

A Structural Model of Marriage Adjustment for Married Individuals

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to test a structural model for married individuals. 215 Turkish married individuals [$Age_{range} = 24-56$, $Age_{Mean} = 35.24$, $Age_{sd} = 7.44$] determined by using the maximum diversity sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, participated in the research. Data were collected with Scale of Meaning of Marriage (SMM), Marital Satisfaction Scale (MSS) and Marital Adjustment Test (MAT). Data were analysed with Two-Stage Structural Equation Modeling. A bootstrap analysis was performed for the significance of indirect effects. As a result of the analyses, the tested structural model was confirmed and it was determined that marital satisfaction had a full mediator effect between the meaning attributed to marriage and marital adjustment of married individuals.

Keywords: Marriage, marital satisfaction, marital adjustment, meaning of marriage.

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Introduction

Close relationships have three stages: initiation, maintenance and termination (Eryılmaz & Atak, 2011). On the initiation phase researches (Eryılmaz & Atak, 2009; Eryılmaz & Doğan, 2013), the indicators of initiating romantic intimacy have been determined. However, the maintenance phase is an important phase in intimacy relationships. The concepts of marital satisfaction, marital adjustment and meaning of marriage in the present study constitute the essence of the maintenance phase (Özbek, 2018).

Marriage is a social system that has an important place throughout human history and constitutes the basic structure of societies. According to Gittins (1985), marriage is expressed as a special love relationship that includes sexual satisfaction established between men and women to meet mutual needs. Güner (2014), on the other hand, defined marriage as an emotional and social bond that includes the social rules realized by two individuals of the opposite sex within the framework of the rights determined by the law. Marriage has a unique place in every society and it has a responsibility that affects the society as well as being affected by it (Burç, 2018). What shapes this responsibility is the physical, social and emotional needs of married individuals (Özaydınlık, 2014). Married individuals shape their responsibilities as they begin to realize each other's needs over time. As a matter of fact, this process brings with it marital adjustment.

Marriage adjustment is defined as the situation in which there is a sense of pleasure and contentment between spouses regarding marriage (Hashmi, Khurshid, & Hassan, 2007). Marital adjustment describes a married couple's experience of adjusting to the marital relationship. Newlyweds enter a period of marital adjustment as both spouses get to know each other. In this sense, marital adjustment is the adjustment of each spouse to their new role and responsibilities as husband and wife. Individuals who have a harmonious marriage are in a positive communication cycle and can cope with the problems they face with cooperative solution methods (Tutarel Kışlak & Çabukça, 2002). According to Kaye, Nick, and James (1977), the ability of two married individuals to get along harmoniously differs according to the expectations they form about marriage. In this sense, individuals get married with the hope and belief of making both themselves and their partner happy (Güler, 2021). The beliefs and expectations about marriage also constitute the meaning attributed to marriage (Mohammadi & Soleymani, 2017).

Determining the components of the meaning attributed to marriage is to reveal how marriage is perceived socially and individually. Although marriage has culturally different meanings, it also includes universal aspects such as love, affection, intimacy and generational continuity (Canel, 2012). Marriage is an institution that is traditionally considered virtuous and has spiritual dimensions. However, social changes and developments in the last century have also differentiated the roles of men and women (Çelik & Erkilet, 2019). Demographic and social changes have also shaped the

meaning, attitudes and beliefs that young adults ascribe to marriage when evaluated from the aspect of marriage (Peters, 2018).

The existence of unrealistic expectations on marriage is also a factor that will trigger the marriage to fail. It has been observed that individuals who create constructive images of marriage have higher marital satisfaction (Jones & Nelson, 1996). In addition, it has been determined that the marital satisfaction of individuals who think that their expectations from marriage are met (Johnson, 2015). In this sense, over the years, it has become important to meet the expectations and needs of married individuals from marriage. A harmonious marriage; it can facilitate the partners to lead a better quality life in terms of mutual psychological, economic and social support (Çağ & Yıldırım, 2013). Therefore, one of the parts of a harmonious marriage is the satisfaction of marriage.

Marriage satisfaction is the psychological satisfaction that creates universal expectations such as gain, justice, equality and sharing problems, as well as personal desires such as love, attachment, trust, sexual satisfaction obtained from marriage (Sokolsi & Hendrick, 1999). "Marriage adjustment" is often used interchangeably with "marriage satisfaction", but the concepts differ. Marriage satisfaction is based on attitude and is therefore different for each spouse. Harmony defines each partner's commitment to marriage and friendship. In general, the spouses' high marital satisfaction is a characteristic of harmonious marriages (Spanier & Cole, 1976). Agreement on important matters is vital to harmonious marriages, so these marriages are characterized by love displayed through behavior and the calm resolution of conflicts (Kendrick & Drentea, 2016).

In the literature, it has been observed that there are positive relationships between marital satisfaction and marital adjustment (Özbek, 2018; Yaşar, 2009; Yılmaz, 2001). Since marital adjustment includes satisfaction and happiness in marital life, it is seen that there is a relationship with satisfaction. According to Huston et al. (2001) it was stated that couples who are satisfied with marriage are connected to each other, have a sense of trust and emotional intimacy, but couples who are not satisfied with marriage are in conflict. As a result, based on the above information, it can be said that marital satisfaction and marital adjustment are related concepts.

Marital adjustment has become more important with the increase in domestic violence and divorce rates today (Güngör & İlhan, 2008). Hawkins and Booth (2005) determined that individuals with unhappy marriages also have low general health status and show more signs of psychological discomfort. On the other hand, it has been observed that individuals in harmonious marriages have high social, physical and emotional well-being (Duman, 2012), and life satisfaction is high (Akhani et al. 1999; Zehir, 2016). Also, according to Kublay (2013), marital adjustment is positively related to subjective happiness. The increase in marital adjustment of married individuals shows that they experience positive emotions more. In addition to these, it is emphasized that marital relationships are an important source of happiness for adults (Eryılmaz, 2011; Eryılmaz & Doğan, 2013). In this sense,

it is thought that it will be important to include studies that will increase the marital adjustment of married individuals in the literature. As a result of the researches, the concepts of marital adjustment, meaning attributed to marriage and marital satisfaction are both theoretical (Blumer, 1969; Spainer, 1976; Sternberg, 1987) and empirical (Çağ & Yıldırım, 2013; Güler, 2021; Güner, 2014; Johnson, 2015; Mohammadi & Soleymani, 2017; Yaşar, 2019) but no model was found to show the structural relationships between each other. In addition, it is extremely important to reveal the protective arguments that affect the marital adjustment of married individuals in the research. Because determining the factors that will contribute to the marital adjustment of married individuals can encourage them to raise awareness about how valuable and important the family institution is, to make the meanings they attribute to marriage positive, and to discover the means of getting satisfaction from their marital life. This may make it easier for married individuals to be more compatible with their marital life. In summary, this positive effect can be considered as a remarkable output both individually and socially. In addition to these, Marriage requires knowledge. For this, it is important for couples to be conscious about taking precautions against problems that may occur in marriage. At this point, social awareness should be aimed, not on individual. In this direction, education policies to be made at the level of the ministry of family and social services are needed in the establishment and harmonious maintenance of healthy marriages. It is thought that the findings and theoretical information in this research will be a guide for the aforementioned need. In conclusion, the aim of this research is to test a structural model for married individuals. For this aim, hypotheses were determined:

H¹: Positive meaning of marriage significantly and positively predicts marital satisfaction.

H²: Marriage satisfaction significantly and positively predicts marital adjustment.

H³: Positive meaning of marriage significantly and positively predicts marital adjustment.

H⁴: The mediating effect of marital satisfaction in the relationship between the positive meaning of marriage and marital adjustment is significant.

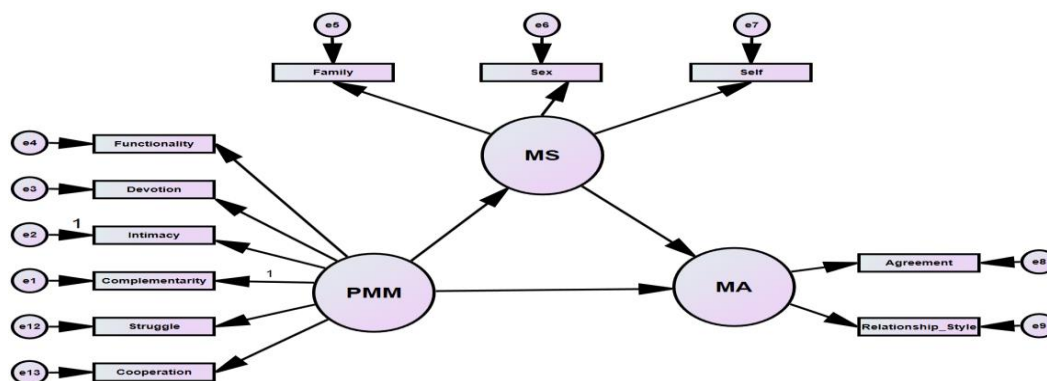


Figure 1. Hypothetical structural model

Note. PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage, MS: Marital Satisfaction, MA: Marital Adjustment.

Method

Participants

215 Turkish married individuals [$Age_{range} = 24-56$, $Age_{Mean} = 35.24$, $Age_{Sd} = 7.44$] determined by using the maximum diversity sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, participated in the research. While creating this sample number, the formula used in structural equation modeling studies was applied. This formula is: $(N: q; 10: 1) = N = \text{Sample size}; q = \text{Number of parameters in the model}$ (Jackson, 2003; Kline, 2015). There are a total of 14 parameters in the current study. According to this formula $(14:10) = 140$ individuals should be reached. In the present study, it can be said that sufficient sampling was achieved, since 215 married individuals were studied. Demographic information of the research group is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic information of the research group

Variables		N	%
Gender	Male	64	29.8
	Female	151	70.2
	Total	215	100
Status of having a child	Yes there is	164	76.3
	No not	51	23.7
	Total	215	100
Education status	High school	32	14.9
	Undergraduate	127	59.1
	MA	37	17.2
	PhD	19	8.8
	Total	215	100
Way of marriage	Arranged	24	11.2
	By meeting, By loving	188	87.4
	Escaping	3	1.4
	Total	215	100
	1 year or less	27	12.6
Duration of marriage	2-5 years	68	31.6
	6-9 years	44	20.5
	10 years and above	76	35.3
	Total	215	100
	Working status	Working	172
	Not working	43	20.0
	Total	215	100
Marriage Age	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation
	15-39	26.01	3.85
	Total	215	100

Data Collection Tools

Scale of Meaning of Marriage (SMM)

SMM, was developed by Özabacı, Körük and Kara (2018) and its validity and reliability analysis was performed. SMM has a total of nine sub-dimensions, including 31 items, positive and negative. Positive meaning dimensions; They are “Functionality”, “Devotion”, “Intimacy”,

“Complementarity”, “Struggle”, “Cooperation”. Negative meaning dimensions are “Frustration”, “Risk”, and “Compliance Expectancy”. Two grand total scores can be taken as SMM, positive meaning score and negative meaning score. Since the current study aimed to measure the positive meaning attributed to marriage, the positive meaning dimensions of SMM were used. Negative meaning dimensions were not evaluated in this study. Confirmatory factor analysis was used by Özabacı, Körük, and Kara (2018) to test the construct validity. In the confirmatory factor analysis findings, it was seen that the acceptable goodness of fit values of SMM were $\chi^2/df= 1.69$, RMSEA=.060, and standardized regression loads ranged between .30 and .75. The reliability of SMM was evaluated by the Cronbach-Alpha internal consistency coefficient by Özabacı, Körük and Kara (2018). The internal consistency coefficient for the entire SMM was found to be .80. In the current study, the internal consistency coefficient of the entire SMM was found to be .86.

Marital Satisfaction Scale (MSS)

MSS, was developed by Çelik and Yazgan-İnanç (2009), at the same time its validity and reliability study was evaluated. MSS contains 13 items and three dimensions. These dimensions are; “Family”, “Sex” and “Self”. The construct validity was tested by Çelik and Yazgan-İnanç (2009) using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis techniques. In the exploratory factor analysis findings, the total explained variance of MSS was 49.23%. In confirmatory factor analysis, it was determined that the goodness of fit value of the MSS was $\chi^2/df= 1.68$, GFI=.90, NNFI=.91, CFI=.93 and SRMR=.07. In the reliability analysis of Çelik and Yazgan-İnanç (2009), the Cronbach-Alpha internal consistency coefficient was used. The internal consistency coefficient of the entire MSS was found to be .79. In the current study, the internal consistency coefficient for the entire MSS was observed as .78.

Marital Adjustment Test (MAT)

MAT was developed by Locke and Wallace (1959). Kışlak (1996) was adapted to Turkish, and its validity and reliability studies were carried out. MAT consists of 15 items and two dimensions. These; “Agreement” and “Relationship Style”. Construct validity was evaluated by Kışlak (1996) with the exploratory factor analysis technique. In the exploratory factor analysis, the total explained variance on married people was 40.8%; in the sample of couples, the total explained variance was found to be 44.4. The reliability study was examined by Kışlak (1996) with the Cronbach-Alpha internal consistency coefficient. The internal consistency coefficient of the entire MAT was .84. In the current study, it was determined that the internal consistency coefficient for the entire MAT was .87.

Data Analysis

First, the preconditions of Structural Equation Modeling Are examined. In this context, preliminary analyses such as normality, tolerance, and VIF and Pearson product-moment correlation were carried out (Finney & DiStefano, 2013; Kline, 2015). After the preliminary analysis, Two-Stage Structural Equation Modeling was carried out in the present study. In the first stage, the measurement model; in the second stage, the structural model was tested (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Goodness of fit indices and acceptance criteria used in the interpretation of these models: [$2 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 3$; $.05 \leq RMSEA \leq .08$; $.90 \leq IFI \leq .95$; $.90 \leq CFI \leq .95$; $.90 \leq GFI \leq .95$; $.85 \leq AGFI \leq .90$] (Bentler & Bonnet, 1980; Kline, 2015; Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger & Müller, 2003). In addition, maximum likelihood estimation was used as the estimation method in the current study (Kline, 2015). Finally, bootstrap analysis was conducted to test whether the mediating effect was significant. For this aim, lower and upper limit confidence intervals were obtained over 1000 resamples by bootstrap analysis. In order to interpret the mediation effect as significant, the fact that the confidence intervals do not contain zero is taken into account as a criterion (Shrout & Bolger, 2002).

Results

Preliminary Analyses

In the present study, firstly, the preconditions of structural equation modeling were examined before analysis. Normality is covered in one of the prerequisites. The skewness values of the variables observed in the present study were between -1.45 and -.37; the kurtosis values were found to vary between -.74 and 3.19. Kalaycı (2010) stated that if the skewness and kurtosis measure take values in the range of ± 3 , it will show a normal distribution. In the study, it was calculated that the kurtosis and skewness values of all variables, except the “Cooperation” variable, varied between ± 3 (see, Table 2). Finally, the multicollinearity prerequisite is; tolerance, VIF values and the correlation between the variables were examined. The tolerance value of the current research is .942; The VIF value was found to be 1.061. In this finding, when analysed according to Kline's (2015) criteria for tolerance greater than .10 and VIF less than 5, it is seen that there is no multicollinearity problem. Present study no multicollinearity problem since the latent variables in the structural model are Pearson product-moment correlation values (ranges from $r=.142$ to $r=.544$) (see, Table 5).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of observed variables in the structural model

Observed variables	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Functionality	21.20	4.94	-.70	.48
Devotion	22.01	2.92	-.98	.72
Intimacy	13.74	1.72	-1.42	1.22
Complementarity	16.90	2.78	-.89	.34
Struggle	9.11	1.05	-1.37	2.36
Cooperation	13.78	1.32	-1.45	3.19
Agreement	27.66	10.37	-.37	-.74
Relationship Style	10.28	2.39	-.89	.53
Family	19.12	5.41	-.99	.26
Sex	16.71	3.04	-1.11	1.22
Self	17.40	2.68	-1.22	1.33

Note. SD: Standard Deviation

Table 3. Relationships between observed variables in the determined structural model

Observed Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Functionality	1										
2. Devotion	,448**	1									
3. Intimacy	,483**	,349**	1								
4. Complementarity	,374**	,502**	,390**	1							
5. Struggle	,196**	,459**	,254**	,285**	1						
6. Cooperation	,175*	,351**	,371**	,316**	,476**	1					
7. Agreement	,385**	,142*	,275**	,243**	,002	-,027	1				
8. Relationship Style	,580**	,210**	,469**	,347**	,082	,090	,536**	1			
9. Family	,317**	,091	,305**	,122	,013	,036	,305**	,484**	1		
10. Sex	,282**	,235**	,300**	,159*	,080	,056	,290**	,353**	,115	1	
11. Self	,339**	,073	,223**	,095	,055	,102	,478**	,520**	,391**	,275**	1

Note. *p<.05; **p<.01.

Two-Stage Structural Equation Modeling

Stage 1: Measurement Model

The measurement model includes 3 latent variables (“Positive Meaning of Marriage”, “Marital Satisfaction” and “Marital Adjustment”) and 11 observed variables (“Functionality”, “Devotion”, “Intimacy”, “Complementarity”, “Struggle”, “Cooperation”, “Family”, “Sex” “Self” “Agreement” and “Relationship Style”). When the measurement model is analysed, it was found to be acceptable goodness of fit indices: (χ^2/df (102.977/38) = 2.71, IFI= .90, CFI= .90 GFI= .92, AGFI =.86, RMSEA = .08 (90) %CI for RMSEA = [.06, .11]. In addition, all standardized factors (ranging from .30 to .85) and t values of the measurement model were found to be significant (see, Table 4).

Table 4. Results of the measurement model

Predicted		Predictor	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p
Complementarity	<---	PMM	1.000			
Family	<---	MS	1.000			
Self	<---	MS	.582	.087	6.694	***
Agreement	<---	MA	1.000			
Relationship Style	<---	MA	.314	.035	8.989	***
Struggle	<---	PMM	.207	.057	3.612	***
Cooperation	<---	PMM	.301	.074	4.046	***
Devotion	<---	PMM	1.019	.152	6.688	***
Intimacy	<---	PMM	.782	.120	6.540	***
Sex	<---	MS	.421	.086	4.873	***
Functionality	<---	PMM	2.540	.371	6.843	***

Note. *** $p < .001$, PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage, MS: Marital Satisfaction, MA: Marital Adjustment.

Table 5. Correlations regarding the latent variables in the structural model

Latent Variables	1	2	3
1. PMM	-		
2. MS	.24**	-	
3. MA	.25**	.54**	-

Note. ** $p < .01$, PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage, MS: Marital Satisfaction, MA: Marital Adjustment.

Stage 2: Structural Model

First step: A Direct-Effect Model

In the first step a direct-effect model was tested to examine the effect of the exogenous variable (PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage) on the endogenous variable (MA: Marital Adjustment) in the absence of mediating variable (MS: Marital Satisfaction). The direct path coefficient from (PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage) to (MA: Marital Adjustment) was significant ($\beta = .59$, $p < .001$). In other words, it was determined that there is a direct and significant relationship between the exogenous (PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage) and endogenous (MA: Marital Adjustment) variables.

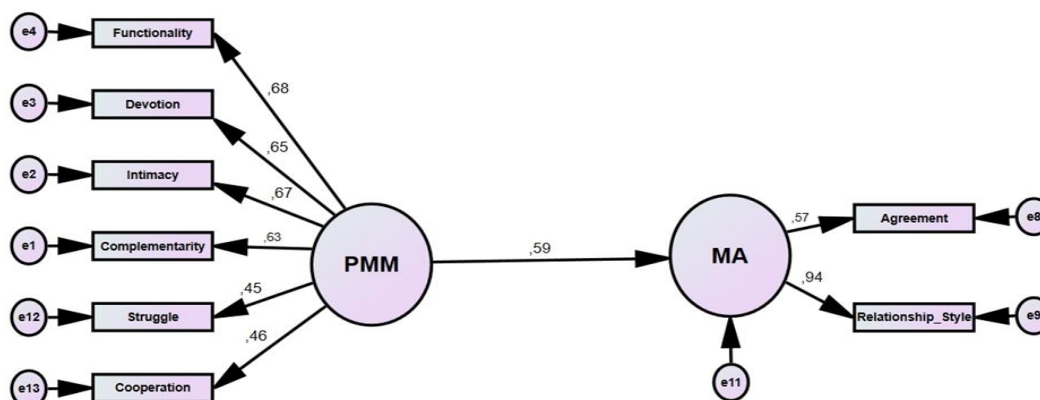


Figure 2. Standardized regression weights of direct-effect model

Note. PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage, MA: Marital Adjustment.

Second step: Structural Model

In the second step was to evaluate structural model that explained the direct relationship between (*PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage*) and (*MA: Marital Adjustment*) and added paths from (*PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage*) to (*MS: Marital Satisfaction*) and from (*MS: Marital Satisfaction*) to (*MA: Marital Adjustment*). When structural model was tested, RMSEA= .12; χ^2/df (167,750/41) = 4.09 was obtained. When the results were examined, it was concluded that three error covariance matrices should be added between Devotion and Complementarity; Devotion and Struggle; Struggle and Cooperation. Finally, with the addition, the structural model was found to be acceptable of goodness of fit indices (χ^2/df (102.977/38) = 2.71, IFI= .90, CFI= .90 GFI= .92, AGFI=.86, RMSEA = .08 (90) % CI for RMSEA = [.06, .11]. However, in this structural model, it was determined that (*PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage*) had no significant direct effect on (*MA: Marriage Adjustment*) ($\beta = .20, p > .05$). These results show the full mediation role of (*MS: Marital Satisfaction*) between (*PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage*) and (*MA: Marital Adjustment*).

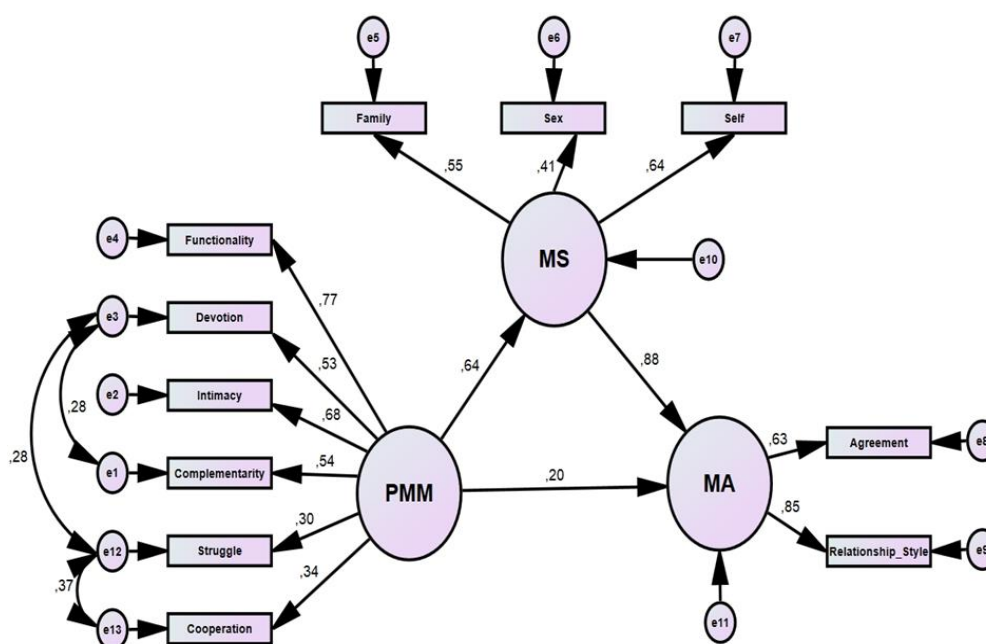


Figure 3. Standardized regression weights of structural model

Note. PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage, MS: Marital Satisfaction, MA: Marital Adjustment.

According to Figure 3, a one-unit increase in (*PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage*) increases (*MS: Marital Satisfaction*) by 0.64 ($t=4.672; p<.001$). Likewise, a one-unit increase in (*MS: Marital Satisfaction*) increases (*MA: Marital Adjustment*) by 0.88 ($t=4.220; p<.001$). On the other hand, the effect of (*PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage*) on (*MA: Marital Adjustment*) is not significant ($\beta=.20, t=1.396; p>.05$).

Table 6. Goodness of fit indices of structural model

Fit Measure	Acceptable Fit Criteria	Model values
¹ χ^2/df	$2 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 3$	2.71
² RMSEA	$.05 \leq RMSEA \leq .08$.08
³ IFI	$.90 \leq IFI \leq .95$.90
⁴ CFI	$.90 \leq CFI \leq .95$.90
⁵ GFI	$.90 \leq GFI \leq .95$.92
⁶ AGFI	$.85 \leq AGFI \leq .90$.86

Note: ^{1,2,5,6,}(Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger and Müller, 2003), ³Bentler & Bonnet, 1980), ⁴(Kline, 2015).

Table 7. Results of the structural model

Predicted		Predictor	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p
MS	<---	PMM	1.260	.270	4.672	***
MA	<---	MS	1.940	.460	4.220	***
MA	<---	PMM	.862	.618	1.396	.163
Complementarity	<---	PMM	1.000			
Functionality	<---	PMM	2.540	.371	6.843	***
Family	<---	MS	1.000			
Self	<---	MS	.582	.087	6.694	***
Agreement	<---	MA	1.000			
Relationship Style	<---	MA	.314	.035	8.989	***
Struggle	<---	PMM	.207	.057	3.612	***
Cooperation	<---	PMM	.301	.074	4.046	***
Devotion	<---	PMM	1.019	.152	6.688	***
Intimacy	<---	PMM	.782	.120	6.540	***
Sex	<---	MS	.421	.086	4.873	***

Note. ***p<.001, PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage, MS: Marital Satisfaction, MA: Marital Adjustment.

Bootstrap Analyses (Significance of Indirect Effects)

Bootstrap analyses was conducted to provide further evidence for the significance of (MS: Marital Satisfaction)'s full mediator role between (PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage) and (MA: Marital Adjustment). In this direction, 1000 resamples were made and lower-upper confidence intervals were established. The fact that these confidence intervals do not contain zero indicates that the indirect effect is significant (Shrout & Bolger, 2002). The results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Bootstrap analyses results

Independent variable	Mediator variable	Dependent variable	Standardized path coefficient (β)	SE	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI	p
PMM →	MS →	MA	.563	.389	.293	1.401	.002

Note. *p<.05, PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage, MS: Marital Satisfaction, MA: Marital Adjustment.

When Table 8 was examined, it was observed that the full mediator role of (MS: Marital Satisfaction) between (PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage) and (MA: Marital Adjustment) was

significant ($[\beta = .563, 95\% \text{ CI } (.293, 1.401)]$). All the mentioned findings can be shown as proof of the full mediating role of (MS: Marital Satisfaction).

Table 9. Evaluation of structural model

Hypotheses	Model pathways	Standardized Coefficients	p	Effect Size	Remark
<i>Direct effect</i>					
H ¹	PMM → MS	0.64***	.000	High	Supported
H ²	MS → MA	0.88***	.000	High	Supported
H ³	PMM → MA	0.20	.163	Low	Unsupported
<i>Mediator Effect</i>					
H ⁴	PMM → MS → MA	0.56**	.002	High	Supported
<i>Total Effect</i>					
	PMM → MA	0.76		High	-

Note. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, PMM: Positive Meaning of Marriage, MS: Marital Satisfaction, MA: Marital Adjustment. Path coefficients effect size as low below .10, medium below .30 and high above .50 (Kline, 2015).

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

The aim of this research is to test a structural model for married individuals. As a result of the analyses, the tested structural model was confirmed and it was determined that marital satisfaction had a full mediator effect between the meaning attributed to marriage and marital adjustment of married individuals. The research findings are discussed below within the framework of the literature.

The close relationship process has three stages. These; it is initiation, maintenance and termination (Eryılmaz & Atak, 2011). Looking at the literature, it is seen that the focus is on the initiation phase of close relationships (Eryılmaz & Atak, 2009; Eryılmaz & Atak, 2011; Eryılmaz & Doğan, 2013). On the other hand, the maintenance phase is; it is important in terms of the quality, satisfaction and harmony of the relationship (Çırakoğlu & Tezer, 2010). In such an important matter, the marital relationship of the individual it is an acquisition that married individuals need, with which resources they continue. The current research has determined that married individuals attribute a positive meaning to marriage, and with the positive effect of this, they get satisfaction from marriage, and as a result, they continue their close relationship processes by adapting to their marriage. On other hand; marital satisfaction, marital adjustment, meaning of marriage can be considered as important sources of the maintenance phase of close relationship psychology.

In the first of the findings obtained within the scope of the research, it was seen that the meaning attributed to marriage predicted the marital satisfaction of married individuals in a significant and positive way. In other words, the positive meaning attributed to marriage in married individuals increases marital satisfaction. When the literature on the results is examined, according to Güler's (2021) research, as the positive meaning attributed to marriage increases, marriage anxiety decreases. In addition, according to Yazıcı and Demirli (2020), the positive meaning attributed to

marriage before marriage shows that the couples' views on marriage are also positive. Although there are no direct correlational studies between the meaning attributed to marriage and marital satisfaction in the literature, Timmer and Orbuch (2001) stated that the meaning of marriage is a part of a cognitive structure that enables individuals to understand and evaluate marriage. The meaning of marriage is the key to the dynamics that occur in married life. Individuals form meaning about events, objects and a person in their social environment through interaction. When a couple marries, the individual interpreting the meaning of marriage reflects the general culture of social experience, language, and general beliefs about marriage, rather than interactions with the spouse. As a matter of fact, in the study conducted by Hamamcı (2005), it is seen that there is an inverse relationship between irrational relationship beliefs and marital satisfaction. Based on the information and findings mentioned above, we can say that the finding that a positive meaning for marriage positively predicts marital satisfaction is also supported by the literature.

In the second of the findings obtained within the scope of the research, it was confirmed that the marital satisfaction of married individuals affected their marital adjustment significantly and positively. It has been seen that the results are also supported by the literature, and it has been determined that there are positive relationships between marital satisfaction and marital adjustment (Heyman, Sayers, & Bellack, 1994; Özbek, 2018; Yaşar, 2009; Yılmaz, 2001). The high level of relationship between the concept of marital satisfaction and the concept of marital adjustment has led to these concepts being used interchangeably in the literature. However, while marital satisfaction expresses the psychological satisfaction that differs personally (Sokolsi & Hendrick, 1999), marital adjustment has a relational feature. According to Kendrick and Drentea (2016), high marital satisfaction of spouses is a feature of harmonious marriages. Fincham, Bradbury, and Baucom's (1986) attribution theory in marriage shows that the answers given by individuals to the question "Why" have internal or external attributions, and this is related to marital satisfaction. Therefore, it can be stated that these attributions can also be a determinant of relational unity. As a result, it has been stated that couples with high marital satisfaction can cope with the difficulties they encounter in marriage more easily and show less stress symptoms (Kirby 2005). It is thought that the fulfilment of these factors will increase the adjustment in marriage.

When the third and fourth findings obtained within the scope of the research are considered together; it was found that the direct effect of the meaning attributed to marriage on marital adjustment was significant, but this effect became meaningless with the addition of marital satisfaction as a mediator variable in the model. In other words, in a triple model in which the meaning attributed to marriage, satisfaction in marriage and harmony in marriage take place; when the meaning attributed to marriage increases the satisfaction of married individuals, harmony occurs in marriage. According to the symbolic interactionism theory, the meaning-making process is based

on both personal and interpersonal interactions (Blumer, 1969). The demographic status of the person and socio-cultural changes also shape the meaning attributed to marriage (Peters, 2018). In addition, individuals' perceptions of marriage are represented according to marriage models observed from early childhood (Hovardaoğlu & Binici-Azizoğlu, 1996). Marriage satisfaction of individuals who have negative mental representations and schemas are also negatively affected (Altun, 2015). Young et al. (2003) revealed that individuals with an addiction schema lead them not to take responsibility in marriage, and this reduces their marital satisfaction. As a matter of fact, marital satisfaction is a variable that is affected by the meaning attributed to marriage. In addition, individuals with high marital satisfaction also have high life satisfaction (Soylu & Kabasakal, 2016), it is easier to cope with the problems they encounter in life (Erber et al., 2005), stress and anxiety levels are lower (Tuzcu, 2017) they were found to be more connected (DeMoss, 2004; Goodman, 1999; Kirby, 2005).

In this study, the meaning that married individuals attribute to marriage and their marital satisfaction are the determining variables in their marital adjustment. The meaning that married individuals attribute to marriage increases the satisfaction in marriage, which brings along marital harmony. Considering the results, it can be suggested that the variables in the model be used in experimental studies that will increase the marital adjustment of married individuals in the future. Another suggestion is that a structural model of marital adjustment was reached for married individuals in this study. In the future, qualitative research approach-based studies can be conducted to describe more deeply the marital adjustment of married individuals. Limitations of this study, instantaneous cross-sectional data were collected. The study was conducted on married individuals living in Istanbul. Three error covariance matrices were applied in the structural model testing process.

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