

The Mediating Role of Social Connectedness in the Relationship between University Students' Parental Acceptance / Rejection Perceptions and Loneliness Perceptions: A Structural Equation Model Study

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the mediating effect of social connectedness on the relationship between university students' parents acceptance-rejection and loneliness. The research was carried out with the descriptive research method. The universe of the research consists of 6818 students who attend Atatürk Faculty of Education in the 2019-2020 academic year. The sample of the study was determined using the stratified sampling method. The sample of the study consists of 387 university students, 271 of whom are women (70%) and 116 of them are men (30%). The scales used are Adult Parental Acceptance-Rejection Scale - Short Form, Ucla Loneliness Scale and Social Connectedness Scale. In line with the main purpose of the study, the model proposed to explain loneliness theoretically was tested and tested by the Structural Equation Model analysis. Relationship between variables in data analysis were determined by Pearson Correlation Analysis. The findings show that the model has acceptable significance and the model is statistically confirmed. According to the verified model; it is seen that the perception of parents' acceptance/rejection in childhood has an effect on loneliness. When the mediator effect of social connectedness is examined, in the model; it appears that the mediating role of social connectedness is confirmed.

Keywords: Loneliness, Parental Rejection, Social Connectedness

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Introduction

Since human is a social entity, it is very important for him/her to connect with people around him/her. Since loneliness is one of the problems underlying human existence, one needs to establish relationships with others. People may experience some problems while establishing relationships with their environment, and some problems may arise during the interaction process. This can cause people to be deprived of their social relationships and to become isolated. Many definitions have been made about loneliness, which is one of the common problems of our age. Loneliness is defined as the general lack of emotional bond established (Haojat,1982). The individual feels lonely unless he/she is emotionally affiliated or bonded, regardless of the quantity of him/her social environment. Similarly, according to Peplau and Perlman (1982), loneliness is a stressful unpleasant situation that occurs when the individual perceives the difference between him/her existing social life and him/her desired social life. Loneliness is addressed in a single and multi-dimensional way. According to the approaches that deal with loneliness in one dimension, loneliness is a universal phenomenon that is experienced in different intensities and levels and affects all aspects of life. According to another view, loneliness has a multi-dimensional structure. In this context, Weiss (1973) stated that loneliness may be a reaction to the lack of intimacy, sincerity and emotionality in these relationships whether the person has social relationships or not. While defining the situation of the individual not being able to establish close relationships with the people around him/her as emotional loneliness, he also defined the situation arising from the lack of any relationship that the individual needs, as social loneliness. Emotional loneliness is considered as a result of the lack or loss of parental attachment relationships (Weiss, 1973). Loneliness is an experience that affects and hurts individuals in all developmental periods (Cacioppo, Hughes, Waite, Hawkley and Thisted,2006).

Erikson argues that loneliness, which started with the interactions in the "insecurity towards basic trust" stage during psycho-social development periods, emerged in the period of "establishing intimacy against loneliness", which is characterized by establishing close relationships in young adulthood (Erikson,1963). While loneliness is expected to be seen in later years, contrary to what is known, it occurs mostly among adolescents and young adults (Çeçen, 2007). In this period of loneliness, physical, spiritual changes and change of the social environment along with the start of the university, cause problems for young people in their close relationships (Bıyık, 2004). Even though friends and peer groups are important in adolescence, family relationships also appear as one of the influential factors in loneliness.

Individuals going to university are moving away from home, thus establish new interactions. The quality of the relationships they establish with their families affects the quality of these interactions, because the most effective and prominent place where individuals acquire various behaviours is the family environment. According to the healthy and unhealthy nature of the

relationships that individuals establish with their families, individuals reflect this situation in their relationships with the environment and sometimes become lonely by avoiding interaction (Buluş,1996).

According to Sullivan, the roots of loneliness in adulthood are based on early period and infancy. Sullivan also states that the need to establish interpersonal intimacy is felt during infancy and manifests itself in adulthood. According to him, while this need is met in the relationship established with the mother in infancy, this need is tried to be met with playmates in early childhood. In the last childhood period, same-sex friends are needed. While trying to fulfil this need before the adolescence with same sex friends, he/she tries to fulfil it by establishing relationships with the opposite sex in adolescence. In adulthood, this need is tried to be fulfilled with the chosen spouse. Loneliness arising from not meeting this need may also be experienced in childhood, but according to him, loneliness starts to be experienced from adolescence in its most negative form (Perlman, Peplau, 1982).

Fromm-Reicmann accepts Sullivan's views on loneliness and argues that the cause of loneliness in adulthood is made up of childhood experiences. Zilboorg, as in Sullivan, stated that the need for physical intimacy is especially important in infancy and, like other psychodynamic theorists, argued that the roots of loneliness go back to infancy. Wiseman, Mayseless, and Sharabany (2006) stated that individuals who are prone to loneliness in adulthood are generally those who cannot establish close relationships with their family and peers in childhood. Similarly, Olson (1993) states that the relationship between the individual and him/her family affects the level of loneliness. In a research that supports the idea of Olson, it is stated that lonely adults remember their parents distantly and unreliably, while adults with low loneliness scores remember their parents warmly and supportively (Rubenstein, Shaver, and Peplau 1979).

Sharf, Wiseman and Farah (2011) stated that positive behaviours of parents towards their children ensure decrease to the feeling of loneliness in their relationship with both parents and their friends and their interpersonal problems during their young and young adulthood. In recent years, researchers have focused on two dimensions while examining the effects of parents' attitudes on the child. The first dimension is control-autonomy and the other is the acceptance-rejection dimension (Arslan, 2010).

In this context, according to the assumption of Rohner's (1975) Parental Acceptance Rejection Theory (PART), all people need to feel the warmth from their parents or other attachment figures (caregiver, etc.). Rohner (1986) thinks that this need exists in all people regardless of other restrictive factors such as culture, race, physical characteristics, social status, language, geography. In warmth dimension, which is accepted as an important component of the parent-child relationship (Rohner, Khaleque & Cournoyer, 2005), there is acceptance in one pole and rejection in the other.

Conceptually, the warmth dimension of parenthood is defined in Parental Acceptance Rejection Theory (PART) as a continuity or a bipolar dimension which the rejection of the absence of parental warmth and love is in one pole, and acceptance is in an opposite pole. The physical and/or verbal expressions of love and affection toward children symbolize accepting parents; rejecting parents are those who do not like and approve, annoy or indifferent their children. Intercultural evidences shows that rejection occurs behaviorally worldwide in three main ways; it takes the form of parental coldness or lack of warmth and love, hostility and aggression, and parental indifference and neglect. Individuals may also experience rejection without having direct behavioural indicators of parental coldness, aggression or neglect (Rohner, 1975, 1986). These hypotheses of the theory have been supported by many studies conducted with children and adults in different geographies in Khaleque A, Rohner (2002, 2010). Numerous findings from these studies suggest that remembered parental acceptance-rejection is associated with many mental disorders that occur in adulthood, including adult psychological adjustment, depression, and substance abuse. Most of the researches on parental acceptance-rejection are related to children and adolescents in Turkey, and it has seen that there are many studies on different topics such as aggression, psychological adjustment, internet addiction, depression, anxiety, social anxiety, anger expression styles, psychological symptoms (Moray, 2019; Olgaç, 2017; Pektaş, 2015; Kılıç, 2012; Ünibol, 2011; Salahur, 2010; Karpat, 2010; Yalçın and Dural, 2014, Yakın, 2011). The studies conducted show differences in terms of research design, measurement tool, sample type and discussed development periods. In addition to these studies, for adult groups examined with parental acceptance rejection; variables such as psychological adjustment, spouse acceptance-rejection, marital adjustment, marital conflict, for children; other variables such as general psychological adjustment, social competence, behavioural problems, and brotherhood/sisterhood relationships are addressed in a wide range (Özbiler,2016; Şireli and Soykan, 2016; Babuşcu,2014; Ali,2001).

Social Connectedness as an Mediator

In this study, it is thought that the social connectedness factor has a mediating role in the relationship of remembered parental acceptance-rejection in the context of Parental Acceptance Rejection Theory with the feeling of loneliness in young adulthood. No similar research was found in the relevant literature.

Social connectedness is the subjective perception of the individual about feeling themselves as a meaningful part of their social and emotional relationships (Lee & Robbins, 1998).

Explanations on the development of social connectedness have a wide place in Kohut's theory which he explains the relationship between self and object in it. According to the theory, the repeat of the child-mother bond established in infancy is at the heart of the social relations established with others. In this context, as to how healthy the feeling of trust is in the relationship between the

individual and the parent, individual will develop relations with similar trust in him/her social environment. Therefore, when individuals with high level of social connectedness are excluded by a group or lose a relative, their perceptions about social connectedness are not shaken. In other words, social connectedness levels do not drop dramatically (Lee, Keough, Sexton, 2002). Individuals with a low level of social connectedness feel distant from other people. This situation restrain them from developing and maintaining new social relationships. Individuals who have failed experiences in developing and maintaining meaningful social relationships experience frustration and social isolation (Moore, 2006). It is understood that social connectedness has an important and critical value especially for young people during university years. Because young people move out of an environment where they feel they belong to in the starting period of the university and move to a new, different environment. This transition can include stressful events within itself. For feeling themselves belonging to their new environment and strengthening their social connectedness, young people need to adapt to the university and their new environment, start new relationships and maintain the relationships they have. If young people cannot adapt and strengthen their social connectedness, they will feel alone at the university campus.

In literature, there are studies investigating the relationships between social connectedness and psychological stress levels (Lee, Draper and Lee , 2001); loneliness levels (Duru, 2008a); with discrimination and difficulty in adaptation (Duru and Poyrazlı, 2011); social comparison (Lee and Robbins ,2000); with social assessment and perceived stress (Lee, Keough and Sexton ,2002); with revenge, forgiveness and subjective well-being (Satici,2016); social intelligence, social anxiety and internet addiction (Savcı,2017).

In this study, the main purpose is to try to reveal a structural model of the relationships between the mentioned variables. In this context, it is aimed to examine the partial mediating effect of social connectedness, which is based on Kohut's Self Theory, in the relationship between the loneliness and remembered parental acceptance-rejection which is included in the PART theory. With the examination of the relationships between parental acceptance-rejection, loneliness and social connectedness, and catching clues about the theoretical structure of these relationships, it can be presented an opinion to the studies to be conducted to examine the relations of the variables in this study.

Method

In this study, it is aimed to examine whether there is a mediating effect of social connectedness in the relationship between parental acceptance/rejection perception and loneliness. For this purpose, the relevant literature was scanned and the theoretical model shown in figure 1 was established. This study, which aims to examine the causal relationship between variables in the established theoretical model, is a descriptive study (Çokluk, Şekerci and Büyüköztürk, 2016).The

reasons why this method is preferred by the researcher are explained as follows. The model proposed by the researcher requires revealing the complex relationships between variables and testing the theory. Therefore, it is thought that the relationships between variables can be examined with the descriptive research method. On the other hand, structural equation analysis was preferred in testing the model that reveals the relationship between variables. Structural equation analysis is a powerful way to reveal the complex relationships between variables compared to other multiple analysis techniques (Hair, 2006; akt: Türkmen, 2012). However, structural equation analysis is a comprehensive statistical method that examines the linear relationships between dependent and independent variables while examining the effect of all variables on each other (MacCallum ve Austin, 2000; akt: Kızıldağ, 2015). For these reasons, structural equation analysis was preferred. In this context, the model shown in figure 1; whether the effect of perception of maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection on loneliness can be differentiated depending on social connectedness has been tested with the structural equation model.

The Universe and Sample of the Research

The universe of the research consists of 6818 students who attend Atatürk Faculty of Education in the 2019-2020 academic year. The sample of the study was determined using the stratified sampling method. Firstly, the appropriate sample size is calculated. In calculating the sample size, Cochran's (1962, Akt: Balcı, 2015) Formula for calculating the sample size in stratified sampling was used.

$$n = t^2(PQ)/d^2 / [(1/N)t^2(PQ)/d^2]$$

Using the sampling calculation Formula, the sample number that will represent the research population with .05 significance and %5 tolerance was determined as 387. The following steps after the sample size was calculated;

- The variable to be used in subgrouping has been determined. It has been decided to divide the students into subgroups according to the departments they study.
- The proportional distribution technique has been used to determine the number of units to be selected from each subgroup. It is aimed to represent the subgroups determined in proportional distribution in the sample with their representation rates in the universe (Büyüköztürk, 2008). The ratio of each subgroup in the universe has been calculated.
- The number of samples multiplied by the ratio of each subgroup. In this way, the number of students to be randomly selected from each subgroup was determined. The sample determined as a result of these steps is thought to have power to represent the universe.

The number of students determined is as follows; students of 80 (%20,7) elementary mathematics teaching, 41 (%10,6) English teaching, 40 (%10,3) primary education, 38 (%9,8) music

teaching, 34 (%8,8) psychological counselling and guidance, 32 (%8,3) social sciences teaching, 32 (%8,3) Turkish teaching, 26 (%6,7) secondary education mathematics teaching, 26 (%6,7) information technologies teaching, 20 (%5,2) French teaching, 12 (%3,1) German teaching, 6 (%1,6) physics teaching. The sample group of the research consists of 387 university students, 271 of whom are women (70%) and 116 of them are men (30%).

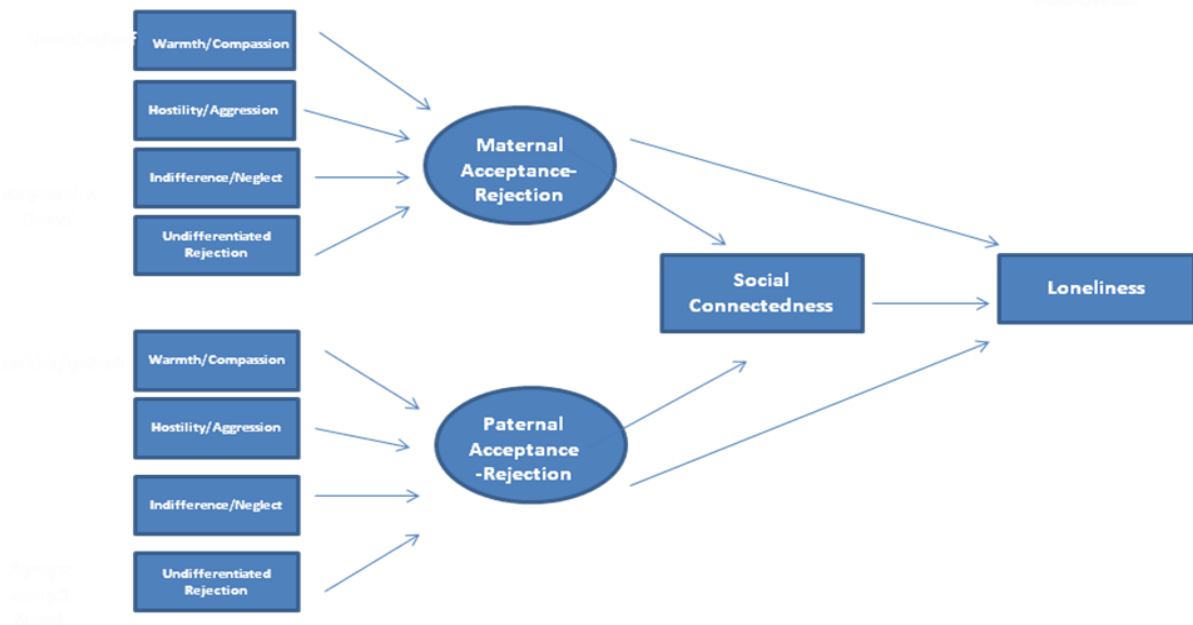


Figure 1: Recommended Structural Model

In the proposed structural model shown in Figure 1, 2 latent variables and 10 observed variables are defined. Loneliness, which is the dependent variable of this research, and social connectedness, which is the mediator variable, were defined as observed variables. Perception of maternal acceptance/rejection and perception of paternal acceptance/rejection, which are independent variables of the research, were defined as latent variables. As indicators of perception of maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection; warmth/compassion, hostility/aggression, indifference/neglect, undifferentiated rejection subscales were defined.

In the model, latent variables have shown oval. The indicator variables observed have shown with a rectangle. In order to test the structural model shown in Figure 1, answers to the following questions were sought.

1. Do university students' perceptions of maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection significantly predict loneliness?

2. Do university students' perceptions of maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection significantly predict social connectedness?
3. Does the social connectedness of university students predict loneliness significantly?
4. Do university students' perceptions of maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection significantly predict loneliness perceptions through social connectedness?
5. Does the proposed structural model to demonstrate the mediating role of social connectedness in the relationship between university students' perceptions of maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection and loneliness have acceptable levels of compliance?

Data Collection Tools

Adult Parental Acceptance-Rejection Scale – Short Form (Adult PARS/S):

The short form was developed by Ronald P. Rohner (1975), the developer of the Adult Parental Acceptance-Rejection Scale, by preserving the original structure with 60 items. The Turkish validity and reliability study was performed by Dedeler et al. (2017). Analysis of the reliability of the scale shows that the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients of all forms and subforms ranged from 0.75 to 0.96 for both forms. Item total correlations ranged from 0.45 to 0.92. Two half reliability of the scale was found to be 0.88 for Mother Form and 0.94 for Father Form. For both forms, it is detected that test-retest reliability coefficients ranged from 0.40 to 0.96. The scale, which is a 24-item 4-point Likert-type scale, which is filled in separately for the mother and father, has four subscales which is namely warmth/compassion (8 items), hostility/aggression (6 items), indifference/neglect (6 items) and undifferentiated rejection (4 items). While calculating the total score in the scale which does not include inverse items, after reversing the scores of the warmth/compassion subscale items, all subscale scores are calculated by adding up. The scale score range ranges from 24 (highest level of acceptance) to 96 (highest level of rejection) (Dedeler et al., 2017).

UCLA Loneliness Scale:

The original form of the scale was developed by Russel, Peplau and Ferguson (1980). The Turkish validity and reliability study was carried out by Demir (1989). The internal consistency coefficient for the reliability of the scale .96; the retest coefficient was found to be $r = .94$. According to the findings, the validity and reliability of the UCLA loneliness scale was reported to be sufficient and can serve the purpose. The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale consisting of 20 items, 10 of which are plain and 10 of which are coded in the opposite direction, is 20, and the highest score is 80. High score is accepted as a sign that loneliness is more intense (Demir, 1989).

Social Connectedness Scale:

The Social Connectedness Scale, whose validity and reliability study was performed by Sarıçam and Deveci (2017), consists of 20 items and one dimension. Scale scoring is in the form of six ratings; the scale gives a total score. Items of 1,2,3,4,5,6,8,10,15,18th are scored by reverse coding. While performing AFA, it was limited to one factor to be compatible with the original scale, and as a result, Bartlett Sphericity Test value and KMO sample conformity coefficient were found to meet the criteria in the literature. Then, DFA was applied to the second group data and as a result, it was determined that the scale's compliance index values were good. A positive correlation was found between the Revised Social Connectedness Scale and the Social Provision Scale, and a negative correlation were found with the UCLA Loneliness Scale. Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability coefficient of R-SCS was found as .86. In addition, the corrected item total correlation coefficients were found to be over .30. In the light of these findings, it was concluded that R-SCS is a valid and reliable measurement tool in determining the social connectedness levels of adults in Turkish culture (Deveci & Sarıçam, 2017).

Data Analysis

Before starting the analysis of the data; whether correlation values between variables of the study, sufficient sample size, missing values, extreme values, normal distribution, multiple linear connections exist has investigated. Before testing the normality assumption, extreme values were determined through the SPSS 21 program and removed from the data set. In order to determine whether the scale scores of the study variables show normal distribution, the skewness coefficients and kurtosis coefficients of the received scores were examined. These values are expected to rank between -2 and +2 (Bachman, 2004). It has seen that the skewness coefficients of the study variables are between .07 and .92 and the kurtosis coefficients are between .30 and .62. As a result of the examination, it was seen that the assumptions of the Structural Equation Analysis were met and the analyzes were continued.

Findings

When the findings obtained from the research are examined, the results of the analysis made in this section are explained under two headings which are the findings showing the relations between the variables of the research and the findings related to the analysis of the structural equation model performed for testing the theoretical model proposed in the study.

1. Findings Showing the Relationships Between the Variables of the Study

Table 1. Correlation Values of Pearson Moments Product Between Variables

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1.Loneliness	1	-.78*	-.45**	.32**	.32**	.24**	-.36**	.31**	.27**	.26**
2.Social Connectedness		1	.41**	-.27**	-.29**	-.25**	.35**	-.29**	-.27**	-.25**
3.Maternal Warmth/Compassion			1	-.63**	-.62**	-.59**	.45**	-.33**	-.35**	-.35**
4.Maternal Hostility/Aggression				1	.67**	.74**	-.26**	.50**	.40**	.52**
5.Maternal Indifference/Neglect					1	.64**	-.27**	.45**	.47**	.49**
6.Maternal Undifferentiated Rejection						1	-.23**	.45**	.37**	.54**
7.Paternal Warmth/Compassion							1	-.49**	-.66**	-.53**
8.Paternal Hostility/Aggression								1	.62**	.79**
9.Paternal Indifference/Neglect									1	.66**
10.Paternal Undifferentiated Rejection										1

p<.01**

In Table 1, it is seen that there is a high level of meaningful relationship between loneliness and social connectedness ($r = -.78, p < .01$). In the context of the relationship between loneliness and the sub-dimensions of the maternal acceptance-rejection scale, there is a meaningful relationship that is at moderate level and negative ($r = -.45, p < .01$) for the warmth-compassion, at moderate level and positive ($r = .32, p < .01$) for the hostility-aggression, at moderate level and positive ($r = .32, p < .01$) for the neglect-indifference, at low level and positive ($r = .24, p < .01$) for the undifferentiated rejection which is another sub-dimension. In the context of the relationship between loneliness and the sub-dimensions of the paternal acceptance-rejection scale, there is a meaningful relationship that is at moderate level and negative ($r = -.36, p < .01$) for the warmth-compassion, at moderate level and positive ($r = .31, p < .01$) for the hostility-aggression, at low level and positive ($r = .27, p < .01$) for the neglect-indifference, at low level and positive ($r = .26, p < .01$) for the undifferentiated rejection which is another sub-dimension. In the context of the relationship between social connectedness and the sub-dimensions of the maternal acceptance-rejection scale, there is a meaningful relationship that is at moderate level and positive ($r = .41, p < .01$) for the warmth-compassion, at low level and negative ($r = -.27, p < .01$) for the hostility-aggression, at low level and negative ($r = -.29, p < .01$) for the neglect-indifference, at low level and negative ($r = -.25, p < .01$) for the undifferentiated rejection which is another sub-dimension. In the context of the relationship between social connectedness and the sub-dimensions of the paternal acceptance-rejection scale, there is a meaningful relationship that is at moderate level and negative ($r = -.36, p < .01$) for the warmth-compassion, at moderate level and positive ($r = .31, p < .01$) for the hostility-aggression, at low level and positive ($r = .27, p < .01$) for the neglect-indifference, at low level and positive ($r = .26, p < .01$) for the undifferentiated rejection which is another sub-dimension.

2. Findings from the Structural Equation Model Analysis

In the proposed theoretical model, the mediating role of social connectedness has been tested with reference to the conditions proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). Accordingly, the mediating effect of social connectedness was examined by analyzing the necessary conditions. The conditions stated are;

1. Independent variables (maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection perception) should directly and significantly predict the dependent variable (loneliness).
2. Independent variables (maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection perception) should significantly predict the mediator variable (social connectedness).
3. When the mediator variable (social connectedness) is included in the model, the effect of independent variables (maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection perception) on the dependent variable (loneliness) decreases/becomes meaningless, while the effect of mediating variable (social connectedness) on the dependent variable (loneliness) is significant.

Findings Regarding Whether the Perception of Maternal Acceptance / Rejection and Paternal Acceptance / Rejection predict Loneliness at a Significant Level

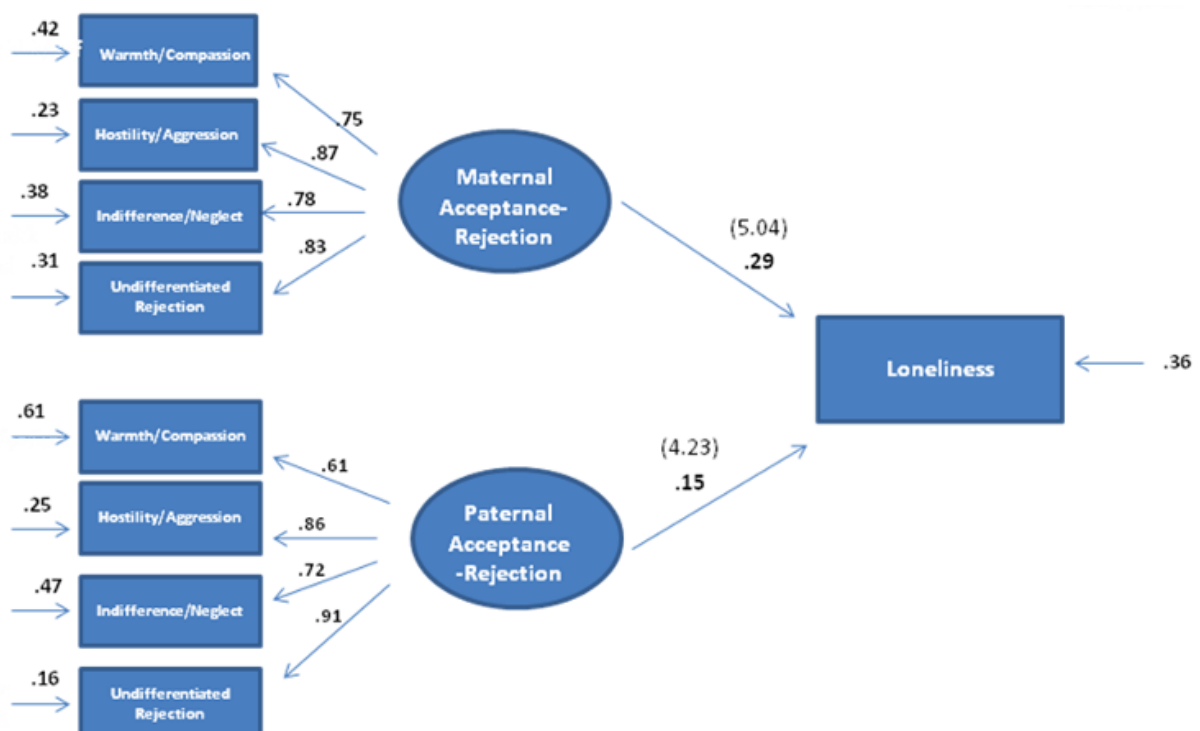


Figure 2: Path diagram of whether the perception of maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection significantly predicts loneliness

When the direct effects shown in Figure 2 are analyzed, maternal acceptance/rejection predicts loneliness directly and significantly ($\beta = .29, p < .01$), and also paternal acceptance/rejection predicts loneliness directly and significantly ($\beta = .15, p < .01$). In this case, the first condition proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) for the mediation role test was provided. It is seen that the model has valid compliance measures (Meydan and Şeşen, 2015). The compliance values of the model are shown in Table 2, the t values of the relationship between the variable in the model are shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Compliance Values of the Structural Model

Compliance Indices Examined	Perfect Compliance	Acceptable Compliance Indices	Compliance Indices Obtained	Result
χ^2/sd	$0 \leq \chi^2/sd \leq 2$	$\chi^2/sd \leq 4-5$	4.16	Acceptable Compliance
CFI	$CFI \geq .95$	$CFI \geq .90$	.94	Acceptable Compliance
TLI	$TLI \geq .95$	$TLI \geq .90$	.96	Perfect Compliance
RMSEA	$.00 \leq RMSEA \leq .05$	$.00 \leq RMSEA \leq .08$	.07	Acceptable Compliance
SRMR	$.00 \leq SRMR \leq .08$	$.00 \leq SRMR \leq .10$	.04	Perfect Compliance

Table 2 shows, the ratio of chi-square value to degrees of freedom was found to be 4.16. The ratio of chi-square degrees of freedom below 5 indicates that the model has an acceptable level of fit (Meydan ve Şeşen, 2015). On the other hand $TLI = .96$ and $SRMR = .04$ calculated as. These calculated values indicate perfect compliance. $CFI = .94$ and $RMSEA = .07$ calculated as. These values seem to indicate acceptable fit criteria (Kline, 2005).

Table 3. T -Values Table of the Relationship Between the Latent Variables in the Model Shown in Figure 2 and Observed Variable

Relationship between variables	β	t	p
maternal accep/reject. \rightarrow loneliness	.29	5.04	.00
paternal accep./reject. \rightarrow loneliness	.15	4.23	.00

Table 3 shows, maternal acceptance/rejection predicts loneliness directly and significantly ($\beta = .29, p < .01$), and also paternal acceptance/rejection predicts loneliness directly and significantly ($\beta = .15, p < .01$). It is seen that the t values obtained in the relations between the latent variables and observed variable are significant. When these values were examined; the t value for the relationship between maternal acceptance/rejection and loneliness was calculated as 5.04, paternal acceptance/rejection and loneliness was calculated as 4.23.

Table 4. Residual Variances for the Observed Variables in the Model Shown in Figure 2.

Variables	Residual Variances
Maternal acceptance/rejection	
Warmth/Compassion	.42
Hostility/Aggression	.23
Indifference/Neglect	.38
Undifferentiated Rejection	.31
Paternal acceptance/rejection	

Warmth/Compassion	.61
Hostility/Aggression	.25
Indifference/Neglect	.47
Undifferentiated Rejection	.16
Loneliness	.36

Table 4 shows the variance amounts in the observed variables that cannot be explained by the factor. The values for error variances are between .16 and .61.

Findings Regarding Whether the Perception of Maternal Acceptance / Rejection and Paternal Acceptance / Rejection predict Social Connectedness at a Significant Level

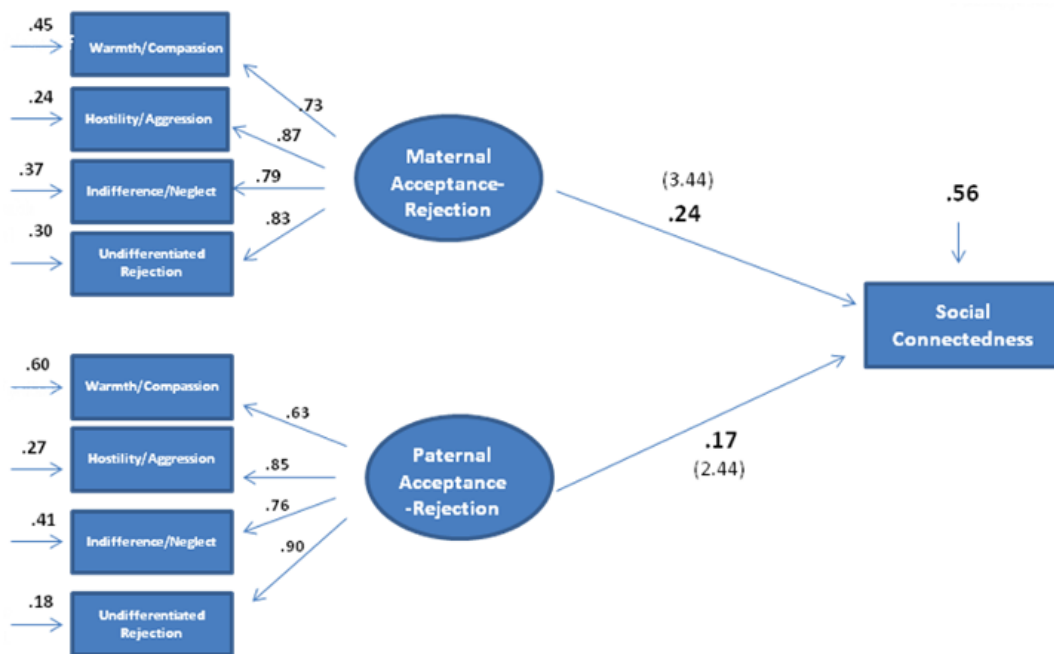


Figure 3: Path diagram of whether the perception of maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection significantly predicts social connectedness.

When the direct effects shown in Figure 3 are analyzed, maternal acceptance/rejection predicts social connectedness directly and significantly ($\beta = .24, p < .01$), and also paternal acceptance/rejection predicts social connectedness directly and significantly ($\beta = .17, p < .01$). The compliance values of the model are shown in Table 7, the *t*-values of the relationship between the variable in the model are shown in Table 8.

Table 5. Compliance Values of the Structural Model

Compliance Indices Examined	Perfect Compliance	Acceptable Compliance Indices	Compliance Indices Obtained	Result
χ^2/sd	$0 \leq \chi^2/sd \leq 2$	$\chi^2/sd \leq 4-5$	3.96	Acceptable Compliance
CFI	$CFI \geq .95$	$CFI \geq .90$	.95	Perfect Compliance
TLI	$TLI \geq .95$	$TLI \geq .90$	.95	Perfect Compliance
RMSEA	$.00 \leq RMSEA \leq .05$	$.00 \leq RMSEA \leq .08$	.04	Acceptable Compliance
SRMR	$.00 \leq SRMR \leq .08$	$.00 \leq SRMR \leq .10$	.05	Perfect Compliance

Table 5 shows, the ratio of chi-square value to degrees of freedom was found to be 3.96. The ratio of chi-square degrees of freedom below 5 indicates that the model has an acceptable level of fit (Meydan ve Şeşen,2015). Other fit indices were calculated as CFI = .95, TLI = .95, RMSEA= .04 and SRMR=.08. These values are known to show the perfect compliance (Kline,2005).

Table 6. *T*-Values Table of the Relationship Between the Latent Variables in the Model Shown in Figure 3 and Observed Variable

Relationship between variables	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
maternal accep/reject. → social connect.	.24	3.44	.00
paternal accep./reject. → socail connect.	.17	2.44	.00

Table 6 shows, maternal acceptance/rejection predicts social connectedness directly and significantly ($\beta = .24$, $p < .01$), and also paternal acceptance/rejection social connectedness directly and significantly ($\beta = .17$, $p < .01$). It is seen that the *t*-values obtained in the relations between the latent variables and observed variable are significant. When these values were examined; the *t*-value for the relationship between maternal acceptance/rejection and social connectedness was calculated as 3.44, paternal acceptance/rejection and social connectedness was calculated as 2.44.

Table 7. Residual Variances for the Observed Variables in the Model Shown in Figure 2.

Variables	Residual Variances
Maternal acceptance/rejection	
Warmth/Compassion	.45
Hostility/Aggression	.24
Indifference/Neglect	.37
Undifferentiated Rejection	.30
Paternal acceptance/rejection	
Warmth/Compassion	.60
Hostility/Aggression	.27
Indifference/Neglect	.47
Undifferentiated Rejection	.18
Social Connectedness	.56

Table 7 shows the variance amounts in the observed variables that cannot be explained by the factor. The values for error variances are between .18 and .60.

The Mediating Role of Social Connectedness in the Relationship between Perception of Maternal Acceptance/Rejection, Paternal Acceptance/Rejection and Loneliness

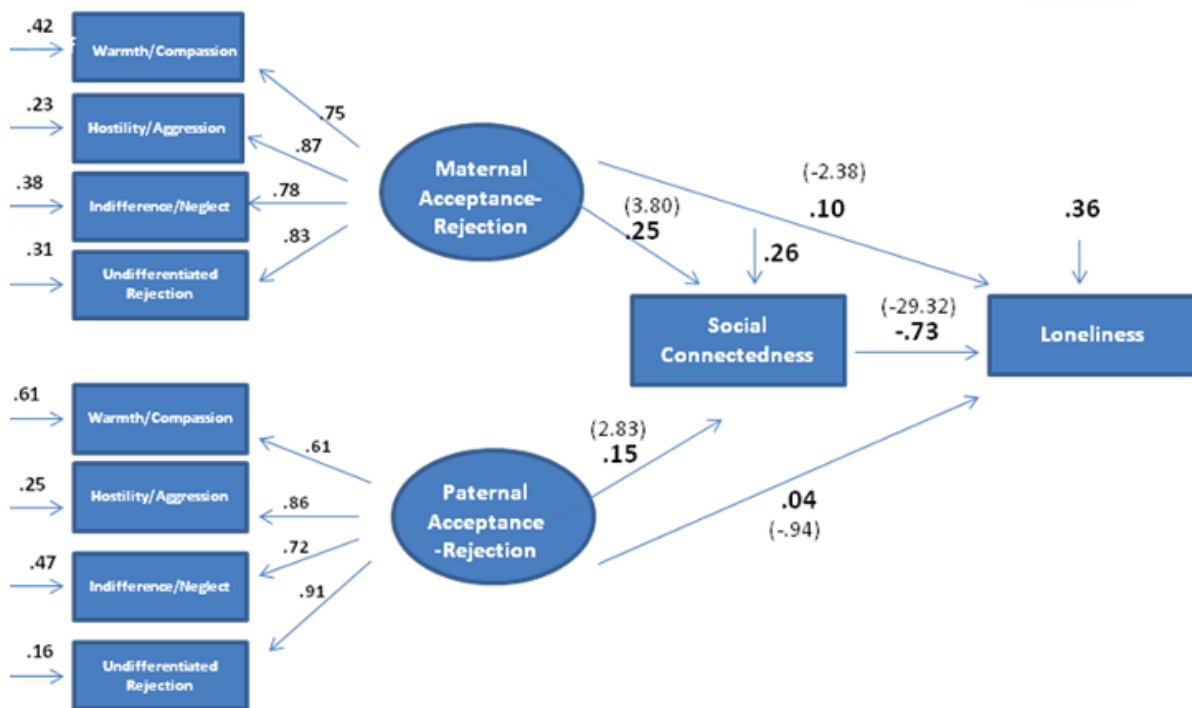


Figure 4. Path diagram regarding the mediating role of social connectedness in the relationship between perception of maternal acceptance/rejection, paternal acceptance/rejection and loneliness

As can be seen in Figure 4, maternal acceptance/rejection perception predicts loneliness directly at a significant level ($\beta = -.25, p < .01$); while paternal acceptance/rejection perception predicts social connectedness directly at a significant level ($\beta = -.15, p < .01$), social connectedness also predicts loneliness directly at a significant level ($\beta = -.73, p < .01$). It is seen that while the maternal acceptance/rejection perception's significant effect ($\beta = .29, p < .01$) which directly predicts loneliness shown in Figure 2 decreases when Figure 3 is examined but appears to remain significant ($\beta = .10, p < .01$). When the mediator variable, social connectedness is included in the model, it is observed that the effect of maternal acceptance/rejection perception on loneliness does not disappear but the effect decreases. In this case, it can be said that there is a partial mediating effect of social connectedness in the relationship between maternal acceptance/rejection perception and loneliness. On the other hand, the effect of paternal acceptance/rejection perception on loneliness stated in figure 2 ($\beta = .15, p < .01$) is seen to be disappeared by getting insignificance when the figure 3 is examined ($\beta = .04, p > .05$). In this case, it can be said that there is a full mediating effect of social connectedness in the relationship between paternal acceptance/rejection perception and loneliness. Model data compliance values are shown in Table 8, the *t*-values of the relationship between the variable in the model are shown in Table 9.

Table 8. Compliance Values of the Structural Model

Compliance Indices Examined	Perfect Compliance	Acceptable Compliance Indices	Compliance Indices Obtained	Result
χ^2/sd	$0 \leq \chi^2/sd \leq 2$	$\chi^2/sd \leq 4-5$	3.51	Acceptable Compliance
CFI	$CFI \geq .95$	$CFI \geq .90$	.97	Perfect Compliance
TLI	$TLI \geq .95$	$TLI \geq .90$	.95	Perfect Compliance
RMSEA	$.00 \leq RMSEA \leq .05$	$.00 \leq RMSEA \leq .08$	.06	Acceptable Compliance
SRMR	$.00 \leq SRMR \leq .08$	$.00 \leq SRMR \leq .10$	.05	Perfect Compliance

Table 8 shows, the ratio of chi-square value to degrees of freedom was found to be 3.51. The ratio of chi-square degrees of freedom below 5 indicates that the model has an acceptable level of fit (Meydan ve Şeşen,2015). Other fit indices were calculated as CFI = .97, TLI = .95 According to Kline(2005) these values indicate perfect compliance. Calculated as RMSEA= .07. Yen & Chin-Sen(2010) indicate that RMSEA below .08 is acceptable. The RMSEA value calculated accordingly has the acceptable compliance condition. Another goodness of fit value examined was found to be SRMR=.05. These calculated values indicate perfect compliance (Byrne, 1998).

Table 9. T-Values Table of the Relationship Between the Latent Variables in the Model Shown in Figure 4 and Observed Variable

Relationship between variables	β	t	p
maternal accep/reject. \rightarrow social connect	.25	3.80	.00
paternal accep/reject. \rightarrow social connect	.15	2.83	.00
maternal accep/reject. \rightarrow loneliness	.10	2.38	.00
paternal accep/reject \rightarrow loneliness	.04	.94	.34
social connect. \rightarrow loneliness	-.73	-29.32	.00

In table 9, maternal acceptance/rejection predicts social connectedness directly and significantly ($\beta = .25, p < .01$), and also paternal acceptance/rejection social connectedness directly and significantly ($\beta = .15, p < .01$). It is seen that the t -values obtained in the relations between the latent variables and observed variable are significant. When these values were examined; the t -value for the relationship between maternal acceptance/rejection and social connectedness was calculated as 3.80, paternal acceptance/rejection and social connectedness was calculated as 2.83. Maternal acceptance/rejection predicts loneliness directly and significantly ($\beta = .10, p < .01$), and also paternal acceptance/rejection loneliness directly and significantly ($\beta = .04, p > .05$). The t -value for the relationship between maternal acceptance/rejection and loneliness was calculated as 2.38, paternal acceptance/rejection and loneliness was calculated as .94 Social connectedness also predicts loneliness directly at a significant level ($\beta = -.73, p < .01$). The t -value for the relationship between social connectedness and loneliness was calculated as -29.32.

Table 10. Residual Variances for the Observed Variables in the Model Shown in Figure 4.

Variables	Residual Variances
Maternal acceptance/rejection	
Warmth/Compassion	.42
Hostility/Aggression	.23
Indifference/Neglect	.38
Undifferentiated Rejection	.31
Paternal acceptance/rejection	
Warmth/Compassion	.61
Hostility/Aggression	.25
Indifference/Neglect	.47
Undifferentiated Rejection	.16
Social Connected	.36
Loneliness	.26

Table 10 shows the variance amounts in the observed variables that cannot be explained by the factor. The values for error variances are between .16 and .61.

Conclusion and Discussion

The main purpose of this study is to determine the mediating role of social connectedness in the relationship between the loneliness and remembered parents' acceptance/rejection in childhood. In this section, the structural equation model analysis results are discussed.

In line with the main purpose of the study, the model proposed to explain theoretical loneliness was tested by the Structural Equation Model analysis. The findings show that the model has acceptable significance and the model is statistically confirmed.

According to the verified model; it is seen that the perception of parents' acceptance/rejection in childhood has an effect on loneliness of adults. PART is a theory that examines the possible consequences of parental acceptance and rejection on children's behavioural, cognitive and emotional development. The theory focuses mainly on the parent-child interaction, called the "warmth dimension of parenthood", namely the nature of the emotional bond between the parent and the child, and how the parent expresses him/her feelings towards the child. The warmth dimension, which is a component of the parent-child relationship, is an extension with acceptance on one end and rejection on the other. According to Rohner, what everyone experiences in their childhood relationship with their parents is somewhere between the two extremes of this extension. The positive (acceptance) and negative (rejection) feelings of parents towards their children may differ from culture to culture in terms of behavioural and symbolic indicators. However, as a result of intercultural comparison studies, it was found that all parents in the world showed their love (acceptance) or withholding it (rejection) in 4 basic ways. While the behaviours of parental acceptance are classified under a single heading; parental rejection is examined under three headings as hostility/aggression, indifference/neglect and undifferentiated rejection (Rohner, Khaleque and Cournoyer, 2005).

In general, the warmth dimension of parenting is related to the quality of the love bond between parents and their children and the physical and/or verbal behaviours that parents use to express these emotions. In other words; it is the child's experience of love, care, attention, compassion, support, warmth from his parents (Rohner, Khaleque and Cournoyer, 2005). As for that parental rejection; unlike parental acceptance, it expresses the absence of warmth and love feelings and behavioural indicators (Rohner, Khaluque and Cournoyer, 2005). Rohner (2004) states that the effect of childhood experiences lasts for a lifetime and childhood traces can be seen in adulthood. In this study, it is seen that the perceptions of the participants about the parental acceptance/rejection and memories of attention in childhood have a direct effect on their perception of loneliness in their young adult life. Although development periods, sample groups and research patterns differ in the international literature, the study conducted by Mekheber (2003) also found a high relationship between parental acceptance/rejection perception and loneliness. In the literature in our country, there is no study investigating the level of predicting loneliness of parental rejection in young adults. In the study conducted only by Eevli (2020) with adolescents, it is seen that loneliness, problematic internet use, rejection sensitivity, social anxiety, and emotional dysfunction variables predict the maternal rejection perception. It was also determined that loneliness more significantly predicted the perception of maternal rejection compared to the perception of paternal rejection.

In a study that indirectly supports the findings of the study, Avaz (2011) showed that 122 young women's, between the ages of 19 and 26, psychological adjustment and depression had a relationship with maternal rejection and paternal rejection.

Studies on parent-child relationships consistently show that perceived parental rejection typically has serious consequences for the psychological development and personality functions of children and adults. Rohner and Britner (2002) provided evidence of worldwide relationships between depression and depressive mood with parental acceptance-rejection; behavioural disorders, behavioural problems including externalization behaviours and guilt; and other mental health problems such as substance abuse.

According to the findings of this study, although the maternal acceptance/rejection level of predicting loneliness is higher than the acceptance/rejection of the father; it can be said that both maternal and paternal acceptance/rejection have a direct effect on loneliness. Parents have long been considered important figures in the development of children. Especially mothers are at the centre of basic theories about child development and are often involved in studies and interventions on child development and family life (Lamb, 1975). Weiss (1973) states that warmth, trust, feelings of love and continuity of these feelings in the relationship between mother and child form the basis of basic feelings of trust in the individual. He stated that if the needs of the child, which continues uninterruptedly during childhood, are not met consistently and properly, it may cause uncertainty

against others and hostile emotions and feelings of loneliness throughout life. Rohner (2005) also states that in a significant part of intercultural studies within the scope of the PART theory, maternal rejection is more effective in children than the perception of paternal rejection.

In both industrialized and developing countries, fathers often have much less time than mothers to have direct contact with their children or to be accessible (Craig, 2006; Craig & Mullan, 2011). Similarly, in our country, fathers are thought to have limited opportunities to show warmth, love and support to meet their children's development needs. Because fathers can be said to take more responsibility and take time to meet the economic needs of the family than the mothers. Therefore, fathers are generally thought to have much less time to establish direct relationships with their children than mothers. Paquette (2004) also argued that by proposing different models for father-child attachment and mother-child attachment, the father focused on around activating behaviour, the mother focused primarily on calming behaviour. Similarly, intercultural researchers have argued that fathers and mothers in many cultures should play different roles and adopt different parenting styles when interacting with their children (Shwalb et al., 2013; Roopnarine, 2015).

Another finding confirmed in the model; shows that social connectedness has a significant negative effect on loneliness. Individuals with a high level of connectedness can easily be with other people and identify with them, as well as they participate in social settings. On the other hand, according to Lee and Robbins (1998), individuals with a sense of alienation, loneliness and isolation see themselves outside of the social world around them. Despite their close family and supportive friends, they state that they have a lack of belonging in their lives. Likewise, according to Lee, Draper and Lee (2001), individuals who have a high sense of social connectedness can easily become integrated with their new environment, become more tolerant in their social relationships, respect interpersonal differences, bear and tolerate the exclusion in their lives to meet their belonging needs. It is thought that the high level of social connectedness of university students can facilitate their adaptation to their new environment.

In the study conducted by Sariçam and Deveci (2017), it was found that there is a negative relationship between loneliness and social connectedness which is defined as the subjective awareness of the individual in close relation to the social world.

On the other hand, in the model confirmed; it is seen that maternal and paternal acceptance/rejection predicts social connectedness negatively and significantly. Kohut (1977) conceptualizes social connectedness as the last step in the development of the sense of belonging and emphasizes that social connectedness is important in the transition process from adolescence to adulthood (Lee and Robbins, 1995; 1998).

It is known that the first social relationship started with the parents and the attitudes of the parents shaped the basis of the first sense of social belonging. Accordingly, this finding obtained from

the study; reveals the impact of childhood memories about the perception of maternal/paternal rejectionist attitude on social connectedness in adulthood.

Parent-child bonds in childhood, peer and group bonds in adolescence; by combining with the ties formed in adulthood, it enables the individual to develop a stable, integrated sense of social connectedness (Lee, Draper and Lee, 2001; Lee and Robbins, 1995; 1998). Social connectedness includes the subjective awareness of the individual's sense of themselves as a “meaningful part” of these relationships within the diversity of their social and emotional relationships (Lee and Robbins, 1998). While individuals with a high sense of social connectedness can participate more easily in new social environments, individuals with a low sense of social connectedness may not be able to manage their emotions and needs; may experience low self-respect, anxiety, depression and loneliness (Lee, Draper and Lee, 2001; Lee and Robbins, 1998).

When the mediator effect of social connectedness is examined, in the model; it appears that the mediating role of social connectedness is confirmed. When the findings, which are obtained before the intermediary variable was included to the model, were examined, it has seen that the perception of maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection directly predicted loneliness, and all the ways of the model were significant. Adler emphasizes that in order for the child to grow up with courage and towards the society and learn to build him/her life on constructive efforts, parents must support and give love to their child in order to gain the self-confidence and interference ability to their children. The child needs the support of him/her parents, who are the most important people around him/her, for healthy personality development. Adler also emphasized that the first five years of life and family relationships during this period have great importance in determining the characteristics of the child (Öztürk 1990, Geçtan 1995). When the findings, which are obtained after the social connectedness (mediator variable) was included in the model, were examined; It is seen that the relationship between maternal acceptance/rejection perception and loneliness remains significant, but the effect is reduced. This situation reveals the partial mediating role of social connectedness between maternal acceptance/rejection perception and loneliness. After the mediating variable is included in the model; it has seen that the relationship between the perception of paternal acceptance/rejection and loneliness becomes meaningless and its effect disappears. This indicates that social connectedness has a full mediating effect in the relationship between the perception of paternal acceptance/rejection and loneliness. When the findings obtained from the study are analyzed as a whole; the perception of paternal acceptance/rejection is related to loneliness over social connectedness; it can be said that the perception of maternal acceptance/rejection is partially related to loneliness through social connectedness.

Li and Meier (2017), in a compilation study that aims to explore and synthesize global publications which compare the impact of perceived paternal love and maternal love or paternal and

maternal acceptance on developmental outcomes; until the mid-70s, fathers appeared very rarely in child development. However, increasing women's participation in the labour market, diversification of family structures and changing gender roles in recent years have led to a deep restructuring of child-rearing practices and family life. The number of parents working in the family challenges the gender-based division of labour in the family and raises higher expectations for men to be a father. At the same time, the disintegration of marriages and increased rates of remarriages bring complexities for child-care arrangements and parent-child relationships. In addition, the relaxation of gender expectations for both genders encouraged new ideals such as "compassionate fathers" that challenging traditional sexist role prescriptions for fathers by emotionally linking to father-child relationships. As a result, over the past few decades, both developed and developing countries have witnessed the growing awareness of the role of the father in child development and the real increase in fathers' participation in child-rearing in many countries.

In most of the studies evaluating the mother-father-child relationship in the literature supporting the research findings, it was concluded that the paternal acceptance level, at which the behaviours of the mother and father affect the spiritual harmony of the adolescent separately, is at least as important as the maternal acceptance level (Rohner, 1986). Dollahite and Hawkins (1998) The Productive "paternity task" seeks to meet a wide range of developmental needs, including courage, sincerity, empathy and support in dealing with loneliness, confusion and anxiety in children. These perceptions and feelings of children towards family members later form the basis of their experiences regarding their interactions with the people around them (Hetherington, Parke, Guavin and Locke, 2006).

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study ,the following are recommendations made;

- It is recommended that psychological counseling and support units of universities plan activities, group work where students can experience a sense of social and emotional connectedness. These activities will decrease student's feeling of loneliness and increase their social connectedness.
- Psychological counselors and psychologists working at the university can include efforts to support the social connectedness of individuals in psychological assistance to students who have problems coping with loneliness.
- Mental health professionals working with adults can work to support social connectedness skills in reducing the loneliness perceived by individuals who cannot meet the need to feel warm from their parents. Because; the findings obtained from the research show that social connectedness has a mediating role in the relationship maternal acceptance/rejection, paternal acceptance/rejection and loneliness.

- Training activities aiming to raise awareness of the effect of perception of maternal acceptance/rejection, paternal acceptance/rejection can be carried out for parents. Findings obtained from the study reveal the effect of maternal acceptance/rejection, paternal acceptance/rejection perception on loneliness.
- The result of this study showed that there may be mediator variable in the effect of parental acceptance/rejection on loneliness. The mediator role of different variables (such as hope, life satisfaction, self-understanding, etc.) can be examined by researchers. It is thought that examining variables with mediating roles will provide useful data for experts; professionals working in the domain of psychology families, pedagogues and researchers.

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