

THE ROLE OF ATTACHMENT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES ON
ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP COMMITMENT OF EMERGING ADULTS:
INVESTMENT MODEL PERSPECTIVE

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ON ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP COMMITMENT OF EMERGING
ADULTS: INVESTMENT MODEL PERSPECTIVE**

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to investigate to what extent attachment and conflict resolution styles of Turkish emerging adults predict their romantic relationship commitment using Rusbult's Investment Model after gender, relationship duration, and student status are controlled. Data were collected from 610 emerging adults (329 women, 281 men), aged between 19-26 and who had a romantic relationship for at least one month via using the Relationship Stability Scale, the Conflict Resolution Styles in Romantic Relationship, the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised, and a demographic form. Using a quantitative correlational design, six-separate Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), a simultaneous multiple regression, and a hierarchical multiple regression analysis were performed for the study. Results showed that there was no difference between men and women in terms of their attachment styles, conflict resolution styles, and relationship commitment. Regarding student status, a statistically significant difference was found in quality of alternatives. Furthermore, the hierarchical multiple regression analysis revealed that non-student Turkish emerging adults with satisfying relationships, having a good deal of investment in relationships, fewer alternatives, showing less avoidance attachment, and having a positive conflict resolution style, have a greater level of romantic relationship

commitment. Results were discussed in light of the relevant literature. Recommendations for future research and implications were presented.

Keywords: Investment Model, commitment, attachment styles, conflict resolution styles, emerging adulthood.



ÖZ

BAĞLANMA VE ÇATIŞMA ÇÖZME STİLLERİNİN BELİREN YETİŞKİNLERİN ROMANTİK İLİŞKİ BAĞLANIMINDAKİ ROLÜ: YATIRIM MODELİ YAKLAŞIMI

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Bu araştırmanın amacı, Türk beliren yetişkinlerin bağlanma ve çatışma çözme stillerinin, cinsiyet, ilişki süresi ve öğrencilik statüsü kontrol edildikten sonra Rusbult'un Yatırım Modeli doğrultusunda romantik ilişki bağlanımlarını ne ölçüde yordadığını araştırmaktır. Veriler, 19-26 yaş arası, en az bir aydır romantik ilişkisi olan, 610 beliren yetişkinden (329 Kadın, 281 Erkek) İlişki İstikrarı Ölçeği, Romantik İlişkilerde Çatışma Çözüm Stilleri, Yakın İlişkilerde Yaşantılar Envanteri-II ve demografik form kullanarak toplanmıştır. Çalışmada nicel korelasyon deseni kullanılarak, altı ayrı Çok Değişkenli Varyans Analizi (MANOVA), bir çoklu regresyon ve bir hiyerarşik çoklu regresyon analizi uygulanmıştır. Bulgular, bağlanma stilleri, çatışma çözme stilleri ve ilişki bağlanımları açısından kadın ve erkekler arasında bir fark olmadığını göstermiştir. Öğrencilik durumuna göre, seçeneklerin niteliğinde istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark bulunmuştur. Ayrıca, hiyerarşik çoklu regresyon analizi bulguları öğrenci olmayan, ilişki doyumu yüksek, ilişki yatırımı daha fazla, seçeneklerinin niteliği daha az, pozitif çatışma stilini daha fazla kullanan ve daha az kaçınmacı bağlanma stili olan beliren yetişkinlerin romantik ilişki bağlanımlarının daha yüksek olduğunu göstermiştir. Bulgular ilgili literatür ışığında tartışılmıştır. Gelecek araştırmalar ve uygulamalar için öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yatırım Modeli, bağlanım, bağlanma stilleri, çatışma çözme stilleri, beliren yetişkinlik.





To my dreams

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Given the fact that satisfying romantic relationships impact a significant role in improving psychological well-being (Proulx, Helms, & Buehler, 2007), physical well-being (Burman & Margolin, 1992; Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001; Robles, 2014), and quality of life (Khaleque, 2004), romantic relationships have been questioned from various perspectives. Considering the effect of romantic relationships, with the increased rate of divorce, break-ups before marriage, several research studies have been done about maintaining and termination of close relationships (Le & Agnew, 2003). Moreover, the interest in romantic relationships has increased in the last decades due to the fact that people seek therapy and counseling in their major life events, depression, and anxiety. Those problems' main patterns are divorces, break-ups, that is mostly related to romantic relationships (Doss, Simpson, & Christensen, 2004).

Romantic relationships are important for all life stages; however, in emerging adulthood, they are developmental goals (Erickson, 1968; Rosenthal, Gurney, & Moore, 1981; Arnett, 2000). For emerging adults, a romantic relationship is not only sexual and emotional intimacy but also a way of discovering values, beliefs, preferences, and productivity. Initiating a romantic relationship and maintaining it are the most significant ways to establish a healthy identity for emerging adults (Arnett, 2000).

Emerging adulthood is a transition period between adolescence and adulthood. The determinant roles of adulthood have changed as the age of having a child/marriage, completion, and length of education have shifted from the beginning of the twenties to the late twenties, which caused young people not to show or start to display adulthood characteristics until their mid or late of twenties (Arnett, 2000). Arnett stated (2000) emerging adulthood covers the ages of 18-25. However, in many countries, studies showed different age periods as emerging adulthood happens at 25-27 in Argentina (Facio & Micocci, 2003), 20-24 in Israel (Mayseless & Scharf 2003), and 19-26 in Turkey (Atak & Çok, 2010).

Emerging adulthood years are the times that individuals are still dependent and are not aware of their responsibilities, in other words, they both have mixed characteristics of adolescence and adulthood. Therefore, emerging adulthood cannot be considered apart from other developmental stages because the characteristics of that stage have an association with previous and next stages. In this stage, individuals form their identity which has started in adolescence by making decisions and trials, and unlike in adolescence, the length of romantic relationships increases in emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2004). In other words, individuals from that period make decisions about love, work, and worldview affecting their lives, which started in adolescent years. Emerging adults start to involve in cognitive, social, and emotional changes caused by romantic relationships which play a significant role in establishing an individual's identity and character. Those romantic relationships also ease people to adapt to a new life they would face (Furjman & Schaffer, 2003).

Acknowledging that romantic relationships have tremendous effects on individuals' lives, one of the well-known models that explain intimate relationships' state is Rusbult's Investment Model (Rusbult, Marts, & Agnew, 1998). Questioning why some relationships last and some do not, according to Rusbult and Buunk (1993), the commitment level is defined as the intent to persist in a relationship, including long-term orientation toward the involvement as well as feelings of psychological attachment like a sense of we-ness. Commitment is the psychological construct that directly influences everyday behavior in relationships, including decisions to persist, that is, commitment mediates the effects on persistence of the three bases of

dependence which are satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew 1998). According to Rusbult and Buunk (1993), commitment in the romantic relationship explains one's desire to stay in the relationship and maintaining supportive behaviors for the relationship such as positive interpretations (Morry & Sucharyna, 2016), relationship persistence, willingness to sacrifice (Etcheverry & Le, 2005), derogation of alternatives (Rodrigues, Lopes, & Kumashiro, 2017), and less violence (Stanley, Whitton, & Markman 2004). Commitment level affects the behaviors shown by partners influencing the intention and orientation of the relationship (Regan, 2011).

Acknowledging how commitment reflects the desire to be in the relationships, commitment is used to examine the relationship within theories and models. In this research, the commitment of romantic relationships was investigated through the Investment Model. In the investment model, commitment is predicted by its components: satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment. Relatively, the model states that people who are committed in their relationship are also high in satisfaction, investment, and low in quality of alternatives or vice versa (Rusbult et al., 1998).

According to the literature, individuals with different demographic qualities may show different romantic relationship commitment to their partners. Previous studies indicated that women show more commitment in relationships than men (Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; Rusbult, Onizuka & Lipkus, 1993; Sacher & Fine, 1996). Additionally, findings showed that the longer the relationship is, the more committed partners are (Rusbult 1983; Bui, Peplau, & Hill, 1996; Rhoades, Stanley, & Markman, 2010). Several studies regarding romantic relationship commitment have been conducted with married couples (Impett, Beals & Peplau, 2001; Butzer, & Campbell, 2008; Akbalık-Doğan, 2010) and college students (Hatchter, Kryter, Prus, & Fitzgerald, 1992; Büyükşahin, & Hovardaoğlu, 2007; Toplu-Demirtaş, Hatipoğlu Sümer, & White, 2013). Considering that romantic relationships are developmental goals for emerging adulthood, premarital relationships and student or non-student individuals should be covered in the studies

since emerging adults might continue their education and postpone marriage (Arnett, 2000).

Although the intention to maintain the relationship can be explained by commitment, Morgan and Shaver (1999) stated that people also show behavioral patterns to attach to their relationships unintentionally. According to the attachment theory, the closeness and contact with the caregiver as an infant predicts “lasting psychological connectedness between human beings” (Bowlby, 1969, p. 164), meaning that, the relationship between infant and caregiver further influences behavioral responses in the relationships including intimate relationships. The intimacy between partners similarly meets the needs for proximity, security, and shelter as caregivers supply for the infant (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). “Since the goal of attachment behavior is to maintain an affective bond, any situation that seems to be endangering the bond elicits action designed to preserve it; and the greater the danger of loss appears to be the more intense and varied are the actions elicited to prevent it.” (Bowlby, 1980, p. 80). As Bowlby (1980) stated, not only how partners act to each other should be considered, but also how they react to particular events in the relationships like conflicts need to be investigated. Since attachment theory states that the relationship between infant and caregiver affects how people behave in their relationships and being committed to the relationship influences the attempts for the relationship to maintain, both determines how individuals perceive the conflict: either as an opportunity or a threat that affect how partners resolve the conflict (Pietromonaco, Greenwood, & Barrett, 2004).

There is a conflict when individuals prevent one another’s goal to reach (Folger, Poole, & Stutman, 2017). Conflicts are identified as disharmony, and disagreement is an unavoidable part of intimate relationships since there is a constant interaction (Rahim, 1983). Having a conflict in the relationship lets attachment processes reveal certain behaviors like withdrawal, acceptance, apology, rejection, and it is a chance to grow or is a threat to the relationship. Therefore, it is important to manage the conflict appropriately, not always meaning dissolve the disagreement, rather handling the conflicting situation well (Gottman, 1993).

All in all, in emerging adulthood, romantic relationships are the tool for self-development in which individuals build their own identity by experiencing intimacy. Considering romantic relationships are the main developmental goal of emerging adulthood, it is significant to investigate what makes a relationship stable and fulfilling. According to Rusbult et al. (1993), commitment in the relationship, one of the most known terms for explaining the maintenance of the relationship, is the intention to be willing to sustain the relationship, meaning that, commitment shows whether the relationship is desirable to persist. There are many criteria affecting romantic relationships' commitment including gender differences, student status, length of the relationship, satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives. Therefore, those criteria should be controlled while interpreting the commitment of the relationship.

Although commitment defines how the relationship is perceived by partners, in other words, it reveals the stability of the relationship, how partners behave in the relationship also affects commitment. Earlier studies regarding romantic relationships showed that partner's attachment styles people brought from their relationship with caregivers as infants have an impact on their relationship (Morgan & Shaver, 1999). Attachment behaviors are activated when there is a threat to individuals like conflicts in their relationships. That's why, how partners handle the conflicts happening in the relationship influences romantic relationship quality and commitment that influenced by the attachment styles (Lloyd, 1987).

Taking romantic relationships into account in emerging adulthood, attachment and conflict resolution styles affect how individuals behave and perceive the relationship which further influences the stability of the relationship. Therefore, this study aims to investigate whether attachment and conflict resolution styles with unique contributions of satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment predict dating relationship commitment in emerging adulthood after controlling for gender, student status, and relationship duration.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine Turkish emerging adults' romantic relationship commitment through Rusbult's Investment Model. For this aim, the relationships among commitment, attachment, and conflict resolution styles were investigated by considering commitment components (satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment) after controlling for demographic and relational variables such as gender, student status, and relationship duration.

The prediction of satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment on commitment was checked before the main analyses were conducted to validate Investment Model promises for the sample of this study. The differences between investment model components, attachment, and conflict resolution styles with regard to gender and student status were also checked.

1.3. Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions of the current study are listed below:

- a) Is there a significant difference between Investment Model components (satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment), conflict resolution styles, and attachment styles in terms of gender on Turkish emerging adults?
- b) Is there a significant difference between Investment Model components (satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment), conflict resolution styles, and attachment styles in terms of student status on Turkish emerging adults?
- c) Do Turkish emerging adults' romantic relationship satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment predict their commitment as the Investment Model states?
- d) To what extent do attachment and conflict resolution styles of Turkish emerging adults predict their romantic relationship commitment with unique

contributions of satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives after controlling for gender, being student, and relationship duration?

Hypotheses for each research question are as follows:

- H1) Men and women will significantly differ in Investment model components (i.e., satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment), conflict resolution, and attachment styles.
- H2) Being student and nonstudent will significantly differ in Investment model components (i.e., satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment), conflict resolution, and attachment styles.
- H3) Romantic relationship satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment will significantly predict the commitment of Turkish emerging adults.
- H4) Attachment and conflict resolution styles of Turkish emerging adults will significantly predict the romantic relationship commitment with unique contributions of satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives after controlling for gender, student status, and relationship duration.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The study aimed to investigate the romantic relationship commitment by using Rusbult's Investment Model through attachment and conflict resolution styles in emerging adulthood.

The theoretical approach of the study which is considering romantic relationships via commitment through attachment and conflict resolution styles represents the uniqueness of the research. Several studies have been conducted to understand romantic relationships through attachment (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Hepper & Carnelley, 2014; Simpson, 1990; Simpson & Steven Rholes, 2017), conflict resolution styles (Delatorre & Wagner, 2019; Overall & McNulty, 2016; Sanderson & Karetzky, 2002), and investment model (Campbell & Foster, 2002; Impett, Beals & Peplau, 2001; Choice & Lamke, 1999; Duffy & Rusbult, 1986) as with Turkish sample (Terzi İlhan & Işık, 2017; Büyüksahin, 2006; Dedekorkut, 2015; Bilecen, 2007; Taluy, 2003). There are several studies that investment model

components were mostly associated with attachment styles (Mikulincer & Erev, 1991; Pistole, Clark, & Tubbs, 1995; Shaver & Brennan, 1992; Etcheverry, Le, Wu, & Wei, 2012), and conflict resolution styles were studied along with attachment styles (Shi, 2003; Pistole, 1989; Rinehart, 1993; Bonache, Gonzalez-Mendez, & Krahé, 2019). Considering these interactions, the present study combines these three models and approaches of romantic relationships via investment model with examining the effects of attachment and conflict resolution styles together on predicting commitment after controlling different variables.

Romantic relationships are mostly studied from the satisfaction perspective considering it as an overall evaluation of the relationship (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Dyrenforth, Kashy, Donnellan, & Lucas, 2010; Erol & Orth, 2013; Hudson & Fraley, 2014; Cann, Norman, Welbourne & Calhoun, 2008; Cramer, 2000). However, one could persist to stay in the relationship although the relationship is not satisfying (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). In the present study, the relationship was considered via the commitment of Rusbult's Investment Model which was stated as commitment is one of the comprehensive models for understanding relationships by Regan (2011). According to the Investment Model, satisfaction is not the only evaluation of the relationship, yet it is one of the components of the general evaluation of the relationship. Satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives together predict the relationship commitment which is the desire to continue in the relationship (Rusbult, 1980). Therefore, the study contributes to romantic relationship literature using the commitment of the Investment Model.

The Investment Model was used several times in the studies about romantic relationships, however, this study extends the literature by including emerging adults as the sample. Since romantic relationships are the main developmental goal of the emerging adulthood period (Arnett, 2000), this particular stage was considered in the study. The study would also present data for Turkish emerging adults in terms of their romantic relationship commitment, attachment, and conflict resolution styles in the relationship. Furthermore, most of the research studies related to the close relationship focus on marital relationships (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Dyrenforth, Kashy, Donnellan & Lucas, 2010; Diamond, Brimhall & Elliott, 2018; Shah, Bihari, &

Munshi, 2018) or conducted with undergraduate students (Hatcher, Kryter, Prus, & Fitzgerald, 1992; Rusbult, 1980; Butler & Goodfriend, 2015; Anlatan, 2019). Since the average age of entering marriage for men is 27,9 and 25 for women in Turkey (TÜİK, 2020) which represents the late years of the emerging adulthood period of Turkey (Atak & Çok, 2010), in this study, dating relationships were taken into consideration through emerging adulthood to comprehend the literature related to the dating relationships of emerging adulthood period in Turkey. Moreover, considering emerging adults might continue to their education in their twenties with post-graduate studies, student status was added as a variable to the study. By including student status as a variable in the study, the difference between students and not students would be revealed in terms of commitment, attachment, and conflict resolution styles.

In addition, the study would also benefit counseling practices. Taking into account that romantic intimacy is developmental goal for emerging adults (Arnett, 2000), one of the main reasons why people get help from mental health professionals is issues related to romantic relationships (Creasey, Kershaw, & Boston, 1999). The findings of the study would give insight into relationship dynamics to develop more committed, satisfied, invested relationships. Acknowledging that conflict resolution and attachment styles could predict further relationship commitment, the results would benefit counseling professions to develop more committed relationships by analyzing attachment behaviors, needs, and conflict resolution attributes. Commitment, attachment, and conflict resolution styles shape partners' behaviors and interpretations affecting people's well-being (Proulx, Helms, & Buehler, 2007; Burman & Margolin, 1992; Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001; Robles, 2014) and relationships' dynamics (Rusbult, 1980; Bray & Jouriles, 1995; Gottman & Levenson, 1992). Therefore, investigating the underlying relationship among those variables would provide a significant contribution for counselors, especially for those who are working with couples or relationship-related issues to understand behavior patterns, attachment needs, and perspectives on the relationship of partners.

Studies showed that pre-marriage or relationship skill programs could improve the quality and maintenance of the relationships (Dion, 2005; Hawkins, Blanchard, Baldwin, & Fawcett, 2008), the study would contribute to the programs by including

attachment and conflict resolution effects on commitment. Attaining each other's attachment needs and conflict resolution styles in those programs would benefit partners to develop more commitment in their relationships and to understand partners' behaviors in the relationship.

1.5. Description of Key Terms

This section introduces the definitions of the study variables.

Satisfaction refers to the evaluation of events experienced as positive versus negative in a relationship. It is affected by what extent the partner meets the individual's needs. (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998).

Quality of alternatives refers to "the perceived desirability of the best available alternative to a relationship. Quality of alternatives is based on the extent to which the individual's most important needs could effectively be fulfilled 'outside' of the current relationship" (Rusbult et al., 1998, pp. 359).

Investment is what individuals sacrifice, put onto their relationships including material, psychological, emotional sources which would be lost if the relationship terminates (Rusbult et al., 1998).

Commitment refers to what extent an individual wants to stay in the relationship and to have intentions to maintain the involvement for the relationship (Rusbult et al., 1998).

Attachment style is relational behavior patterns of individuals gathered from the infant-caregiver relationships and lasting throughout their lives. Anxious attachment refers to "the extent to which individuals worry that relationship partners might not be available or could abandon them, and avoidant attachment is the extent to which individuals desire limited intimacy and prefer to remain psychologically and emotionally independent" (Simpson, Rholes, Orina, & Girch, 2002, pp. 598).

Conflict resolution styles are how individuals behave and handle the conflict in terms of behaviors, emotions, and attitudes. Positive conflict resolution style refers to

whether individuals choose a constructive and effective way to handle the conflicts. Negative conflict resolution style is the destructive and aggressive ways of handling conflict handling. Subordination refers to the extent to which individuals are acquiescent and put their partner's needs primarily. Retreat refers to ignoring conflicts or showing minimum interest to them (Özen, Salman-Engin, & Sakallı-Uğurlu, 2016).



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the literature of related study variables which are The Investment Model, Attachment Theory, and Conflict Resolution were investigated in three main sections. In each section, background theories/models and relevant research findings were given.

2.1. Investment Model

The Investment Model has originated from The Interdependence Theory of Thibaut and Kelley (1959) and was developed by Rusbult (1980). Interdependence Theory is emerged from social exchange theory and explains that the structure and process of mutual dependence in the relationship make individuals maintain the relationship. Interdependence is partners' attitudes and behaviors influenced by each other's experiences on motives, preferences, and actions (Rusbult & Arriaga, 1997). It focuses on the interaction between partners and partners cannot be considered without this mutuality (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). As partners influence each other via this interaction, they influence both their own and their partner's perception of the relationship, that is, it has impacts on both current and future of the relationship (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). In other words, partners cannot be considered apart from each other as they share emotions, behaviors, and thoughts, and as they both influence their relationship state (Regan, 2011).

Partners get positive or negative outcomes from interactions. Positive outcomes reflect rewards such as pleasure, joy, and happiness whereas negative outcomes represent

costs like anxiety, disagreement, and disappointment (Impett, Beals, & Peplau, 2001). Those outcomes influence individuals' personal assessment of the relationship. As in the social exchange theory, this assessment is the ratio of rewards to costs. The more rewards there are in the relationship, the more individuals would show to stay in the relationship (Rusbult & Arriaga, 1997). However, individuals may want to maintain the relationship even though they do not have enough rewards as they expected. Interdependence theory explains this controversy via two criteria evaluating the relationship which are comparison level and comparison level for alternatives (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959).

Comparison level determines how individuals perceive rewards and costs in the relationship from their partners (Chadwick-Jones, 1976). If the rewards are more than costs and more than expected, the relationship is qualified as satisfactory, and if the costs are more than rewards and more than expected, the relationship is considered unsatisfactory (Le & Agnew, 2003). On the other side, the comparison level for alternatives can be identified as that evaluation of to what extent individuals can get rewards outside the relationship. Individuals show a tendency to stay in the relationship if they have more rewards in their own relationship than another possible person would provide. Likewise, if partners assume that they might have more rewards outside of the relationship, they tend to terminate or change the relationship (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959).

The comparison level is the standard to evaluate whether the relationship is satisfying or attractive, and the comparison level for alternatives is the standard to evaluate whether the relationship is worthy to depend on to maintain or terminate. In other words, the comparison level deals with satisfaction whereas the comparison level for alternatives is related to dependence. Therefore, even though people without satisfying relationships might continue to their relationship, they might not find another alternative to have more rewards (Regan, 2011). There are several research studies supporting the fact that individuals with having a high rewarding relationship and high satisfaction which means low comparison level, and with not having a better

alternative live in a more dependent and stable relationship (Rusbult, Johnson, & Morrow, 1986; Bui, Peplau, & Hill, 1996; Regan, 2011).

All in all, interdependence theory focuses on the interaction in the relationship and its reward-cost balance which affects relationships' stability. People are eager to have high rewarding relationships with low costs. While evaluating rewards and costs, individuals use comparison level and comparison level for alternatives dealing with satisfaction and dependence, respectively. Relationships with satisfaction and no better alternatives would last longer or vice versa (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959).

According to Rusbult (1983), the interdependence theory is not enough to explain why some relationships last and some do not. People may persist to stay in a dissatisfying relationship although they have better alternatives to have more rewards, or people may end their relationships even though they are satisfied. In other words, satisfaction and alternatives cannot be the only evaluation criteria for partners to maintain the relationship. Therefore, Rusbult (1980) stated that to comprehend why dissatisfied people stay in the relationship and satisfied people terminate their relationship, other variables should be taken into account, which let investment model emerge.

As in interdependence theory, investment model evaluates satisfaction and comparison level separately to reveal the rationale behind maintaining or terminating the relationship. However, the investment model uses the term commitment instead of dependence, and quality of alternatives in place of the comparison level for alternatives. In the investment model, the comparison level is used to explain satisfaction, and dependence is explained by comparison level for alternatives, and the model states that the investment size in the relationship is also a determinant to reveal relationship stability (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). Dependence is identified as the basis of the relationship whereas commitment is the result of increased dependence. As mentioned, dependence is the belief that relational needs could be met in the relationship. The more increase in dependence in the relationship, the stronger the commitment is developed between partners (Rusbult & Van Lange, 1996). Commitment is a psychological construct related to the maintenance of the relationship and affects behaviors shown in the relationship directly. In short, while dependence is

a descriptive and structural state of the relationship that provided by the needs met on the relationship (Le & Agnew, 2003), commitment is an individual experience and psychological reflection of dependence (Agnew, Van Lange, Rusbult, & Langston, 1998).

The Investment Model claims that in the relationships with interdependence, commitment is present, and it has three determinants as satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment. The model is based on these three components (Rusbult & Van Lange, 1996). Commitment is the tendency and desire to persist in the relationship which influences an individual's determination of staying or leaving the relationship (Rusbult, 1980; Rusbult, 1983). Several studies showed that commitment is a significant predictor of the maintenance of relationships (Etcheverry & Le, 2005; Etcheverry, Le, Wu, & Wei, 2012).

Satisfaction in a romantic relationship is both the ratio of experiencing the relationship as pleasurable to sustain and meeting the expectations from the relationship in the required manner (Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster, & Agnew, 1999). The needs that could be met in the relationships could be intimacy, sexuality, security, belongingness (Greene & Britton, 2015). In other words, it is the interpretation of rewards and costs, like closeness and sexuality needs met in the relationship, as desirable and positive (Rusbult et al., 1998). When rewards are high, expectations are met and costs are low, it is expected to have a satisfying relationship. The more satisfaction the relationship is, the more commitment it brings (Rusbult & Martz, 1995). Research studies have indicated that satisfaction is a significant predictor of relationship commitment (Etcheverry et al., 2012; Rodrigues, Lopes, & Kumashiro, 2017). Nevertheless, individuals in unsatisfied relationships might prefer to stay in the relationship or satisfied partners may show lower commitment since satisfaction is not the only determinant of commitment (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986).

Quality of alternatives is about evaluating possible options outside the relationship. The best alternative is who gives the needed rewards and lowest costs. If individuals assume that they would gather more rewards with an attractive alternative, they might go towards that option and terminate their relationships. In contrast, if quality of

alternatives is evaluated as negative, the commitment would increase (Rusbult & Martz, 1995). Nonetheless, even in case of absence of a more rewarding alternative, individuals may persist in the relationship even though they are not satisfied. Attractive alternatives may not be only another possible partner but also could be being alone, with friends and relatives (Le & Agnew, 2003). In other words, if individuals with dissatisfied relationships consider spending time alone would be a better alternative, their commitment to their relationship would be lower than others. In addition, people may have low commitment although they are satisfied with their relationship who think there is a more attractive alternative. In short, the absence of attractive alternatives leads to greater commitment (Rusbult, 1980; Rusbult, 1983).

Investment is about the magnitude of how much spent time, emotional communion, and moments shared in the relationship. Investments are the number and significance of the psychological (time, energy, effort, trust) and material (goods, children, money) things that are tied to the relationship, that would be lost when the relationship terminates (Rusbult & Martz, 1995). Intrinsic and extrinsic investments increase the commitment level. Intrinsic investment sources could be emotional effort, time, self-disclosure whereas extrinsic investment sources may be mutual friends, moments shared, tangible properties, and things related to the relationship like activities, objects, incidents, or people. As couples grow, they invest more in their relationships (Rusbult & Van Lange, 1996). Those investments both can have rewards and costs for partners. When the relationship terminates, partners have to abandon all those investments. Therefore, all the lost and decreased sources when the relationship ends are counted as investment. The price of losing those investments is related to relationship commitment. The more price they would feel they would pay after termination, the more committed they become (Le & Agnew, 2003). One of the reasons why individuals cannot end their relationship even though they would prefer to terminate is explained by the investment size on the relationship via the Investment Model. This type of commitment is named nonvoluntary dependence by Rusbult (1983).

Considering satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment together, they all compromise the relationship commitment. The basic statement of the investment

model is that commitment is composed of the addition of satisfaction and investment, and the subscription of quality of alternatives. In other words, individuals with highly satisfied, fewer alternatives, more investment would have committed relationships. Satisfaction and investment are positively related to commitment, yet the quality of alternatives is negatively associated (Rusbult, Zembrodt & Gunn, 1982). Still, positive and negative aspects should be considered to interpret relationship commitment since it is not the only positive factors that determine the persistence of the relationship, rather negative contributor might make individuals as they are trapped in the relationship (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). In addition, Rusbult stated (1983) that even though satisfaction decreases in some partners, individuals might persist to be in the relationship and increase their investment size. Rusbult explains this by an economical term sunk cost when quality of alternatives was perceived as low. The sunk cost is investing more to the same false construct with the expectation for profit. In other words, although the relationship was considered unsatisfying, individuals would invest more with the expectation to gain benefit miserably. In case one of the partners ends the relationship, the partner who wants to continue in the relationship maintains investing and committing. Compared to those who leave the relationship willingly, the commitment level was found more in the left partners (Drigotas & Rusbult, 1992).

To test her assumptions, Rusbult conducted two following research studies. In the former study (1980), the effect of satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment on commitment was investigated with 171 college students. Relationship costs, alternative level, and investment were interpreted as high and low, and the role of them on satisfaction and commitment were checked. According to the results, having low costs was significantly related to higher satisfaction in the relationship. The magnitude of investment increased commitment while alternative level decreased commitment. Both rewards and costs significantly predicted satisfaction. It was found that in case of an increase in rewards, investment, and decrease in quality of alternatives, the commitment level increased. These results showed that Rusbult found strong evidence for the Investment Model predicting relationship commitment.

In the second study by Rusbult (1983), a longitudinal study for seven months was designed with 111 college students. When those who continued in their relationships compared with those who left, it was stated that rewards, satisfaction, investment, and commitment increased over time, and quality of alternatives decreased or vice versa for those who left the relationship. Likewise, Arriaga and Agnew (2001) found in their study with 47 college students that those who terminated their relationships had lower commitment compared to those who stayed in the relationship in the four months duration.

Additional to Rusbult's initial studies to test the investment model, several research studies have been conducted with different groups and with other relationships rather than intimate. The model was tested with violent relationships (Choice & Lamke, 1999; Rhatigan & Axsom, 2006; Rusbult & Martz, 1995; Rhatigan, Moore, & Stuart, 2005; Rhatigan, Shorey, & Nathanson, 2011; Rhatigan & Street, 2005), homosexual couples (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986; Kurdek, 1995), between friends (Hirofumi, 2003; Lin & Rusbult, 1995; Rusbult, 1980; Branje, Frijns, Finkenauer, Engels, & Meeus, 2007; VanderDrift, Lehmler, & Kelly, 2012), different ethnic groups (Davis & Strube, 1993; Sanderson & Kurdek, 1993), organizational commitment (Farrell & Rusbult, 1981; Oliver, 1990), graduate student commitment (Geyer, Brannon, & Shearon, 1987), sport-related supporter commitment (Raedeke, 1997; Schmidt & Stein, 1991, Williams, 2013), and all resulted in the proposition that satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives predict commitment in which satisfaction and investment have a positive effect while quality of alternatives has negative.

Le and Agnew (2003) evaluated investment model's performance with a meta-analysis in which data were collected from several studies conducted until 1999. In the analysis, fifty-two different studies were benefited with more than ten thousand individuals. According to results, all three components of commitment, namely satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment, were found to be significantly and greatly related to commitment. The relationship between satisfaction and commitment was the strongest ($r = .68$), and quality of alternatives and investment similarly had the same

magnitude of relationship with commitment, ($r = -.48, .46$, respectively). The analysis also revealed that the relationships among each construct were significant.

Another current meta-analysis for Investment Model was conducted by Tran, Judge, and Kashima in 2019. Data were collected from 202 studies made between 1980 and 2016 with a total of 50,427 participants. Again, satisfaction showed the strongest relationship with the commitment, followed by investment and then quality of alternatives. All constructs of commitment were found to be in a relationship with each other. Investment was found to increase as participants aged and relationship duration increased.

In the studies related to the investment model, one of the most concerned variables is gender. Several studies indicated that females had greater satisfying (Kızılkaya, 2018; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; Sacher & Fine, 1996) and committed relationships (Baker, McNulty, Vanderdrift, 2017; Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; Sacher & Fine, 1996; West, 2013) and invested more (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986; Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999; Katz, Kuffle, & Brown, 2006; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; Sprecher, 1988) in their relationships compared to males. On the contrary, males had greater amount of quality of alternatives (Baker, McNulty, Vanderdrift, 2017; Emmers-Sommer, Warber, & Halford, 2010; Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999; Floyd & Wasner, 1994; Hasta & Büyüksahin, 2006; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; West, 2013). Males were eager to stay in the relationship in case of high commitment whereas females persist in the relationship even with moderate commitment (Lydon, Meana, Sepinwall, Richards & Mayman, 1999).

The Investment Model was tested with Turkish sample several times. The Investment Model Scale adapted to Turkish sample by Büyüksahin, Hasta, and Hovardaoğlu (2005). 325 individuals aged between 18-31, who have had romantic relationships participated in the study. Results showed that men and women differed only in quality of alternatives. Males indicated more tendency to another alternative, in other words, females had a lower degree of quality of alternatives. In addition to the first study by Büyüksahin, another study was conducted by Büyüksahin (2006) with 271 participants. Similar to previous findings, satisfaction and investment found positive

predictors for commitment whereas quality of alternatives had a negative effect on commitment. In addition, results revealed that dating relationships had lower satisfaction and investment than married and engaged partners but higher in quality of alternatives, similar to the findings of Bilecen (2007) and Dedekorkut (2015). Women scored less in terms of quality of alternatives but higher in commitment compared to men. In her study with 316 participants, Taluy (2003) found that women have greater investment and lower quality of alternative scores than men. Differently, men invested more in their relationships, according to the findings of Aslan-Dölen (2014) with 379 college students. Differently, Anlatan (2019) and Öztekin (2016) reported that university students did not differ in their satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment in terms of gender.

Additionally, the investment model was studied through attachment styles. In Pistole, Clark and Tubbs' study (1995) with 239 participants aged between 17-50, the association between attachment styles and investment model was considered. The results showed that individuals with secure attachment styles had more satisfaction and commitment in their relationships than other attachment styles. Avoidant attachment style was related to lower investment and anxious/ambivalent attachment style showed more cost.

A longitudinal study of investment model and attachment styles of 354 dating couples by Kirkpatrick and Davis (1994) revealed that anxious and avoidant attachment styled participants chose their partners from a different attachment style of their owns. Expectedly, securely attached individuals showed higher satisfaction, commitment, viability, and intimacy than avoidant and anxious attachment styles. Partners of avoidant males and anxious females showed commitment and satisfaction as secure attachments.

Etcheverry, Le, Wu, and Wei (2013) conducted a research with 334 college students to reveal whether anxiety and avoidance attachment styles predict romantic relationship commitment using unique contributions of investment model variables. Results indicated that attachment styles significantly predicted investment model variables, namely, satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives. Avoidance

attachment was found as a predictor of commitment with unique contributions of satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives while anxiety attachment significantly predicted commitment by mediators of satisfaction and investment.

All in all, the investment model examines one's desire to stay in the relationship by commitment which is predicted by satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment. The model explains the reasons why people persist in the relationships by to what extent the relationship is perceived as pleasurable (satisfaction), whether there is a better alternative than the partner (quality of alternatives), and to what extent partners contributed to the relationship (investment) (Rusbult, Agnew, & Arriaga, 2012). Several studies proved that the investment model is effective to interpret the status of the relationship (e.g., Baker, McNulty, & VanderDrift, 2017). Therefore, the investment model was utilized to assess romantic relationships in this study. In addition, several studies showed that there are factors influencing one's commitment in the relationships such as gender (Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; Rusbult, Onizuka & Lipkus, 1993; Sacher & Fine, 1996), duration of relationship (Rusbult, 1983; Bui, Peplau, & Hill, 1996; Rhoades, Stanley, & Markman, 2010), and attachment styles (Pistole, Clark, & Tubbs 1995; Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994). In order to investigate those variables' effect on the investment model, they were also included in the study.

2.2. Attachment Theory

Attachment theory was formulated by John Bowlby (1969) and based on ethology and psychoanalytic theories. The theory describes the tendency of infants to form strong emotional bonds with their caregivers (Bowlby, 1969). Bowlby questioned why and how infants develop emotional bonds with their caregivers, and why infants show distress when they lost their caregiver or when they are separated from their caregivers (Bretherton, 1992). Bowlby (1969) asserted that there is an attachment system to protect the intimacy between infant and caregiver in case of danger as a part of evolution. Since infants are not able to feed and protect themselves, this system increases infants' chance to survive. The fact that infants are needed to be taken care of for a long time causes them to bear with attachment behaviors to have intimacy

towards an attachment figure. To Bowlby (1969), searching for intimacy is a congenital tool for emotional regulation that protects individuals from physical and psychological threats, and which reduces stress.

The attachment figure is not always the mother for infants and the figure might be more than one individual. Bowlby (1958) assumed that infants prioritized the figures. The figure is mostly the mother, yet the attachment theory does not propose that the mother should be the figure. Infants establish attachment to those who serve persistent care and response to stressors for them (Cummings, 1980).

According to Ainsworth (1989), attachment is not only a special bond with caregiver, but also with different people throughout individuals' lives. Ainsworth describes those emotional bonds with a particular person as that they are not temporary and are persisting (1), that only continue with that particular person, meaning, they cannot be replicable (2), that they are significant for emotional state (3), that individuals want to maintain their relationship (4), and that individuals feel distressed when they are separated (5). In addition to these criteria, to form an attachment, individuals need to feel security and comfort. If those security needs are met, people attach securely (Ainsworth, 1989).

When the primary attachment figure is not available or cannot serve enough security, individuals look for another figure. Empirical studies showed that infants can establish more than one attachment; however, the significance of those figures for infants is not the same as caregivers. Additionally, studies indicated that individuals mostly show persistence to the primary attachment figure (Cummings, 1980; Farran & Ramey, 1977).

As individuals grow up, changes occur in attachment hierarchy and its context. First caregivers are always in the hierarchy; however, their position could be altered as the infant matures. Different attachment figures might be added or eliminated (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2004). As individuals form intimate relationships with others, especially with sexual partners like spouses, they might become primary attachment figures causing the number of attachment figures to decrease (Antonucci, Akiyama &

Takahashi, 2004). Marriages, romantic relationships, close friends, relatives, and siblings could be count as attached relationships (Colin, 1996). In a study with people in romantic relationships, eighty percent of the participants reported their partners as primary attachment figures who give them support and safety, and parents were the main figure for the rest of the participants (Hazan & Shaver, 1994).

Attachment theory continues throughout individuals' lives (Ainsworth, 1989). Therefore, the theory formed a basis to understand the romantic relationship. Attachment theory explains how individuals could establish different kinds of romantic relationships with their partners, and explains how individuals interpret attachment, caring, and sexuality in their life (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Considering romantic relationships in terms of attachment theory, similarities found between infant attachment to their caregivers and adult attachment to their partner. As assumed that infants attach to their caregivers for biological reasons, the relationship between infant and caregiver affects individuals' further romantic relationship experiences. Besides, intense attraction and separation anxiety to attachment figures were observed both in infant-caregiver and romantic relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). There are also differences between those relationships. The infant-caregiver relationship is supplementary, and the needs of the infant are met by the caregiver whereas romantic relationships are mostly reciprocal (Shaver, Hazan & Bradshaw, 1998).

Based on Ainsworth's (1979) statements, Hazan and Shaver (1987) compromised three attachment styles considering adults' experiences. Individuals with secure attachment easily get close to their partners, have long-standing relationships, and trust their partners. Anxious/ambivalent attached people often fail to sustain their relationships, think that their partners are reluctant to get closer to them and that they are not loved, and are anxious about whether their partners would leave them. People who have avoidant attachment are bothered by closeness, and struggle to trust and feel belonged to their partners. Individuals who are not attached securely are more likely to have negative experiences and believes, short-term relationships, and negative relationships with their parents in their childhood (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) state that the models of self and others are the basis of adult attachment. Having a positive self-perception leads individuals to love themselves and have self-respect without needing others' confirmation. On the contrary, a negative self-image causes low self-esteem, needing approval from others. A positive image of others is related to searching for support and closeness whereas a negative image of others results in avoiding closeness and having negative expectations in relationships (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Feeney & Noller, 1990).

According to the four-category attachment model by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), attachment models are proposed by considering young adult's positive and negative image of others and self, namely secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful. Securely attached individuals both have a positive image for themselves and others. Since they have self-esteem and self-regard, they do not hesitate about trusting someone nor others trusting them. People with preoccupied attachment have a negative self-image and positive image of others, meaning that, they show dependence on their partners and see their partners as supportive while they perceive themselves as worthless. Fearfully attached people have a negative model of self and others leading them to consider themselves unworthy to be loved and others as unreliable. By avoiding close contact with others, the probability of rejection is decreased. Lastly, individuals with dismissing attachment perceive the model of self as positive while seeing others as negative. Therefore, they value themselves and think that close relationships are not necessary. To protect their self-image, they are reluctant to avoid people around them. They prefer to be on their own rather than being in a relationship (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

It takes time for two individuals who are in a romantic relationship to be attached to each other as infants gradually attach to their caregiver. Infants are born ready to have attachment yet consistent experience with caregiver forms the attachment. Likewise, attachment to a romantic partner takes time. However, all relationships might not be concluded with an attachment (Zeifman & Hazan, 1997).

Several research studies issued attachment theory over romantic relationships considering different variables. In his longitudinal study for six months with 144 dating couples, Simpson (1990) found that partners with securely attached regardless of gender had more trust, interdependence, commitment, and satisfaction in their relationships than anxious and avoidant attachment styles. Follow-up interviews with participants from terminated relationships indicated that men with avoidant attachment experienced less stress than other attachment styles.

Lopez, Melendez, and Rice (2000) studied the effect of college student's attachment styles over race and parental divorce on their relationships. It was found that racial background and parental marital status were related to attachment behavior both in infant-parent and later intimate relationships. Moreover, the study presented that people from minority groups would show more avoidant attachment behaviors than in their relative environments. On the contrary, securely attached people showed more intimacy and rapport in their intimate relationships.

In their study with 239 participants, Pistole, Clark, and Tubbs (1995) were found that securely attached individuals had greater satisfaction and commitment in their relationship compared to those who anxious/ambivalent attached. People with avoidant attachment showed fewer investment level in their relationships. Similarly, Öztekin (2016) conducted a study with 485 university students and found that avoidance attachment had a negative relationship with commitment. Besides, in his study with 322 college students, Gür (2019) stated that dismissive attachment negatively predicted commitment but positively predicted quality of alternatives, and that preoccupied attachment predicted relationship investment.

Duemmler and Kobak (2001) conducted a longitudinal study with 51 couples from university students to investigate the relationship between relationship attachment and commitment in terms of relationship stability. Results showed that male's secure attachment predicted high romantic relationship commitment in the relationship. It was stated there is a significant relationship between two relationship constructs, commitment and investment, and as one of the relationship constructs increased, they positively consolidated each other in a positive way. Similarly, another longitudinal

study with 105 college students showed that after 4 months, the level of commitment of couples with securely attached stayed stable and high compared to those who attached avoidantly and anxiously in which their commitment level decreased over time (Keelan, Dion, & Dion, 1994). Similarly, several studies showed that secure attachment is significantly associated with high relationship commitment while insecure attachments (anxious, and avoidant) are significantly in a relationship with lower commitment in romantic relationships (Simpson, 1990; Pistole, Clark, & Tubbs, 1995; Tran, & Simpson, 2009; Ehrenberg, Robertson, & Pringle, 2012; Givertz, Woszidlo, Segrin, & Knutson, 2013).

Several previous studies regarding the measurement of attachment styles offer different numbers for attachment styles (Hazan, & Shaver, 1987; Collins, & Read, 1990; Griffin, & Bartholomew, 1994). Considering recent attachment studies in romantic relationships, individuals show attachment styles in two different dimensions such as avoidance and anxiety (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998; Fraley & Waller, 1998). Brennan et al. (1998), conducted a study to develop a reliable adult attachment style scale with 1086 participants by gathering frequently used instruments, and suggested for future studies to use two attachment dimensions as anxiety and avoidance. Therefore, two factored attachment model was used in this study.

Conflict resolution styles are mostly studied with attachment styles since attachment styles are activated in case of danger, stressful events, conflicts, and insecurities (Kobak & Duemmler, 1994). When faced with a conflict, internal working models of partners affect their behaviors on how they handle the conflict (Shi, 2003). Studies showed that secure attachment is related to positive coping behaviors (Corcoran & Mallinckrodt, 2000; Shi, 2003; Pistole, 1989), less yet more effective arguments (Creasey, 2002; Pistole & Arricale, 2003). On the contrary, people with anxious attachment styles perceive conflicts as a threat and reluctant to get close with their partners as a result of conflicts (Pistole & Arricale, 2003). Anxiously attached partners show more insecurity, jealousy, and conflict (Campbell, Simpson, Boldry, & Kashy, 2005; Collins & Read, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Levy & Davis, 1988; Simpson, Rholes, & Phillips, 1996).

Pistole (1989) conducted a study to reveal the role of attachment on conflict resolution styles and satisfaction with 137 undergraduate students and found that avoidance and anxiety attachment styles showed negative conflict resolution behaviors, and less satisfaction compared to those securely attached. Similarly, in their study with 140 college students, Creasey, Kershaw, and Boston (1999) found that those who have insecure attachment style struggle with resolving the conflict compared to securely attached, and that anxious/ambivalent attachment style significantly predicted difficulties in conflict resolution.

To sum up, after Bowlby proposed attachment theory (1969), Hazan and Shaver (1987) adapted the attachment model to adulthood relationships. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) considered attachment from the perspective of self and others and proposed four-type attachment styles which are secure, preoccupied, fearful, and dismissing. However, recent studies showed that adult attachment is composed of two dimensions, namely, anxiety and avoidance. Anxiously attached partners need assurance for their worth leading them to have fear of losing the relationship. On the other hand, avoidantly attached partners are self-directed and feel uncomfortable with intimacy (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998). Considering the effect of attachment styles on relationship commitment which is anxiety and avoidance attachment is negatively associated with commitment (Pistole, Clark, & Tubbs, 1995; Tran, & Simpson, 2009), the relationship between commitment and attachment will be investigated in this study. Besides, since the literature strongly suggests that there is a significant relationship between attachment and conflict resolution styles, conflict resolution styles were also be included as a predictor variable in the study.

2.3. Conflict Resolution Styles

Conflicts are interactive processes caused by disagreements, discrepancies, or inconsistencies in each social being, and occur in every relationship (Peterson, 1983). Like other relational problems, conflicts are affected by environment, individual differences, and relation itself (Huston, 2000). According to Dhir and Markman (1984), attachment between partners causes issues in problem-solving methods and if those methods cannot provide satisfaction for both partners, conflicts occur. Each

conflict may trigger other conflicts, meaning that, causes and consequences of conflicts may be the same (Wall & Callister, 1995). Expectations from partners, material issues, individual problems, not met needs might be conflict topics (Faulkner, Davey, & Davey 2005).

As stated in the Cooperative Model, conflicts can be considered as two-sided; constructive and destructive. Constructive conflicts improve and mature the relationship whereas destructive conflicts harm both the person and the relationship. How individuals perceive and react to conflicts specifies conflict's constructiveness or destructiveness (Deutsch, 1994).

In close relationships, conflicts may help partners to improve their relationships in case of using positive resolutions. For Gottman (1993), conflicts are required to obtain genuine intimacy among couples. However, not being able to handle conflicts and resolve them might result in damage to and dissolve in relationships for both partners (Bray & Jouriles, 1995; Gottman & Levenson, 1992).

The way how individuals handle conflicts shows their conflict resolution styles, in other words, specific behavioral patterns that one prefers to employ when addressing conflict situations shows the conflict resolution style of that person. There are different models concerning conflict resolution styles. According to Deutsch's model (1949), how people approach conflicts can be either in a cooperative way or as a competition. Cooperation is more beneficial, and it concludes more positive outcomes than perceiving conflict as a competition (Deutsch, 1949).

Blake and Mouton (1964) proposed a managerial grid model concerning how to manage conflicts in the work-related profession. Individuals' behaviors change according to their concern for people and production. Considering these two concerns, people show different resolution styles. Based on this model, Thomas (1976) compromised five different conflict resolution styles as competing, accommodating, avoiding, compromising, and collaborating. Individuals showing competing resolution style attempt to solve the issue yet not cooperate. They are eager to meet their own needs while showing minimum or no effort for others' needs. Partners with competing

resolution style consider their own emotions, attitudes, and thoughts as of right, and regardless of what their partner thinks, they continue the conflict as their beliefs are approved, in other words, they have greater concern for their own and low concern for others. On the contrary, people with accommodating resolution styles try to balance their own needs and their partners' needs. They have less concern for self and greater for others which let them tend to make compromises from their own beliefs while expecting their partners to do the same. Individuals with avoiding resolution styles demands to end the conflict immediately without aiming to resolve. They do not look for balance nor force others to do anything. Rather, they prefer not to avoid anything about the conflict and skip it forthwith. Little or no attempt for meeting self and other's needs is observed during the conflicts by people with avoidant resolution style. This style might cause conflicts not to resolve or to resolve in a way their partners manage. Having moderate concern for self and others show compromising resolution style in individuals. People with compromising styles tend to end conflicts by offering suggestions for both. The great deal of concern for self and others results in people having collaborating resolution in which they look for the decent resolution satisfying both self and others' expectations. Competing, avoiding, and accommodating style are considered destructive while compromising and collaborating styles are constructive (Thomas, 1976).

Similar to Thomas's contributions, Rahim (1983) proposed another model issuing management of interpersonal conflict. Emphasizing on concern for self and others, Rahim developed five conflict resolution styles, namely dominating, obliging, avoiding, compromising, and integrating.

Based on two axes as being active or passive and constructive or destructive, Rusbult and Zembrodt (1982) compromised another conflict resolution style model regarding romantic relationships composed of four styles which are exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect. Active and destructive behaviors represent exit, that is, termination of the relationship. Voice is composed of both active and constructive attitude and is associated with searching for a solution in which individuals may sacrifice and obtain help. Passive and constructive behaviors like praying and hoping to conflict resolve

were observed in loyalty style. Lastly, people with neglect resolution style show passive and destructive behaviors like rejecting conflicts, ignoring partner's needs.

According to Kurdek (1994), partners handle conflicts in four different ways. Those conflict resolution styles are positive problem solving, conflict engagement, withdrawal, and compliance. Individuals with positive problem-solving style resolve conflicts in a constructive way in which partners use conflicts effectively to grow. On the other hand, conflict engagement includes verbal and physical attempts to the partner. People with withdrawal style try to avoid conflicts regardless of needs. Compliance is associated with accepting partners' offerings without attempting to have any benefit.

Investigating the literature about conflict resolution styles, the models are similar and can be summarized in four different styles. They include resolving the conflict actively, constructively, and (1) positively; actively, destructively, and (2) negatively; passively, destructively, and as (3) retreat; and passive, constructive, and as (4) subordination (Özen, Salman-Engin, & Sakallı-Uğurlu, 2016).

Conflict resolution styles are issued in several research studies regarding marital adjustment and satisfaction (Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Kurdek, 1995; Metz, Rosser, & Strapko, 1994; Peterson 1983; Cramer, 2000; Gottman 1993; Moland, 2011; Haring, Hewitt & Flett, 2003; Öner, 2013; Schudlich, Papp, & Cummings, 2011), individual characteristics (Antonion, 1998), and attachment styles (Bahadır, 2006; Pancaroğlu, 2007).

Considering individual characteristics, extroversion, conscientiousness, openness, and agreeableness predicts conflict resolution styles. According to Antonioni's (1998) findings being extrovert is positively correlated with dominating resolution, that characteristics of agreeableness and neuroticism are negatively associated with dominating resolution. Being extroverted, open and conscience were negatively related to avoiding, on the contrary, being agreeable and neurotic had a positive correlation.

In a longitudinal study with 50 university students in which partners recorded their conflicts for 14 days, Lloyd (1987) investigated the relationship between conflicts and relationship quality and found that the number of conflicts was negatively associated with satisfaction and commitment. In addition, male participants who think they had conflicts regarding the same problems over time reported lower satisfaction and commitment while females showed lower satisfaction and commitment when they initiated a conflict that was not resolved. Similarly, Knee, Patrick, Vietor, and Neighbors (2004) conducted an event-based diary study to investigate the relationship between conflict resolutions and commitment with 128 college students and found that having conflict and how the conflict was resolved was associated with relationship commitment. Participants reported lower commitment when the conflict was not resolved.

In another longitudinal study with 78 participants who were being monitored since birth aiming to investigate the role of parenthood quality and conflict resolution styles on adulthood romantic relationship commitment by Oriña, Collins, Simpsons, Salvatore, Haydon, and Kim (2011), it was found that individuals with lower quality parents and inadequate in resolving conflicts showed lower commitment in their relationships. Besides, a greater difference in commitment level among partners was found related to negative conflict resolution behaviors.

Conflict resolution styles were also issued with Turkish sample (Tezer 1986; Hatipoğlu Sümer, 1993; Uğurlu, 2003; Özen et al., 2006; Bahadır, 2006; Pancaroğlu, 2007; Koydemir, Sun-Selişik & Tezer, 2008). Bahadır (2006) investigated the relationship between attachment and conflict resolution strategies with 569 college students and found that forcing, avoiding, accommodating, and collaborating styles were related to anxiety attachment while avoidance attachment was related to avoiding, accommodating, and compromising styles. The relationship between attachment and conflict resolution styles was also examined by Pancaroğlu (2007) in terms of gender with 312 university students. It was found that male university students showed more accommodating conflict resolution compared to females and

that individuals with secure and anxious attachment styles tended to have compromising conflict resolution.

All in all, conflicts are a possible interpersonal consequence of relationships due to differences in needs, urges, wishes, and values (Peterson, 1983). Several different models were proposed to assess how individuals resolve their conflicts in different settings (Deutsch, 1994; Blake, & Mouton, 1964; Thomas, 1976; Rahim 1983) as in romantic relationships (Rusbult, & Zembrodt, 1983; Kurdek, 1994). According to the literature, conflict resolutions are categorized as negative style which contains physically and verbally destructive behaviors, positive style in which partners develop valid and promising solutions for each partner's needs, subordination style includes behaviors such as trying to minimize the problem and focusing on partner's needs, retreat style involves actions like ignoring the conflicts and passive behaviors (Özen et al., 2016). Studies showed that conflict resolution styles were mostly predicted by attachment styles (Bahadır, 2006; Pancaroğlu, 2007), and were related to relationship commitment (Lloyd, 1987; Oriña et al., 2011). Therefore, conflict resolution styles were included in this study to reveal their relationship with attachment styles and commitment.

2.4. Summary of Literature Review

Considering the theories, models, and research findings mentioned above, romantic relationship status was suggested to be investigated through the commitment by Rusbult's Investment Model (Baker, McNulty, & VanderDrift, 2017). The model promises that commitment is the decision to stay in the relationship and is predicted by how pleasurable the relationship is, to what extent alternative partners are preferable, and the sources partners put into the relationship. In other words, partners with satisfying relationships, who invest more, and who considers there are limited better alternatives for their partners have greater commitment and persist to stay in the relationship.

The investment model was utilized in several studies regarding the romantic relationships. The model is frequently studied with married couples and university

students. In addition, studies focusing commitment showed that gender and length of the relationship reveal different results for individual's level of commitment in the relationship as that females showed greater levels of satisfaction, investment, and commitment while males showed greater levels of quality of alternatives, and that the more increase in relationship duration there is, the more committed partners become. Therefore, to reveal whether being a student, gender, and relationship duration affects individuals' commitment level, those variables were included in this study.

One of the most preferred variables in studying romantic relationships is attachment styles. Attachment styles identify how individuals behave in presence of their significant other considering the strong enduring emotional bond toward them which provides individuals to meet their need for security and intimacy. Studies showed that attachment styles predict commitment in romantic relationships. Anxiety and avoidance attachment were found negatively associated with relationship commitment. Since attachment behaviors are triggered in case of danger like conflicts, conflict resolution styles are related to attachment styles and accordingly relationship commitment. Conflicts are disagreements between two individuals due to differences in needs, values.

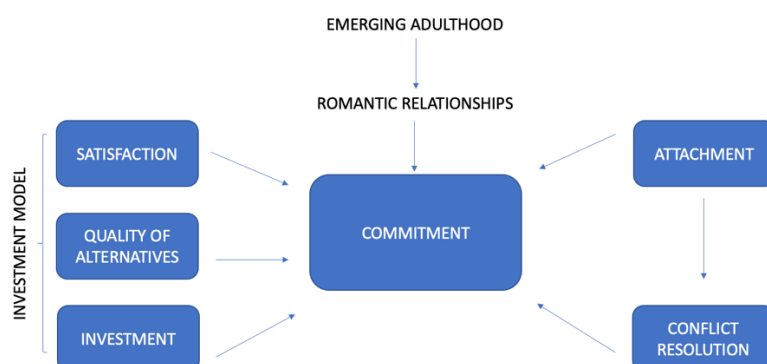


Figure 2.1: Summary of directional relationships between variables

Considering the relations summarized above (see Figure 2.1), the purpose of this study is to investigate the role of attachment and conflict resolution styles on romantic

relationship commitment after controlling gender, student status, and relationship duration with the contributions of satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment. In light of the literature, it was hypothesized that attachment and conflict resolution styles would predict relationship commitment with unique input of gender, student status, and length of the relationship.



CHAPTER 3

METHOD

In this chapter, details of the methodology are presented in sections. Initially, the research design of the present study is given. In the second section, the sampling procedure and demographics of the participants were stated. The instruments used were explained in the data collection instruments section. Procedures followed regarding data collection and ethical permissions were mentioned in the fourth section. Related variables issued in the study were operationally described in the fifth section. Used analysis methods were specified in the data analysis section. Lastly, the limitations of the study were discussed.

3.1. Research Design

The study aimed to investigate the role of attachment and conflict resolution styles on romantic relationship commitment of Turkish emerging adults with the contributions of investment model components: satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment after gender, student status, duration of the relationship were controlled. In line with this purpose, correlational design was employed, and the purposive sampling method was used for data collection. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted as the primary data analysis method of the study. Descriptive statistics, MANOVA, and simultaneous multiple regression analysis were also conducted.

There were 610 participants in the study aged between 19-26 and with having at least one-month duration of the romantic relationship from different cities in Turkey. To collect personal information, a demographic information form was used. The

Investment Model Scale, Conflict Resolution Styles in Romantic Relationship, Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised were used as the main instruments of the study. Data were collected by using an online link directing participants to a virtual version of the instruments. Participants were reached through social media platforms.

3.2. Participants and Sampling

The target population of the study was emerging adults having a romantic relationship for at least one month in Turkey. Convenience data collection was used to reach a specific age group and relationship status. The sampling was based on two criteria which are being aged between 19-26 and having a romantic relationship for at least one month. Participants were reached through an online data collection platform via the link provided. The link directed participants to an online survey platform, Google Forms. The link was shared with social media platforms, universities, and companies in which 19-26 years old people are mostly in.

In total, 664 people attended the study. Only participants aged between 19-26 and had dating relationships for at least one month were included in the study. Therefore, 54 people were excluded from data analyses due to not fitting the sampling criteria which were age group (33 people aged 30, 9 people aged 18) and relationship status (3 married, 5 living together, 4 engaged). Moreover, it was aimed to include gender identities (gender orientations, non-binary sex), future relationship expectations (getting married, breaking up), and the frequency of having conflicts. However, adequate participant numbers for these demographics could not meet the requirement to represent the population and to statistically compare. Therefore, relationship expectations, gender identities, frequency of meeting, and frequency of conflicts were not included in further analyses.

After data cleaning, 610 participants who were having a dating relationship for at least one month and aged between 19-26 were included in the data analysis. When the location of participants was taken into consideration, 36 different cities were listed by the participants. Most of the participants attended from Ankara ($n = 258$; 41.8%), İstanbul ($n = 93$; 15.2%) and İzmir ($n = 44$; 7.2%).

Table 3.1.
Demographics and Relational Characteristics of Participants

		<i>N</i>	%
Gender	Female	329	53.93
	Male	281	46.07
	Total	610	100.0
Student	Student	372	61.0
	Non-Student	238	39.0
	Total	610	100.0
Working	Working	279	45.74
	NonWorking	331	54.26
	Total	610	100.0
Intentions for Relationship	I will break up	0	0
	My partner will break up with me	4	0.65
	No idea/I do not know	135	22.13
	We will stay together	45	7.38
	We will get married	426	69.84
	Total	610	100.0
Frequency of Meeting	Less Than A Month	48	7.9
	Once A Month	53	8.7
	Once in Two Weeks	47	7.7
	Each Week	58	9.5
	More Than Once A Week	207	33.9
	Everyday	131	21.5
	More Than Once A Day	66	10.8
	Total	610	100.0
Frequency of Conflicts	Less Than A Month	228	37.4
	Once A Month	165	27.0
	Once in Two Weeks	89	14.6
	Each Week	68	11.1
	More Than Once A Week	52	8.5
	Everyday	8	1.3
	More Than Once A Day	0	0.0
	Total	610	100.0

As presented in Table 3.1., the sample of the study consisted of 610 people. There were slightly more females ($n = 329$; 53.93%) than males ($n = 281$; 46.04%). Participants were aged between 19-26 ($M = 23.93$ $SD = 1.63$) and had relation duration range from 1 month to 140 months ($M = 29.45$, $SD = 26.73$). 372 of the participants were students (61%), and 238 of them were not. Of the 610 participants, 279 stated that they were working (45.7%), and 331 were not working (54.3%).

When intentions for the future of the relationships are considered, most of the participants stated that they expect to marry their partner (69.84%). 135 people (22.13%) reported that they did not have an idea for the future of their relationships. 45 of the participants (7.38%) stated that they would stay together. Only 4 participants (0.65%) thought that their partner would break up, and none of the participants stated that they would break up.

When how often participants meet with their partners were asked, distribution of frequency of getting together for less than a month is 48 of participants (7.9%), for once a month is 165 (27.0%), for once in two weeks is 47 (7.7%), for once each week is 58 (9.5%), for more than once a week is 207 (33.9%), for each day is 131 (21.5%), and for more than once a day is 66 (20.8%).

Considering the frequency of having conflicts between partners, 228 people (37.4%) have conflict less than once a month, 165 have once a month (27.0%), 89 have once in two weeks (14.6%), 68 have each week (11.1%), 52 have more than once a week (8.5%), 8 have each day (1.3%), and any of the participants did not have conflicts more than once a day.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

This section gives details about data collection instruments. The data were collected by using four instruments: The Relationship Stability Scale (i.e., The Investment Model Scale, Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew 1998; Büyükşahin et al., 2005, see Appendix C), Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (Selçuk, Günaydın, Sümer, & Uysal, 2005, see Appendix D), Conflict Resolution Styles in Romantic Relationship (Özen et

al., 2016, see Appendix E), and a demographic form prepared by the researcher (see, Appendix B).

3.3.1 The Relationship Stability Scale (RSS)

The Investment Model Scale was developed by Rusbult, Martz, and Agnew (1998) to measure the current status of the relationship through satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment size which predicts the commitment level of the relationship as Rusbult (1980) stated in the Investment Model. The original scale includes four subscales as Satisfaction (10 items), Quality of Alternatives (10 items), Investment (10 items), and Commitment (7 items) with a total of 37 items.

In the Satisfaction, Quality of Alternatives, and Investment subscales, there are facet and global items. Facet items are used to prepare participants for global items. Only global items are included in the analyses.

The first five items of those subscales are facet items in which participants rate their relationships within item through a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Don't Agree at All and 4 = Agree Completely). The remaining five items of the subscales are global items that have a 9-point Likert type (1 = Don't Agree at All, and 9 = Agree Completely).

Differently, the Commitment subscale does not have facet nor global items, which means, all of the items are considered in the analyses. There are two reverse items which are 3 (I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end soon.) and 4 (It will likely date someone other than my partner within the next year.). The Commitment subscale has 7 items in which participants respond on a 9-point Likert-type scale. Sample items include "I want my relationship to maintain for a long time."

The scale is scored with mean scores of global items of each satisfaction, quality of alternatives and investment subscales, and all items of commitment. Higher scores of each subscale show greater status of satisfaction, investment, commitment, and quality of alternatives.

Reliability and validity were assessed with three different studies by Rusbult et al. (1998). Results of the three studies indicated that reliability coefficients of satisfaction

ranged between .92 and .95, quality of alternatives ranged between .82 to .88, .82 to .84 for investment, and .91 to .95 for commitment.

Turkish translation and adaptation studies were conducted by Büyükşahin et al. (2005) as Relationship Stability Scale. Two social psychologists and one clinical psychologist working on relationship issues translated the scale. Reliability and validity studies were conducted by researchers with 325 university students who had a romantic relationship. For criterion validity, The Love Attitudes Scale-LAS (Büyükşahin & Hovardaoğlu, 2004) was used. Results showed that correlation coefficients between those two scales ranged from -.45 to .67. Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients of Turkish adapted scales as .90 for satisfaction, .84 for quality of alternatives, .84 for investment. Moreover, split-half reliability coefficients were .84 for satisfaction, .71 for quality of alternatives, .78 for investment components. Moreover, in 2008, Büyükşahin and Taluy revised the scale and included the Commitment component with seven new items. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for internal consistency of the last version were found .93, .83, .84, .70 for satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment, respectively. Moreover, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for the present study and were found .87, .74, .80, .83 for each subscale, respectively.

3.3.2 Conflict Resolution Styles Scale (CRSS)

Conflict Resolution Styles Scale was developed by Özen, Salman-Engin, and Sakallı-Uğurlu (2016) to measure dating couples'/participants' conflict resolution styles in romantic relationships. The prior aim of the scale is to measure four styles of conflict resolution which are positive conflict resolution, negative conflict resolution, subordination, and retreat. The scale has a 6-point Likert type (1 = Completely Disagree, 6 = Completely Agree) and 4 subscales, namely positive conflict resolution, negative conflict resolution, subordination, and retreat. Positive, subordination, and retreat subscales have 6 items while negative conflict resolution subscale has 7 items.

Positive conflict resolution style subscale questions whether partners are constructive and effective in conflicts via items like "I try to find a common ground in conflicts."

Negative conflict resolution style subscale measures destructive and aggressive conflict-handling styles via items like “I threaten my partner to end the relationship.”. Subordination subscale assesses whether partners show acceptance without defending their own needs and perspectives via items like “I do what he/she needs to end the conflicts.”. Retreat subscale assesses to what extent partners refuse to discuss or behave uninterestedly via items like “I prefer not to talk when I am nervous.”. The greater scores of each subscale indicate how likely participants show that style of conflict resolution. Mean total scores of each subscale are used for analyses.

The study for testing validity and reliability of the scale was employed with 200 participants who were students in Middle East Technical University, aging between 17-36. Translated Kurdek’s Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (Kurdek, 1994) was used to compute criterion validity which showed a correlation of .75 for negative, .61 for positive, .45 for subordination, and .39 for retreat subscales. The internal reliability was stated for subscales with Cronbach’s alpha values as .80 for positive, .82 for negative, .74 for retreat, and .73 for subordination.

The Cronbach’s alpha coefficients were computed for the present study. For each subscale, alpha values were found .79 for positive, .79 for negative, .75 for retreat, and .72 for subordination.

3.3.3 Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R)

Attachment styles of participants were measured via Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised which was originally developed by Fraley, Waller, and Brennan in 2000. The original scale has thirty-six items with two subscales. To develop the scale, Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998) factor analyzed commonly used scales for attachment and proposed the first ECR scale with thirty-six items and two subscales as anxiety and avoidance. In 2000, Fraley, Waller, and Brennan revised some items of the scale and proposed ECR-Revised using the same structure. Participants rate all items on a seven-point Likert type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

The anxiety subscale consists of 18 items and includes items like “I scare to lose my partner’s love.” and “I think that my partner is not close to me as he/she says.”. Avoidance subscale has 18 items and include items like “I do not prefer to show what I really feel to my partner.” and “I feel nervous when my partner gets too close to me.”. Odd-numbered items are related to anxiety attachment whereas even-numbered items correspond to avoidant attachment. Scoring is computed with the mean total scores of each subscale for each participant. Higher mean scores in attachment anxiety and avoidance subscales correspond to greater anxiety and avoidance attachment, respectively. Items 4, 8, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 30, 32, 34 and 36 were reversely coded. The original scale had internal consistency with coefficient alphas of .91 for anxiety and .94 for avoidance subscales.

Translation and adaptation to Turkish were conducted by Selçuk, Günaydın, Sümer, and Uysal in 2005 with 256 university students whom 112 of them had dating relationships. Reliability analyses showed high internal consistency coefficients for Cronbach’s alpha of .86 for anxiety and .90 for avoidance subscales. Moreover, test-retest reliability coefficients were computed as .82 and .81 for anxiety and avoidance subscales, respectively.

When Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for the present study, the values were found .87 for anxiety, and .86 for avoidance subscale.

3.3.4 Demographic Information Form

To collect demographic information of participants, a form was developed by the researcher. The form included variables as gender identity, age, location, student status, working status, relationship status, duration of the relationship, frequency of meeting with the partner, intentions for the future of the relationship, and frequency of conflicts.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

Before data collection, some procedures were followed. Initially, the authors of the instruments were contacted and taken permission to use the related instruments. Then,

the approval from Middle Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee was gathered to ensure the study was adequate for the related protocols (see Appendix A). After having ethical approval, all the instruments were transmitted to an online survey platform, Google Forms. The prepared link was shared via social media platforms such as Facebook Groups, WhatsApp, and Instagram in which there were only related age group users. The reason was to reach potential participants practically by just clicking the link. The link directed potential participants to Google Forms platform. Participants firstly encountered the consent form including information about the study, that participating to the study was voluntary, that they were free to leave the study anytime, that their answers will be used only for the research, and that their participation would be anonymous. Participants had to confirm the consent form to reach the instruments. Only data from individuals who completed each instrument were recorded in Google Form. In total 664 attended the study.

3.5. Description of Variables

The criterion variable of the study was the commitment of the romantic relationship. Commitment score was obtained from RSS's Commitment subscale by calculating the mean scores of each participant.

Other investment model variables, namely satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment were also measured by the RSS's related subscales of Satisfaction, Quality of Alternatives, and Investment. Each score for these variables was gathered from the total mean score of global items from the subscales separately.

Conflict resolution styles were measured by using the CRSS. Positive conflict resolution, negative conflict resolution, subordination, and retreat styles were measured by using the total mean scores from each CRSS subscale separately.

Attachment styles were measured by ECR-R. Anxiety and avoidance dimensions of attachment styles were measured by using the total mean score from each related subscale separately.

Gender identity was asked in the demographic information form including these options: female, male, trans, intersex, and a blank in which people could answer with their perspective. Gender identity indicates how one feels and wants to be seen in terms of gender by other people that are not only about body and birth-sex but also includes psychological and social perspectives (Kaos GL Derneği, 2018). To make the study statistically appropriate and due to lack of enough representatives, only female and male categories were considered. Gender identity was dummy coded as 0=female and 1=male.

Duration of relationship shows how many months partners were together in total as a continuous variable.

Education status indicates whether participants are students or not. Being a student and not being a student was dummy coded as 0= Student, 1= Not Student.

3.6. Data Analyses

In this section, how the main data were analyzed is presented. Initially, data screening was done to assess whether the data were appropriate for analyses. Reverse items in the instruments were re-coded. Before analyses, scoring of each subscale of ECR-R, CRSS, and RSS were computed. Assumption checks were completed.

Parallel to the aim of the study, that is, investigating the relationship of commitment level with conflict resolution and attachment styles, several analyses were employed. Firstly, six separate one-way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was performed to investigate whether investment model components, conflict resolution styles, and attachment styles were differ in terms of gender and student status. Then, Simultaneous Multiple Regression analysis was carried out to check the assumption of the Investment Model. Finally, Hierarchical Multiple Regression analysis was run to investigate to what extent conflict resolution and attachment styles predict commitment after controlling for gender, relationship duration, student status, and the investment model components.

All the analyses were run using IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS 2017, Version 25.0) for Mac, and the alpha level was set to .05 for significance criteria.

3.7. Limitations

There are some limitations of the study that should be considered while going through study results. Firstly, to reach the required age group and relationship status, data collection was done with purposive and snowballing sampling, meaning that the participants were not randomly selected. Although these methods provide including particular characteristics for the sample, the methods might decrease the generalizability of the study for emerging adults of Turkey. Similarly, considering most of the participants stated that they were expecting to be married in the future, the study might be generalized and interpreted for dating couples with intentions of marrying.

Data were gathered using online surveys, meaning that, there was no researcher for participants to ask questions nor to be controlled while filling out the instruments. Thus, participants might interpret instrument items differently. Moreover, collecting data online might have resulted in a lower response rate.

All the instruments used for the study were self-reported. Since answering items regarding their relationships could be sensitive, the answers might not be honest. Considering social desirability bias, participants might be influenced and answer instruments in a desired way than they actually were.

In terms of the balance between demographic information of the participants, some groups were not enough to statistically represent the related population. Therefore, gender orientations had to be eliminated before analyzing the main data which could be count as another limitation for the study.

The research design was correlational, that is, there was no manipulation over the data and there was no cause-effect relationship to be formed.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of the study were given with 6 main sections. Firstly, preliminary analyses for the main analyses are discussed. Those include re-coding reverse items, exclusion of unrelated data, and normality checks. Then, descriptive statistics of variables are presented. In the third section bivariate correlations between variables are presented. Gender differences in variables and how student status affected the variables are mentioned in the fourth section. Fifth section shows investment model prediction results. Lastly, the main analysis results, which are results regarding predicting commitment, are given.

4.1. Preliminary Analyses of the Study

Before conducting main analyses, the data were checked to ensure there was no mistake made while entering the data. For this purpose, the frequencies, and minimum/maximum values of variables (age, gender, student status, duration of the relationship, frequency of meeting, frequency of conflicts, satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, commitment, anxiety attachment, avoidant attachment, negative conflict resolution, positive conflict resolution, subordination conflict resolution and retreat conflict resolution) were analyzed to assure that the data were in a possible range of value. Later, reverse items were re-coded which were items 3 and 4 in Relationship Stability-Commitment Subscales, and items 4, 8, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 30, 32, 34, and 36 in ECR-R.

Since the study aims to analyze dating relationship commitment during emerging adulthood, 18 people were excluded due to not having a dating relationship currently and 32 people were excluded due to not fitting the age (ranging from 19 to 26) criteria for the study.

The normality estimation was checked. The values for skewness and kurtosis between -2 and +2 are considered acceptable to prove normal univariate distribution (George & Mallery, 2010). As can be seen in Table 4.1., there is no violation of normality for the study variables, the values of skewness and kurtosis ranged from -1.33 to .72 and from -.57 to .147, respectively. Considering Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk normality assumptions, all variables were failed to validate the normality assumption ($p < .05$). Nevertheless, in social studies in which the fact that participants fill out instruments about themselves results in social desirability. It was expected to have higher points, meaning that violation of normality is considered as not a crucial issue (Pallant, 2016). Rather, Q-Q plot analyses were revealed that the data could be considered normally distributed.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics of the Variables

Before the main analyses, means, standard deviations, possible ranges, minimum-maximum values of variables were calculated. Results were demonstrated in Table 4.1.

According to the results (see Table 4.1), minimum and maximum participant age were 19 and 26 ($M = 23.93$, $SD = 1.63$). Participants' dating duration ranged between 1-140 months ($M = 29.45$, $SD = 26.73$).

The mean scores of participants showed that participants have high satisfaction ($M = 7.95$, $SD = .93$) and high commitment ($M = 8.18$, $SD = .97$), relatively average quality of alternatives ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 1.6$), and average investment ($M = 4.87$, $SD = 1.72$) scores. Considering participants' conflict resolution styles, the respectively order from the highest mean score to the lowest was positive conflict resolution style ($M = 28.19$, $SD = 5.35$), retreat conflict resolution style ($M = 20.23$, $SD = 6.51$), subordination conflict resolution style ($M = 19.58$, $SD = 5.50$), and negative conflict resolution style

($M=16.17$, $SD = 6.35$). Participants showed moderately high anxiety attachment ($M=3.27$, $SD = 1.0$).

Table 4.1.
Descriptive Statistics of Predictor and Criterion Variables

Variables	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Potential Range	Actual Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
Relationship Duration	610	29.45	26.73	1-	1-140	1.28	1.47
Satisfaction	610	7.95	.93	1-9	5.20-9.00	-.92	.23
Quality of Alternatives	610	4.09	1.60	1-9	1.00-8.40	.33	-.32
Investment	610	4.87	1.72	1-9	1.20-9.00	.21	-.40
Commitment	610	8.18	.97	1-9	5.14-9.00	-1.33	.81
Negative CRS	610	16.17	6.35	7-42	7.00-36.00	.72	.18
Positive CRS	610	28.19	5.35	6-36	12.00-36.00	-.99	.76
Subordination CRS	610	19.58	5.50	6-36	7.00-34.00	.34	-.21
Retreat CRS	610	20.23	6.51	6-36	6.00-36.00	.02	-.57
Anxiety AS	610	3.27	1.00	1-7	1.56-6.33	.55	.10
Avoidance AS	610	2.51	.91	1-7	1.00-4.61	.39	-.63

Note. CRS=Conflict Resolution Style, AS=Attachment Style

4.3. Bivariate Correlation Matrices of the Variables

To reveal the relationship between criterion and predictor variables, Pearson Product Moment Correlations Coefficients were examined. Results were presented in Table 4.2, and were discussed via Cohen's (1988) standards for interpreting the correlation coefficients which suggests that correlations from .10 to .29 are weak, from .30 to .49 are moderate, and from .50 to 1.00 are strong associations.

Considering Cohen's (1988) standards, all significant associations for relationship duration were found as weak. According to the results, relationship duration was

significantly and positively associated with satisfaction ($r = .11, p < .01$), investment ($r = .22, p < .01$), commitment ($r = .13, p < .01$), and negative conflict resolution ($r = .12, p < .01$). On the contrary, anxiety attachment ($r = -.13, p < .01$) and positive conflict resolution style ($r = -.09, p < .05$) were significantly and negatively related to relationship duration.

Results indicated that all of the investment model components are significantly correlated with each other. Satisfaction was positively correlated with investment ($r = .18, p < .01$) and commitment. Quality of alternatives component was negatively correlated with all the components as satisfaction ($r = -.22, p < .01$), investment ($r = -.29, p < .01$), and commitment ($r = -.41, p < .01$). Moreover, commitment and investment were found positively correlated ($r = .32, p < .01$). Criterion variable commitment had the strongest relationship with satisfaction ($r = .54, p < .01$), and weakest relationship with retreat conflict resolution style ($r = -.08, p < .05$).

Satisfaction ($r = -.09, p < .05$), investment ($r = -.14, p < .01$), and commitment ($r = -.08, p < .05$) were negatively correlated with retreat conflict resolution style whereas quality of alternatives was positively correlated with retreat ($r = .17, p < .01$). Negative conflict resolution styles were negatively correlated with satisfaction ($r = -.24, p < .01$) while positively correlated with investment ($r = .11, p < .01$). There was a positive correlation between satisfaction and positive conflict resolution style ($r = .27, p < .01$), between investment and subordination conflict resolution style ($r = .19, p < .01$), and between commitment and positive conflict resolution style ($r = .27, p < .01$). In addition, a negative correlation was found between positive conflict resolution style and negative conflict resolution ($r = -.12, p < .01$) and retreat conflict resolution ($r = -.12, p < .01$). On the contrary, positive correlations were found between positive conflict resolution and subordination ($r = .18, p < .01$), between retreat and negative conflict resolution ($r = .19, p < .01$), and between subordination and retreat conflict resolution ($r = .26, p < .01$).

Both anxiety and avoidance attachment styles were negatively correlated with satisfaction ($r = -.26$ and $r = -.37$, respectively, $p < .01$), and commitment ($r = -.12$ and $r = -.31$ respectively, $p < .01$). Investment was positively correlated with anxiety

attachment ($r = .22, p < .01$), and negatively correlated with avoidance attachment ($r = -.10, p < .05$).

Anxiety attachment style was positively correlated with negative conflict resolution ($r = .29, p < .01$) and subordination ($r = .01, p < .05$) whereas negatively correlated with positive conflict resolution ($r = -.14, p < .01$). On the other hand, avoidance attachment style was found positively correlated with negative conflict resolution ($r = .20, p < .01$) and anxiety attachment ($r = .31, p < .01$), and negatively correlated with positive ($r = -.32, p < .01$) and subordination conflict resolution styles ($r = -.14, p < .01$).



Table 4.2.

Bivariate Correlation Matrix Between Variables (n = 610)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1.Relationship Duration	-	.11**	-.06	.22**	.13**	-.13**	-.02	.12**	-.09*	-.01	.05
2.Satisfaction		-	-.22**	.18**	.54**	-.26**	-.37**	-.24**	.27**	-.03	-.09*
3.Quality of Alternatives			-	-.29**	-.41**	-.03	-.05	.05	-.01	.01	.17**
4.Investment				-	.32**	.22**	-.10*	.11**	.05	.19**	-.14**
5.Commitment					-	-.12**	-.31**	-.07	.27**	.05	-.08*
6.Anxiety Attachment						-	.31**	.29**	-.14**	.01*	.03
7.Avoidance Attachment							-	.20**	-.32**	-.14**	.07
8.Negative Conflict Resolution								-	-.12**	-.05	.19**
9.Positive Conflict Resolution									-	.18**	-.12**
10.Subordination Conflict Resolution										-	.26**
11.Retreat Conflict Resolution											-

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

4.4. Results Regarding Gender and Student Status Differences

To investigate the gender and student status differences over satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment; anxiety and anxious attachment styles; negative, positive, subordination and retreat conflict resolution styles, six separate one-way between groups MANOVA were computed. MANOVA is an analysis to test whether the effect of one or more independent variables over dependent variables (Cohen et al., 2003). Six separate One-Way MANOVA analyses (1) gender and investment model; (2) gender and attachment styles; (3) gender and conflict resolution styles; (4) student status and investment model; (5) student status and attachment styles; (6) student status and conflict resolution styles were used to indicate the differences.

Before conducting MANOVA, assumptions were checked which are sample size, normality, singularity, homogeneity, covariance, multicollinearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, and linearity (Cohen et al., 2003). The sample size for the analyses was 610 which met the criteria that the number of participants is required to be more than the dependent variables of the analysis. Normality assumptions of variables were checked and there was no major violation, see Table 4.1. For finding outliers, Mahalanobis Distances was checked. The maximum Mahalanobis Distance value is required to be below 18.47 for $df = 4$ and below 13.82 for $df = 2$ (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The values for gender and student status were found 20.25, 15.35, and 9.43, respectively which indicated no major issue to meet the assumption. Scatter plot matrixes were used to check the linearity assumption and found that there was no linearity, see Figure 4.1.

As shown in Table 4.2., considering multicollinearity and singularity, bivariate correlation of the variables indicated values smaller than .7 which was the criteria to meet (Cohen et al., 1975).

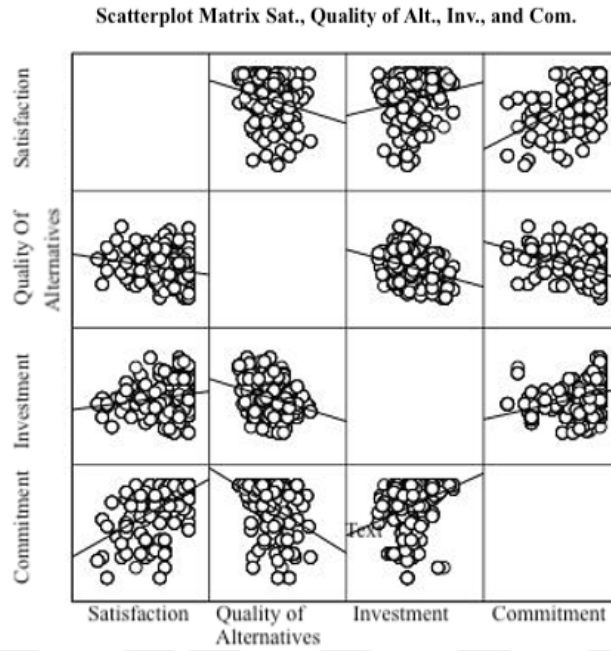


Figure 4. 1. Scatterplot Matrixes of Satisfaction, Investment, Quality of Alternatives, and Commitment

In addition, Box's M Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices values were checked to ensure that they were greater than .001 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Considering gender, for the first [Box's $M = 8.95$, $F(10, 1672106.06) = .89$, $p = .54$], second [Box's $M = 1.53$, $F(3, 315876229) = .51$, $p = .67$], and third analyses [Box's $M = 18.90$, $F(10, 1672106.06) = 1.88$, $p = .043$], homogeneity of variance and covariance assumptions were met. Considering student status, for the first [Box's $M = 9.95$, $F(10, 1196319.71) = .69$, $p = .02$], second [Box's $M = 6.60$, $F(3, 11847111.7) = 2.19$, $p = .09$], and third analyses [Box's $M = 48.64$, $F(10, 1196319.71) = 4.82$, $p = .02$], homogeneity of variance and covariance assumptions were met.

Table 4.3.
Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for Gender

Variables	F	df1	df2	<i>p</i>
Satisfaction	1.6	1	608	.21
Investment	6.02	1	608	.01*
Quality of Alternatives	.24	1	608	.63
Commitment	.004	1	608	.95
Anxious Attachment Style	.13	1	608	.71
Avoidance Attachment Styles	.50	1	608	.48
Negative Conflict Resolution	4.46	1	608	.04*
Positive Conflict Resolution	.92	1	608	.34
Subordination Conflict Resolution	.84	1	608	.36
Retreat Conflict Resolution	.23	1	608	.63

Note. * $p < .05$

Assumption of variance equality was checked via Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances. Levene's Test significance value needs to be greater than .05 (Cohen et al., 2003). Table 4.3. indicated that for gender variable, investment and negative conflict resolution variables failed to meet the assumption. Considering student status, satisfaction, investment, commitment, and anxious attachment failed to meet the criteria for variance equality (see Table 4.5.). Therefore, Pillai's Trace is used to robust statistical power (Seber, 1984). Moreover, since the assumption was not met with related variables for the analyses, Bonferroni adjustment was applied. Thus, the alpha level was set to .013 after dividing .05 with 4 which was the number of variables for investment model variables and conflict resolutions, and .025 after dividing .05 with 2 which was the number of variables for attachment styles.

Table 4.4.

Univariate Test Results for Gender with Means and Standard Deviations

Variables	Gender	N	M	SD	ANOVA		
					Type III SS	F	p
Satisfaction	Female	329	7.96	.91	.09	.11	.74
	Male	281	7.94	.95			
Quality of Alternatives	Female	329	3.98	1.61	7.42	2.90	.08
	Male	281	4.20	1.59			
Investment	Female	329	4.76	1.64	9.28	3.17	.09
	Male	281	5.00	1.79			
Commitment	Female	329	8.17	.96	.01	.92	.92
	Male	281	8.18	.99			
Anxious Attachment Style	Female	329	3.24	.99	.62	.62	.43
	Male	281	3.31	1.02			
Avoidance Attachment Style	Female	329	2.55	.91	1.17	1.41	.24
	Male	281	2.46	.92			
Negative Conflict Resolution	Female	329	16.13	6.12	1.33	.03	.86
	Male	281	13.22	6.62			
Positive Conflict Resolution	Female	329	28.05	5.54	13.06	.46	.50
	Male	281	28.35	5.13			
Subordination Conflict Resolution	Female	329	19.19	5.33	108.76	3.61	.06
	Male	281	20.03	5.67			
Retreat Conflict Resolution	Female	329	20.81	6.35	239.63	5.70	.02
	Male	281	19.55	6.64			

As seen in Table 4.4, MANOVA results for gender differences showed that there was no significant difference between males and females in terms of satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment and commitment [$F(4, 605) = 2.3, p > .05$; Pillai's Trace = .015, partial $\eta^2 = .02$]; anxiety and avoidance attachment [$F(2, 607) = 1.43, p > .05$; Pillai's Trace = .002, partial $\eta^2 = .005$]; negative, positive, subordination and retreat conflict resolution styles [$F(4, 605) = 3.38, p > .05$; Pillai's Trace = .022, partial $\eta^2 = .02$].

Table 4.5.
Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for Student Status

Variables	F	df1	df2	<i>p</i>
Satisfaction	8.50	1	608	.01*
Investment	5.64	1	608	.02*
Quality of Alternatives	3.40	1	608	.07
Commitment	20.74	1	608	.00*
Anxious Attachment Style	4.67	1	608	.03*
Avoidance Attachment Styles	.89	1	608	.35
Negative Conflict Resolution	1.57	1	608	.21
Positive Conflict Resolution	1.95	1	608	.16
Subordination Conflict Resolution	2.61	1	608	.11
Retreat Conflict Resolution	1.30	1	608	.26

Note. * $p < .05$

As seen in Table 4.6., considering student status, MANOVA results showed that, students and non-students significantly differed in terms of investment model variables [$F(4, 605) = 6.84, p < .05$; Pillai's Trace = .043, partial $\eta^2 = .04$]. On the other side, no significant relationship was found between student status with anxiety and avoidance attachment [$F(2, 607) = .66, p > .05$; Pillai's Trace = .002, partial $\eta^2 = .002$]; and with conflict resolution styles [$F(4, 605) = .93, p > .05$; Pillai's Trace = .006, partial $\eta^2 = .006$].

MANOVA results showed that students and non-students significantly differed in quality of alternatives ($p < .013$, see Table 4.7.). The mean score of students ($M = 3.93, SD = 1.67$) was found significantly different than non-students ($M = 4.23, SD = 1.47$).

Table 4.6.

Univariate Test Results for Student Status with Means and Standard Deviations

Variables	Student Status	N	M	SD	ANOVA		
					Type III SS	F	p
Satisfaction	Student	372	7.95	1.0	.02	.03	.87
	Non-Student	238	7.96	.81			
Quality of Alternatives	Student	372	3.93	1.67	22.41	8.83	.01*
	Non-Student	238	4.23	1.47			
Investment	Student	372	4.91	1.77	1.25	.42	.51
	Non-Student	238	4.81	1.62			
Commitment	Student	372	8.10	1.06	5.23	5.59	.02
	Non-Student	238	8.29	.80			
Anxious Attachment Style	Student	372	3.24	1.02	1.15	1.15	.28
	Non-Student	238	3.33	.97			
Avoidance Attachment Style	Student	372	2.50	.95	.44	.53	.47
	Non-Student	238	2.55	.85			
Negative Conflict Resolution	Student	372	15.95	6.20	51.72	1.28	.26
	Non-Student	238	16.54	6.58			
Positive Conflict Resolution	Student	372	28.25	5.12	3.80	.13	.72
	Non-Student	238	28.09	5.70			
Subordination Conflict Resolution	Student	372	19.49	5.75	7.63	.25	.62
	Non-Student	238	19.72	5.09			
Retreat Conflict Resolution	Student	372	20.42	6.59	34.58	.82	.37
	Non-Student	238	19.93	6.38			

Note. * $p < .013$

4.5. Results Regarding Investment Model Components

In the line with the purpose of the study, it was checked whether satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment significantly predicted commitment. For this aim, all three components were assumed to have equal footing on commitment as the Investment Model states (Rusbult et al. 1998). Therefore, to check the relationship, simultaneous multiple regression analysis was used to test all three independent variables' effect on the dependent variable, commitment. Simultaneous multiple regression analysis is a model for more than two independent variables in which they

are treated simultaneously and have a similar role on the dependent (Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken, 2003).

Prior to the analysis, assumptions of the multiple regression analysis were checked which are linearity, independence, continuous variables, independent errors, homoscedasticity, no multicollinearity, and normality.

Three predictor and criterion variables, namely, satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment were quantitative and continuous in which they met the criteria for the assumption of the variable type (Allison, 1999).

The normality of residuals criteria was checked via analyzing the histogram and normal P-P plot graphs which showed that the data met the assumption (Allison, 1999).

The interdependence of errors was checked via the Durbin Watson statistic. To meet the assumption, the value needs to be between 1.5 and 2.5 (Cohen et al., 2003). Further, Crown (1998) stated that mostly Durbin Watson tests are unconvincing because it is influenced by the order of answers. According to the analysis, the Durbin Watson value was 1.02 which could be considered appropriate.

For the multicollinearity check, correlations between independent variables were considered. The correlation values were not greater than .7, meaning that, none of the predictors were multicollinear. Besides, Tolerance and VIF values were controlled whether they were smaller than 1.0 and greater than 1.0, respectively, to ensure that the multicollinearity assumption was met (Cohen et al., 2003). Moreover, Allison (1999) states that VIF should not be over 2.5 and Tolerance should not be below .40. All the values for Tolerance and VIF were met the criteria for multicollinearity (Satisfaction, Tolerance = .94, VIF = 1.07; Quality of Alternatives, Tolerance = .89, VIF = 1.12; Investment, Tolerance = .90, VIF = 1.11).

The homoscedasticity assumption was checked via using scatter plots of the regression analysis. According to Mahalanobis and Cook's distances revealed from the analysis, it was yielded that there was no violation for the assumption. The degrees for Mahalanobis and Cook's distances were 10.44 and .028, respectively.

Table 4.7.
Results of Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis Concerning Investment Model

Variables	B	SE	β	t	Correlations			R^2	Adjusted R^2
					Zero-order	Partial	Part		
Model 1 (Constant)	4.59	.31		15.00**				.401	.404
Satisfaction	.47	.03	.46	14.11**	.54	.50	.44		
Quality of Alternatives	-.16	.02	-.26	-7.97**	-.41	-.31	-.25		
Investment	.09	.01	.16	4.90**	.32	.19	.15		

Note. ** $p < .01$

Simultaneous multiple regression analysis revealed that all three predictor variables as satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment significantly predicted criterion variable commitment (see Table 4.3). The results of the regression showed that satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment explained 40.4 % of the variance in commitment, $F(3,606) = 138.89, p < .01$. Considering the unique effects of each predictor, the square of the part correlations was calculated (Pallant, 2016) which showed that satisfaction explained 19%, quality of alternatives explained 7%, and investment explained 2% of the variance in commitment. Furthermore, standardized coefficient values indicated that satisfaction contributed significantly the most to the model ($\beta = .46, p < .01$), quality of alternatives ($\beta = -.26, p < .01$) and investment ($\beta = .16, p < .01$) had a significant relationship with commitment.

4.6. Results Regarding Predicting Commitment

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis is a way to indicate whether independent variables explain statistically significant amount of variance in dependent variable after taking into account all other variables. (Cohen et al, 2003). As the purpose of the study, that is to investigate the role of conflict resolution styles and attachment styles

on commitment of Turkish emerging adults after controlling for gender, student status, and relationship duration, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted. Before the analysis, assumptions for the analysis were checked, namely, linearity, independence, continuous variables, independent errors, homoscedasticity, no multicollinearity, and normality (Cohen et al., 2003).

For analysis to be more generalizable, fifteen participants per predictor variable were needed (Stevens, 1996) or sample size should be more than eight times of independent variable summed with 50 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). In the analysis, there were 610 participants for all variables, and in total which were greater than 146 ($50 + 8 \times 12$). All the variables in the analysis were quantitative and continuous except gender and student status variables. However, gender and student status were dummy coded for the assumption to be met (0 = Female, 1 = Male; 0 = Student, 1 = Non-Student). The normality was checked via P-P plots created with regression standardized residuals, and P-P plots showed that the data were normally distributed.

For the interdependent error assumption, the Durbin Watson value was checked. The Durbin Watson value is expected to range between 0 and 4.0, and the value for this analysis was .94. As Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) stated, the value needs to be between 1.5 and 2.5 to meet the independence error assumption. However, The Durbin Watson test is often inconclusive since it was used more in time-series analysis and is affected by the data entry order (Crown, 1998).

Correlation between predictor variables was checked to ensure the multicollinearity assumption was met. According to Cohen et al. (2003), the correlation values are required to be less than .7. All the correlation values were fell below .7 which showed that there was no multicollinearity, specifically, the highest value of correlation was .54. Additionally, Tolerance and VIF values were examined. For assumption to be met, Tolerance values would be smaller than 1.0 whereas VIF values were needed to be greater than 1.0 (Cohen et al., 1975), or Tolerance needs to be higher than .4 and VIF should be below 2.5 (Allison, 1999). All the values of Tolerance and VIF met the criteria for multicollinearity in the study. Tolerance ranged between .83 and .99, and minimum and maximum VIF values were 1.01 and 1.20, respectively.

The scatter plot gathered from the analysis was checked to control the homoscedasticity assumption. For the assumption, Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) stated that minimum and maximum values of standardized residuals are required to range between -3 and +3. Though it was found that standardized residual values were from -3.94 to 2.34, Mahalanobis and Cook's distances have met the criteria which were 34.81 and .02, in order. The criteria are 32.91 for Mahalanobis with $df = 12$, and smaller than 1 for Cook's distance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) in which the data did not show major problems for meeting the assumption.

As mentioned earlier, the hierarchical multiple regression analysis is used how independent variables predict criterion variable by adding variables into the model for following a particular way (Cohen et al., 2003). In this study, four models were formed for the analysis parallel to the literature. The first model was composed of demographic variables such as gender, relationship duration, and student status to control the influence of them on commitment. Gender, relationship duration, and student status, in other words, model 1 contributed significantly to the regression model, $F(3, 606) = 4.91, p < .01$, and accounted for 2.4 % of the variation in commitment. Introducing satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment variables to the model explained an additional 40.1 % of the variation in commitment and this change in R^2 was significant, $F(3, 603) = 74.33, p < .001$. Adding attachment variables (anxiety and avoidance) to the regression model explained an additional 2.6 % of the variation in commitment and this change in R^2 was significant, $F(2, 601) = 61.74, p < .001$. Finally, the contribution of conflict resolution styles (negative, positive, subordination, and retreat) to the regression model explained an additional 1.9 % of the variation in commitment and this change in R^2 square was also significant, $F(4, 597) = 44.19, p < .001$. Together all predictor variables explained 47.0 % of the variance in commitment, see Table 4.8.

According to the hierarchical multiple regression analysis, relationship duration ($\beta = .12, p < .05$) and student status ($\beta = .09, p < .05$) were significantly contributed to the first model. In the model 2, gender ($\beta = .02, p > .05$), and relationship frequency ($\beta = .02, p > .05$) were not significant predictors when satisfaction, quality of alternatives and investment entered the model. Student status ($\beta = .13, p < .05$), satisfaction ($\beta =$

.45, $p < .05$), quality of alternatives ($\beta = -.28, p < .05$) and investment ($\beta = .15, p < .05$) significantly predicted commitment in the model 2. Satisfaction was the most effective predictor in model 2. When attachment styles added in the model 3, gender ($\beta = .01, p > .05$), and relationship duration ($\beta = .04, p > .05$) still did not significantly predict commitment like anxiety attachment style ($\beta = -.01, p > .05$). On the other hand, student status ($\beta = .14, p < .05$), satisfaction ($\beta = .39, p < .05$), quality of alternatives ($\beta = -.31, p < .05$), investment ($\beta = .14, p < .05$) and avoidance attachment style ($\beta = -.18, p < .05$) were significant predictors of commitment in the model 3. Again, satisfaction was the strongest predictor in the model 3. In the final model, student status ($\beta = .14, p < .05$), satisfaction ($\beta = .36, p < .05$), quality of alternatives ($\beta = -.33, p < .05$), investment ($\beta = .15, p < .05$), avoidance attachment style ($\beta = -.15, p < .05$) and positive conflict resolution style ($\beta = .14, p < .05$) significantly predicted commitment while gender ($\beta = .02, p > .05$), relationship duration ($\beta = .03, p > .05$), anxiety attachment style ($\beta = .01, p > .05$), negative conflict resolution style ($\beta = .04, p > .05$), subordination conflict resolution style ($\beta = -.03, p > .05$), and retreat conflict resolution style ($\beta = .06, p > .05$) were not significant predictors for commitment in the model 4. In all the models, satisfaction was the strongest predictor among all other variables including model 4.

Table 4.8

The Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Commitment

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>R</i> ²	ΔR^2	Adjusted <i>R</i> ²
Model 1 (Constant)	7.77	.17		45.44**	.024	.024	.02
Gender	.019	.08	.01	.24			
Relationship Duration	.004	.001	.12	3.01**			
Student Status	.18	.08	.09	2.23*			
Model 2 (Constant)	4.26	.32		13.34**	.43	.40	.42
Gender	.05	.06	.02	.74			
Relationship Duration	.001	.001	.02	.71			
Student Status	.26	.06	.13	4.17**			
Satisfaction	.47	.03	.45	14.07**			
Quality of Alternatives	-.17	.02	-.28	-8.56**			
Investment	.09	.02	.15	4.60**			
Model 3 (Constant)	5.43	.40		13.71**	.45	.02	.44
Gender	.03	.06	.02	.56			
Relationship Duration	.001	.001	.03	.81			
Student Status	.28	.06	.14	4.53**			
Satisfaction	.40	.04	.38	10.93**			
Quality of Alternatives	-.19	.02	-.31	-9.50**			
Investment	.08	.02	.14	4.07**			
Anxiety Attachment	-.01	.03	-.01	-.14			
Avoidance Attachment	-.19	.04	-.18	-5.11**			
Model 4 (Constant)	4.66	.44		10.59**	.47	.02	.46
Gender	.05	.06	.02	.77			
Relationship Duration	.001	.001	.03	1.01			
Student Status	.29	.06	.14	4.72**			
Satisfaction	.38	.04	.36	10.11**			
Quality of Alternatives	-.2	.02	-.33	-9.94**			
Investment	.08	.02	.15	4.10**			
Anxiety Attachment	-.01	.03	-.01	-.20			
Avoidance Attachment	-.16	.04	-.15	-4.36**			
Negative Conflict R.	.01	.01	.35	1.06			
Positive Conflict R.	.03	.01	.14	4.23**			
Subordination Conflict R.	-.01	.01	-.03	-.97			
Retreat Conflict R.	.01	.01	.06	1.82			

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Parallel to the aim of the study, which is investigating the role of Turkish emerging adults' conflict resolution and attachment styles on romantic relationship commitment considering contributions of satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives after gender, relationship duration, and student status were controlled, quantitative correlational design was used via using MANOVA, simultaneous multiple regression, and hierarchical multiple regression analyses. Discussion of the findings was presented in this chapter. In the first section, the findings of the main study are discussed. The second section provides the implications drawn from the results of the study. Lastly, the third section presents recommendations for future research and practice.

5.1. Discussions of the Findings

Findings gathered from analyses were discussed in three parts. Initially, gender and student status differences among Investment Model components, attachment, and conflict resolution styles were discussed from results gathered by six multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA). Subsequently, results of simultaneous multiple regression analysis for predicting commitment through Investment Model components were presented. Lastly, findings from hierarchical multiple regression analysis were examined to reveal the role of attachment and conflict resolution styles on predicting relationship commitment.

5.1.1. Gender Differences in Investment Model Variables, Attachment, and Conflict Resolution Styles

To investigate whether gender differences effect individuals' level of investment model components, attachment, and conflict resolution styles, multivariate analyses of variance were performed. Mean scores of both genders were similar, and results of MANOVA showed that there is no significant difference in satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, commitment, attachment, and conflict resolution styles in terms of gender.

Considering previous studies about gender concerning investment model, females reported more satisfaction (Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; Sacher & Fine, 1996), commitment (Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; Rusbult, Onizuka & Lipkus, 1993; Sacher & Fine, 1996), and investment (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986; Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; Sprecher, 1988) compared to males. Moreover, men were found greater in quality of alternatives compared to women (Davis & Strube, 1993; Duffy & Rusbult, 1986; Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; Sprecher, 1988; Le & Agnew, 2003). However, in some research studies with Turkish dating college students, there was discrepancies with investment model variables in terms of gender. Aslan-Dölen (2014) found that men showed more investment in relationships. It was found that there was a significant difference only in the quality of alternatives in studies of Hasta and Büyüksahin (2005), Büyüksahin (2006), and Kaynak (2014) based on gender. Beşikçi (2008) found that males and females only differed in commitment. Similar to what is found in the current study, Anlatan (2019) and Öztekin (2016) found in their studies with university students that gender results was not significantly changed in any investment model component.

Although gender is a significant variable in the investment model components in several prior studies, studies performed with Turkish dating individuals showed different results for gender differences concerning satisfaction, investment, quality of alternatives, and commitment. Therefore, it can be said that there is not a clear path for dating Turkish sample considering gender differences over their relationship

satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment. The reason why there was no difference found for this study with Turkish sample could be due to effect of Turkish culture on romantic relationships. In Turkish culture, dating is considered as a trial stage before marriage; in other words, Turkish individuals try to have dating relationships with expectations for marrying in the future (Hortaçsu, 2003). Turkey could be considered as a collectivistic (Hofstede, 2001) and a sexist country (Tekeli, 1995). Sakallı-Uğurlu (2010) states that having such culture influences Turkish couples to be more concerned about future of their relationships regardless of gender. Similarly, most of the participants in the present study stated that they expect to marry in the future. This leads individuals to commit to their partners and perceive their relationships as satisfactory, meaning that, having a relationship in Turkish culture creates the expectation of getting married.

Considering attachment styles from the gender perspective, no significant difference was found according to the MANOVA results. In other words, being a male or a female did not change individuals' attachment styles. Since the basic assumption of the attachment model concerns the relationship between infant and caregiver regardless of gender with the thrive for surviving, the attachment theory does not assume sex differences; in other words, the theory has a sex-neutral perspective (Del Giudice, 2019). In line with the results of the current study, gender was not found associated with attachment styles in several studies (Baker, McNulty, Vanderdrift, 2017; Delevi, Sökmez & Avcı, 2018; Shi, 2003; Wongpakarana, Wongpakarana & Wedding 2012). The reason why no significant gender difference was found in terms of attachment styles might be caused by the fact that avoidant and anxiety attachment styles are mostly associated with unsatisfied and less committed relationships (Dandurand, Bouaziz, Lafontaine, 2013) in which emerging adult participants of the present study scored high in both satisfaction and commitment. However, attachment styles in adulthood affect how individuals act as a partner leading that gender differences might occur. Several studies showed that men showed higher avoidance attachment than women (Del Giudice, 2011; Gugová & Heretik, 2011; Keklik, 2011).

Considering conflict resolution styles in terms of gender, MANOVA results revealed that there was not a significant difference between men and women. The present study finding was similar to Öner's (2013) and Gürcan's (2015) findings. However, several studies stated that women show more positive conflict resolution styles compared to men (Basım, Çetin & Meydan, 2009; Black, 2000; Gbadamosi, Baghestan, & Al-Mobrouk, 2014; Gürkan, 2019; Haferkamp, 1991; Rubin & Brown, 1975; Sevim, 2005; Taştan, 2007). On the other hand, Pancaroğlu (2007) found that only subordination conflict resolution style was significantly different in terms of gender. The reason why no significant difference was found in the present study could be explained by that participants' satisfaction and commitment scores were high and most of the participants showed positive conflict resolution styles. As stated in several studies, since positive conflict resolution styles are associated with satisfying relationships and vice versa (Cramer, 2000; Özen, Salman-Engin, & Sakallı-Uğurlu, 2016; Koydemir, Sun-Selişik, & Tezer, 2008), gender might not have differed in the present study in terms of conflict resolution styles.

5.1.2. Student Status Differences in Investment Model Variables, Attachment, and Conflict Resolution Styles

In line with the aim of the study, to reveal how student status effected investment model variables, attachment, and conflict resolution styles, multivariate analyses of variance were computed. Results of the analyses showed that student status was merely different in the quality of alternatives. Students scored lower in quality of alternatives compared to those who are not students. In terms of student status, no significant difference was found in attachment and conflict resolution styles.

Several studies regarding investment model about romantic relationships conducted with college students (Büyükşahin, & Hovardaoğlu, 2007; Hatchter, Kryter, Prus, & Fitzgerald, 1992; Toplu-Demirtaş, Hatipoğlu Sümer, & White, 2013), and with different relationship types such as dating, engaged, and married (Hadden, Harvey, Settersten, & Agnew, 2018; Rusbult, Johnson & Morrow, 1986; Webster, Laurenceau, Smith, Mahaffey, Bryan, & Brunell, 2015). The present study included students and non-student participants to reveal the difference. Similar to the findings of the meta-

analysis by Tran, Judge, and Kashima (2019), the results showed that being a student differed in the investment model. The quality of alternatives was significantly showed a difference between students and non-students. According to the investment model, individuals with a greater level of quality of alternatives have a perception that significant needs might be met outside the relationship (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). In case of lack of better attractive alternatives for the relationship, partners could show more commitment to their relationship. Besides, better alternatives are not only possible for partners but also for friends or being alone that fulfills greater number of needs than relationship (Le & Agnew, 2003). Considering the investment model's statements, the results of the study illustrated that non-student Turkish emerging adults have more thoughts of a better alternative for the relationship than student Turkish emerging adults. In contrast to what was found, quality of alternatives decreases as the relationship duration and age of the partners increase (Rusbult, 1986). One possible explanation for why quality of alternatives decreases over time explained by Pawlowski and Dunbar (1999) as people age and left college, self-evaluation for possible dating activity, in other words, dating market value decreases which results in a decline in the quality of alternatives. However, the findings of present study revealed that non-student participants showed greater levels of quality of alternatives. The investment model states that high commitment levels are associated with lower levels of quality of alternatives (Rusbult, 1983). When the levels for commitment and quality of alternatives were investigated, the sample of present study indicated high levels of commitment in both student and non-student participants while non-student participants showed greater quality of alternatives. Non-student participants did not indicate lower commitment even though they showed greater quality of alternatives. Furthermore, although having a romantic relationship allows emerging adults to experience how to establish and maintain a relationship, Fincham and Cui (2010) states that as emerging adults gain experience in romantic relationship with aging, they stay in their relationships to be able to discover more romantic options. Therefore, it can be implied that the reason why non-student emerging adults showed greater quality of alternatives could be that as non-student participants develop their relationship skills, they search for better alternatives. Furthermore, in the present study, when the future expectations for the relationships were examined via student status, 87.1% of the

student participants reported that they would expect to marry while 76.9% of the non-student participants reported that they had intentions to marry. Although it was not one of the aims of the current study, to explore the associations between student status and future expectations, it was observed that non-student participants had less intention to marry their current partners [$\chi^2(3) = 23.84, p < 0.1$]. Indeed, Stanley, Rhoades, and Whitton (2010) found that having intentions to continue the relationship in the future results in more committed relationships, and the higher commitment is associated with the poorer quality of alternatives which leads to highly committed relationships. Thus, it can be implied that non-student participants of the current study might have reported greater quality of alternatives than students due to their low intentions of marriage.

5.1.3. The Investment Model Assumption Testing

To reveal whether investment model components, namely satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives were associated with romantic relationship commitment, simultaneous multiple regression analysis was performed.

Parallel to what Rusbult's Investment Model proposes, results showed that satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment were significant predictors of relationship commitment (Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998). Specifically, satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment explained the 40.4% of the variance in commitment. Satisfaction was the greatest predictor of commitment in this study, as found in previous studies (Le & Agnew, 2003; Tran, Judge & Kashima, 2019). Like the earlier studies, satisfaction and investment had a positive contribution to commitment while quality of alternatives had a negative contribution to commitment (Rusbult, Zembrodt & Gunn, 1982; Le & Agnew, 2003; Sprecher 1988). Considering the findings of the present study, results show consistency with the previous studies. However, Sprecher (1988) found that satisfaction and quality of alternatives were the strongest predictors of commitment, yet investment was not found to be associated with commitment.

Simultaneous multiple regression analysis indicated that commitment is predicted by satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment of Turkish emerging adults which

indicates that as Turkish emerging adults' satisfaction and investment increase and their quality of alternatives decreases, their romantic relationship commitment increases. The results were in line with a great number of previous studies regarding the investment model (Le & Agnew, 2003; Tran, Judge & Kashima, 2019; Rusbult, Zembrodt & Gunn, 1982; Le & Agnew, 2003; Sprecher 1988). Besides, the study proved that the proposition of the investment model was valid for the Turkish emerging adults sample.

5.1.4. The Role of Attachment and Conflict Resolution Styles on Commitment

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the role of attachment and conflict resolution styles on romantic relationship commitment after controlling for gender, student status, and relationship duration. To reach that aim, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted.

Initially, gender, student status, and relationship duration were entered into the model to reveal their effect on predicting commitment. Results showed that relationship duration and student status were significantly associated with commitment. Bivariate results of the present study supported these findings. Similarly, Rusbult (1986) proposed that commitment increases in relationships over time, and Rhoades, Stanley, and Markman (2010) found that as the relationship continues relationship stability increases. Additionally, Tran, Judge, and Kashima (2018) also found that student status was associated with commitment. As mentioned earlier, when people get older and end up their education, they may prefer to stay in the relationship as they gain relational experience to recognize other possible romantic alternatives. On the other hand, gender was significantly associated with commitment; yet in studies with Turkish sample, the results regarding gender differences were mixed considering commitment.

After introducing investment model variables in model 2, relationship duration was not significantly associated with commitment while student status, satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives found to be significant. Investment model

variables, namely satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment contributed 40% of variance change of commitment.

In model 3, attachment styles were entered into the model. The effect of investment model variables and student status on commitment continued with the unique addition of avoidance attachment, meaning that not being a student, satisfaction, investment, quality of alternatives, and avoidance attachment were significantly associated with commitment while anxiety attachment was not found significant in the model. Introducing attachment styles to the model caused 2.6% variance change in commitment. Since individuals with avoidance attachment show less dependence (Bartholomew, 1990; Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998), it might have been expected to have less commitment in their relationships (Birnie, McClure, Lydon & Holmberg, 2009) as found in the study. A possible reason behind this proposition is that people with avoidance attachment do not tend to have committed relationships (Keelan, Dion, & Dion, 1994; Pistole, Clark, & Tubbs, 1995; Simpson, 1990), and long-lasting relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). On the other hand, although individuals with anxious attachment tend to strive for dependency and stability in relationships (Feeney, & Noller, 1990), they struggle to maintain their relationships due to their inconsistency about their self-worth which results in less committed relationships for anxiously attached individuals (Joel, MacDonald, & Shimotomai, 2011). Similar to the findings of the study, avoidance attachment was found negatively related to commitment while anxiety attachment failed to predict commitment in Öztekin's (2016) study with Turkish college students.

When conflict resolution styles were introduced to the model, only positive resolution style was found significant among other styles while student status, satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and avoidance attachment were still significant predictors for commitment. Conflict resolution styles contributed 1.9% of variance change in commitment. The reason behind this might be that participants of the present study have high satisfaction and commitment in their relationships. Highly satisfied relationships are mostly associated with positive conflict resolution styles (Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Cramer, 2000; Cramer 2002; Gottman 1993; Haring, Hewitt & Flett,

2003; Kurdek, 1995; Metz & Rosser, 1994; Moland, 2011; Öner, 2013; Peterson 1983; Schudlich, Papp & Cummings, 2011) and less satisfying relationships are related to negative conflict resolution styles (Dellatore & Wagner, 2019; Hünler & Gençöz, 2003; Marchand & Hock, 2000; Sanderson & Karetsky, 2002; Stanley, Whitton, & Markman 2004). Similar to the findings of the study, Gonzaga, Keltner, Londahl, and Smith (2001) found that commitment was predicted by constructive conflict resolution styles. Moreover, the bivariate results of the present study also supported this finding in which positive conflict resolution style was related to commitment and other conflict resolution styles except for retreat conflict resolution style.

To sum up, results showed that the romantic relationship commitment of Turkish emerging adults was explained by some demographic and relational variables (gender, student status, and relationship duration), investment model components (satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment), attachment styles, and conflict resolution styles. The final model explained 46% of the variance in commitment with student status, satisfaction, investment, quality of alternatives, avoidance attachment, and positive conflict resolution style. Student status, satisfaction, investment, and positive conflict resolution style had a positive effect on commitment while the quality of alternatives and avoidance attachment had negative. Specifically, non-student Turkish emerging adults with satisfying relationships, having a good deal of investment in relationships, fewer alternatives, showing less avoidance attachment, and having a positive conflict resolution style, have a greater level of romantic relationship commitment.

5.1. Implications for Theory, Research, and Practice

Previous studies related with investment model mostly included attachment styles, and studies with attachment styles were associated with conflict resolution styles. In the present study, in light of the literature, the interaction between those models and theories was utilized, and the effect of attachment and conflict resolution styles together on commitment was investigated after controlling for gender, relationship duration, student status with unique contribution of investment model components. The present study showed that avoidance attachment style and positive conflict

resolution were predictors of commitment with the unique contribution of the investment model variables after controlling for gender, student status, and relationship duration. These findings suggest several implications for theories, research, and practices.

As a research implication, the study investigated relationship commitment through the investment model with Turkish emerging adult sample. The investment model states that commitment is predicted positively by satisfaction and investment while predicted negatively by the quality of alternatives (Rusbult, 1983). It was indicated in the present study that the model was validated for the Turkish emerging adulthood sample by having the same directional relations among investment model components.

The investment model also asserts that commitment is negatively associated with the quality of alternatives (Rusbult, 1980). Nevertheless, the current study provided evidence regarding the non-student emerging adult participants that it seems possible to report stronger commitment along with a better quality of alternatives. Since emerging adults have both characteristics of adolescents and adults, they need a secure base to be able to explore the world (Arnett, 2000). Hence, emerging adults may commit to their relationships while looking for better alternatives (Fincham & Cui, 2010). Considering the investment model is predominantly involved in the studies with married couples and college students, the present study finding has extended the literature indicating that the relationships among investment model variables might be influenced by being a non-student emerging adult.

As Fincham, Stanley, and Rhoades (2011) stated, since the majority of emerging adults desire to be married or have a romantic relationship; and that conflicts, disagreements frequently happen in the initial phases of relationships, relationship education is significant during emerging adulthood. Moreover, according to the latest report from the Turkish Statistical Institute (2020), the age of first marriage for men is 27,9 while 25 for women. Thirty-six percent of divorce happens in the first five years of marriage. Therefore, it is important to consider intervention and prevention programs for dating and premarital relationships. Many of such programs focus on informing about relationships and skill-based training which could help partners to maintain and

improve their current or possible future relationships on a specific content (Senediak, 1990). Therefore, the study's findings would provide insight into how to maintain the relationship since the fact that commitment is one of the most effective predictors of the persistence of the relationship (Etcheverry & Le, 2005). In other words, considering the fact that satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment were found as the strongest predictors of the relationship commitment, all predictors of commitment including avoidance attachment and positive conflict resolution should be taken into account while preparing relationship education programs for couples.

Furthermore, the present study included non-student participants in dating relationships, and results showed that commitment was influenced by the student status. This finding implies that it is significant to offer romantic relationship-related courses and seminars not only to college students but also to non-student individuals. Even though most of the relationship-related programs were held in college settings, several programs were implemented in different community settings in the past decades (Markman & Rhoades, 2012). Meta-analysis studies indicated that couple and relationship educations, apart from university settings, benefits partners to enhance their relationship (Hawkins & Erickson, 2015; Hawkins, Blanchard, Baldwin, & Fawcett, 2008).

As findings of the study revealed the significance of attachment and conflict resolution styles over couple's relationships, attachment issues are significant in clinical practice (Werner-Wilson & Davenport, 2003). Presenting issues for couples to seek counseling is mostly that there are conflicts dissolved or solved ineffectively caused by dissatisfied attachment needs (Solomon, 2009). Therefore, the information gathered from the present study provides valuable implications for clinical practice for couples and individual counseling. Counselors/therapists working with relationship related issues would benefit from the findings of the study. Specifically, the fact that bringing insight to clients about their attachment and conflict resolution styles would help them to understand and resolve conflicts better, meet their attachment needs, and further increase their commitment. Hood (2014) found a significant difference between pre-test and post-test results of clients with anxiety and avoidance attachment who

underwent individual counseling sessions, and that clients improved their attachment security over counseling. As Bowlby (1988) declared attachment styles are progressive and influenced by an individual's internal working models which could be changed with counseling. Counseling presenting a riskless and safe atmosphere to clients assists them to discover and internalize the effects of prior attachment background on previous and current relationship beliefs (White, 2004). By this inspection, clients could be able to realize unmet attachment needs from past and present and to increase their attachment security (Wachtel, 2010).

The present study indicated that positive conflict resolution styles contribute to romantic relationship commitment in dating relationships. Premarital relationships are predictors of marriage experience, meaning that, existing conflict resolution behaviors would result in similar attitudes in marriage. Therefore, investigating conflict behaviors in dating relationships is significant to prevent and develop appropriate methods (Creasey, 2002). Furthermore, attachment styles determine how individuals perceive and resolve the conflict. In case of a conflict, internal working models are activated and affect conflict resolution ways of partners (Shi, 2003). Therefore, counselor/clinicians could benefit from the findings of the study, and train clients to improve positive conflict resolution styles.

5.2. Recommendations for Future Research

The present study aimed to investigate whether attachment and conflict resolution styles predict relationship commitment in Turkish emerging adults' dating relationships after controlling for gender, student status, relationship duration, and the investment model components. They were found related to commitment.

Nonetheless, data gathered from Turkish emerging adults were not diverse in terms of gender identity representations which was an important limitation to the study. Gender identities have been studied in terms of investment model components with different cultures (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986; Kurdek, 1995) yet not with the Turkish sample. Future studies should include a larger sample size to reveal associations between commitment with attachment and conflict resolution styles with diverse gender

identities among Turkish emerging adults. It should also be considered that many studies cannot include those gender identities due to lack of enough representations as was the case for this study (Frohard, Dobson, Clark, Doull, & Saewyc, 2016). Therefore, to have an inclusive studies in terms of gender, studies should be population-based, and purposive sampling for gender identities can be used. Additionally, merely dating relationships were included in the present study considering the emerging adulthood period's characteristics; therefore, married, cohabiting, and engaged couples are also needed to be investigated in future studies.

Several studies provided strong evidence about gender predicting commitment (Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; Rusbult, Onizuka & Lipkus, 1993; Sacher & Fine, 1996). However, gender was not found related to relationship commitment in the present study. Studies with Turkish sample have shown inconsistent findings regarding relationship between gender and commitment. Some studies have found associations (Aslan-Dölen, 2014; Hasta & Büyüksahin, 2005; Büyüksahin, 2006; Kaynak, 2014; Beşikçi, 2008) while others failed to report such a relation (Anlatan, 2019; Öztekin, 2016). Hence, a meta-analysis study can be conducted to explore this relationship in research with Turkish samples.

The present study showed that Turkish emerging adults who have at least one month of dating relationship have high levels of satisfaction and commitment in their relationships. Future studies should cover couples with lower satisfaction and commitment to reveal different relationships with other attachment and conflict resolution styles.

The study focused on Turkish emerging adults who were dating at least one month. For future studies, longitudinal studies would reveal the change in data in time to better understand the relationship between variables. Moreover, the study design was quantitative in which data gathered from participant via instruments. Future studies could benefit from qualitative studies in which participants could share their individual experiences as they would like.

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APPENDICES

A. ETHICAL APPROVAL FROM MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

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12 Aralık 2019

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (IAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Zeynep Hatipoğlu SÜMER

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Onur KIZILKAYA'nın "Bağlanma ve Çatışma Yönetim Stillerinin Beliren Yetişkinlerin Romantik İlişki Bağlanımındaki Rolü" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 458 ODTÜ 2019 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız

Doç.Dr. Mine MISIRLIŞOY
Başkan

Prof. Dr. Tolga CAN
Üye

Doç.Dr. Pınar KAYGAN
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Süreyya Özcan KABASAKAL
Üye

B. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM (IN TURKISH)

KATILIMCI BİLGİ FORMU

Araştırmanın bu kısmında sizinle ilgili genel bilgiler sorulmaktadır. Lütfen her bir maddeyi okuyup, durumunuzu en çok yansıtan seçeneği işaretleyiniz ya da boşlukları doldurunuz.

Cinsiyet kimliğinizi nasıl tanımlarsınız (Erkek, kadın, Trans, Interseks vb. gibi):

Yaşınız:

Yaşadığınız Şehir:

Öğrenci Misiniz? () Evet () Hayır

Çalışıyor Musunuz? () Evet. () Hayır

Eğitim Düzeyiniz:

() İlkokul () Ortaokul () Lise () Üniversite () Yüksek Lisans () Doktora

İlişki Durumunuz: () İlişkim var. () İlişkim yok.

İlişki Süreniz: Yıl.....Ay

Flört İlişkiniz ile Görüşme Sıklığınız:

() Ayda bir defadan az

() Ayda bir defa () İki haftada bir () Her hafta

() Haftada birkaç kez

() Her gün

() Gün içinde birden çok kez

Şu an devam eden ilişkiniz için hangisi en uygundur?

() Flört/Çıkma

() Sözlü/Nişanlı () Birlikte Yaşama

() Evli

Aşağıdakilerden hangisi ilişkinizin geleceğini en iyi şekilde tanımlar?

() Geleceğimiz hakkında bir fikrim yok/kararsızım.

() Bitecek, partnerim ayrılmak istiyor/ayrılacak.

() Bitecek, ben ayrılmak istiyorum/ ayrılacağım.

() Evlenmeden, böyle birlikte devam edeceğiz.

() Evleneceğiz.

İlişkinizdeki çatışma sıklığınız:

() Ayda bir defadan az

() Ayda bir defa

() İki haftada bir

() Her hafta

() Haftada birkaç kez

() Her gün

() Gün içinde birden çok kez

**C. SAMPLE ITEMS FOR TURKISH VERSION OF THE INVESTMENT
MODEL SCALE**

İLİŞKİ İSTİKRARI ÖLÇEĞİ

I. İD.

Şu anki yakın ilişkinizi göz önüne alarak, aşağıdaki ifadelerden her birine ne derece katıldığınızı belirtiniz.

	Tamamen Yanlış	Oldukça yanlış	Oldukça doğru	Tamamıyla doğru
a) Birlikte olduğum kişi, kişisel düşünceleri, sırları paylaşma gibi yakınlık gereksinimlerimi karşılıyor.				
b) Birlikte olduğum kişi beraberce bir şeyler yapma, beraber olmaktan keyif alma gibi arkadaşlık gereksinimlerimi karşılıyor.				
c) Birlikte olduğum kişi el ele tutuşma, öpüşme gibi cinsel gereksinimlerimi karşılıyor.				
d) Birlikte olduğum kişi istikrarlı bir ilişki içinde güvende ve rahat hissetme gereksinimlerimi karşılıyor.				
e) Birlikte olduğum kişi duygusal olarak bağlı hissetme, o iyi hissettiğinde kendimi iyi hissetmem gibi gereksinimlerimi karşılıyor.				

**D. SAMPLE ITEMS FOR EXPERIENCES IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS-
REVISED (ECR-R)**

ROMANTİK İLİŞKİLERDE ÇATIŞMA ÇÖZÜM STİLLERİ

Aşağıda, romantik ilişkilerinizde yaşanan sorunların genel olarak nasıl çözümlendiğiniz ile ilgili ifadeler yer almaktadır. Lütfen partneriniz ile ilişkinizi göz önüne alarak, aşağıdaki ifadelerden her birine ne derece katıldığınızı belirtiniz. Her bir ifadenin önündeki boşluğa aşağıdaki sayılardan uygun olanı yazınız.

1	2	3	4	5
6				
Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum.	Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Katılıyorum
Çok Katılıyorum				

____1.Tartışma esnasında konuyla ilgisiz de olsa zayıflıklarını yüzüne vururum.

____2.Kavganın büyümemesi için onun istediği şeyleri yaparım.

____3.Çok sinirlenmişsem konuşmayı ertelerim.

E. SAMPLE ITEMS FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES SCALE (CRSS)

(YIYE-II)

Aşağıdaki maddeler romantik ilişkilerinizde hissettiğiniz duygularla ilgilidir. Bu araştırmada sizin ilişkinizde yalnızca şu anda değil, genel olarak neler olduğuyla ya da neler yaşadığınızla ilgilenmekteyiz. Maddelerde sözü geçen "birlikte olduğum kişi" ifadesi ile romantik ilişkide bulunduğunuz kişi kastedilmektedir. Eğer halihazırda bir romantik ilişki içerisinde değilseniz, aşağıdaki maddeleri bir ilişki içinde olduğunuzu varsayarak cevaplandırınız. Her bir maddenin ilişkilerinizdeki duygu ve düşüncelerinizi ne oranda yansıttığını karşılarındaki 7 aralıklı ölçek üzerinde, ilgili rakam üzerine çarpı (X) koyarak gösteriniz.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7
Hiç Kararsızım/ Tamamen
katılmıyorum fikrim yok katılıyorum

1. Birlikte olduğum kişinin sevgisini kaybetmekten korkarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Gerçekte ne hissettiğimi birlikte olduğum kişiye göstermemeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Sıklıkla, birlikte olduğum kişinin artık benimle olmak istemeyeceği korkusuna kapılırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Özel duygu ve düşüncelerimi birlikte olduğum kişiyle paylaşmak konusunda kendimi rahat hissedirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Sıklıkla, birlikte olduğum kişinin beni gerçekten sevmediği kaygısına kapılırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

F. TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET

BAĞLANMA VE ÇATIŞMA ÇÖZME STİLLERİNİN BELİREN YETİŞKİMLERİN ROMANTİK İLİŞKİ BAĞLANIMINDAKİ ROLÜ: YATIRIM MODELİ YAKLAŞIMI

1. GİRİŞ

Romantik ilişkilerin insanların hayatında önemli etkilerinin olması (Proulx, Helms ve Buehler, 2007; Robles, 2014), ilişkilerin birçok farklı açıdan değerlendirilmesine neden olmuştur. Boşanma ve evlilik öncesi ayrılma sayılarının artması ve bireylerin psikolojik danışma hizmeti almalarında romantik ilişkilerin çokça neden olması (Doss, Simpson ve Christensen, 2004), yakın ilişkilerin nasıl sürdürüldüğü ve bittiği konularında birçok araştırmanın yapılmasına neden olmuştur (Le ve Agnew, 2003). Romantik ilişkiler tüm yaşam dönemlerinde önemli olsa da beliren yetişkinlikte gelişimsel hedeflerdir (Erickson, 1968; Rosenthal, Gurney, & Moore, 1981; Arnett, 2000). Beliren yetişkinler, romantik ilişkiler başlatarak ve sürdürerek kendi değerlerini, tercihlerini, inançlarını keşfederler (Arnett, 2000). Beliren yetişkinlik, ergenlik ve yetişkinlik arasındaki geçiş periyodunu kapsamaktadır. Yetişkinliğin belirleyici rollerinden olan çocuk sahibi olmanın, evlenmenin ve eğitimi tamamlamanın gerçekleştiği yaşların yirmili yaşların başından yirmili yaşların sonuna ertelenmesi, bireylerin yirmili yaşların ortasına kadar yetişkin karakteristik özelliklerini göstermemesine neden olmuştur (Arnett, 2000). Arnett'e (2000) göre 18-25 yaş arasındaki bu dönem beliren yetişkinliktir. Farklı ülkelerde bu yaş aralığı değişkenlik göstermektedir. Araştırmalara göre beliren yetişkinlik Türkiye'de 19-26 yaş aralığına denk gelmektedir (Atak ve Çok, 2010).

Beliren yetişkinlik döneminde bireyler bağımsızlığını kazanmamış olabilir ve sorumluluklarının farkında olmayabilirler. Bir başka deyişle, hem ergenlik hem de yetişkinlik dönemlerinin özelliklerini taşırlar. Bu dönemde ergenlik döneminde başlayan karakter oluşumu; aşk, iş ve dünya görüşü konularında kararlar alarak ve denemeler yaparak devam eder (Arnett, 2004). Aynı zamanda, bilişsel, sosyal ve

duygusal deęişimlere neden olan romantik ilişkiler, kişilerin karakterinin ve kimliğinin oluşmasında önemli bir rol oynayarak, karşılaştıkları yeni sorumluluklara adapte olmalarını kolaylaştırır (Furjman ve Schaffer, 2003).

Romantik ilişkilerin özellikle beliren yetişkinlerin hayatında büyük bir öneme sahip olduğu düşünüldüğünde, yakın ilişkileri en iyi tanımlayan modellerden biri Rusbult'un Yatırım Modeli'dir (Rusbult, Marts ve Agnew, 1998). Bazı ilişkilerin neden bittiğı ve bazılarının devam ettiği sorusundan yola çıkarak, Rusbult ve Buunk (1993) ilişki bağlanımını, psikolojik bağlılık olan biz kavramını içeren, ilişkide kalma isteğı olarak açıklamıştır. Bağlanım, ilişkideki davranışları belirleyen psikolojik bir yapıdır ve doyum, seçeneklerin niteliğı ile yatırım olarak üç temele dayandırılır (Rusbult, Marts ve Agnew, 1998). Yatırım Modeli'nde, doyum, seçeneklerin niteliğı ve yatırım, ilişki bağlanımını oluşturur. Bir başka deyişle, ilişkilerinde bağlı olanlar aynı zamanda daha yüksek doyuma, daha fazla yatırıma ve daha düşük seçeneklerin niteliğine sahiptirler (Rusbult, Mars ve Agnew, 1998). Bağlanım, ilişkide kalma isteğini yansıttığı için, birçok araştırmada yer almıştır. Bu çalışmada da bağlanım, Yatırım Modeli çerçevesinde incelenmiştir.

Alan yazındaki araştırmalar incelendiğinde, farklı demografik özellikteki bireylerin farklı bağlanım düzeylerinin olduğu görülmüştür. Örneğın, yapılan çalışmalar, kadınların erkeklere göre daha fazla yatırım yaptığını (Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998) ve ilişki süresi uzadıkça yatırımın arttığını göstermiştir (Rhoades, Stanley, & Markman, 2010; Rusbult 1983). Bağlanımla ilgili yapılan çalışmalarda çoğunlukla evli çiftler (Butzer, & Campbell, 2008; Impett, Beals & Peplau, 2001) veya üniversite öğrencileri katılımcı olarak belirlenmiştir (Büyükaşahin, & Hovardaoğlu, 2007; Toplu-Demirtaş, Hatipoğlu Sümer, & White, 2013). Beliren yetişkinlerin evlenmeyi erteleyebilecekleri veya öğrenimlerine devam edebilecekleri göz önüne alındığında (Arnett, 2000), öğrenci ve öğrenci olmayan grupların da bağlanım açısından araştırılmasına ihtiyaç vardır.

İlişkiyi devam ettirmeye yönelik istek bağlanım ile açıklansa da Morgan ve Shaver (1999) bireylerin ilişkilerine bağlanmaları için kasıtlı olmadan davranışsal örüntüler gösterdiğini belirtmiştir. Bağlanma Kuramına göre, bebeklikte bakıcıyla kurulan

yakınlık ve temas, bireylerin insanlarla kurduğu psikolojik bağlantıları belirler (Bowlby, 1969). Yani, bebekle bakıcısı arasındaki ilişki, bebeğin gelecekte başkalarıyla kuracağı ilişkilerdeki davranışlarına da yansımalar yapabilir. Partnerler arasında doyurulan yakınlık ve güven ihtiyacı, bakıcının bebekte karşıladığı ihtiyaçlara benzemektedir (Hazan ve Shaver, 1987). Bağlanma davranışlarının amacı, ilişki içindeki tartışmalar dahil olmak üzere her türlü tehlikeden bireylerin kendisini korumasıdır (Bowlby, 1980). Bağlanma kuramı ve yatırım modelindeki bağlanım, bireylerin ilişkide nasıl davrandıklarını ve ilişkiyi nasıl değerlendirdiklerini belirlediği için, bireylerin aynı zamanda ilişkideki çatışmaları fırsat veya tehdit olmak üzere nasıl değerlendirdiklerini de etkiler (Pietromonaco, Greenwood ve Barrett, 2004).

Biri diğerinin hedefine ulaşmasını engellediğinde, tartışmalar ortaya çıkar (Folger, Poole ve Stutman, 2017). Uyumsuzluk ve anlaşmazlık olarak tanımlanabilecek tartışmalar, sürekli etkileşim halinde olan partnerler için kaçınılmazdır (Rahim, 1983). Tartışma yaşandığında kişiler, bağlanma süreçlerine göre farklı davranışlar gösterebilirler. Bu davranışlar vazgeçme, kabullenme, özür dileme veya reddetme olabilir. Tartışmalar, kişilerin verdiği tepkilere göre, ilişki için yapıcı veya yıkıcı olabilir. Bu nedenle, tartışmaları uygun şekilde çözümlemek, her zaman uyuşmazlığı ortadan kaldırmaya da oldukça önemlidir (Gottman, 1993).

Sonuç olarak, beliren yetişkinlikte romantik ilişkiler, bireylerin samimiyeti deneyimleyerek, kendi kimliklerini inşa ettikleri, kişisel gelişim araçlarıdır. Romantik ilişkilerin beliren yetişkinliğin ana gelişimsel amacı olduğu düşünüldüğünde, bu dönemde bir ilişkiyi neyin istikrarlı ve tatmin edici kıldığını araştırmak önemlidir. Rusbult ve ark. (1993), ilişkinin sürdürülmesini açıklamak için en bilinen terimlerinden biri olan ilişkide bağlanımını, ilişkiyi sürdürmeye istekli olma niyeti olarak açıklar. Cinsiyet farklılıkları, öğrencilik durumu, ilişkinin uzunluğu, doyum, yatırım ve seçeneklerin niteliği gibi romantik ilişkilerin bağlanımını etkileyen birçok değişken vardır. Bu nedenle, ilişkinin bağlanımı yorumlanırken bu değişkenler dikkate alınmalıdır.

Özetle, bağlanım, ilişkinin partnerler tarafından nasıl algılandığını tanımlar ve ilişkinin istikrarını ortaya koyar. İlişkide partnerlerin nasıl davrandığı da bağlanımı

etkiler. Romantik ilişkilerle ilgili daha önce yapılan araştırmalar, eşlerin bebeklikte bakıcılarıyla geliştirdikleri ilişkilerinden oluşan bağlanma stillerinin, şimdiki ilişkilerini etkilediğini göstermiştir (Morgan ve Shaver, 1999). Bağlanma davranışları, çatışmalar gibi, bireyler için bir tehdit olduğunda aktif hale gelir. Bu nedenle, ilişkide meydana gelen çatışmaları partnerlerin nasıl ele aldığı, bağlanma tarzlarından etkilenen romantik ilişki kalitesini ve bağlanımını etkiler (Lloyd, 1987). Beliren yetişkinlikteki romantik ilişkiler düşünüldüğünde, bağlanma ve çatışma çözüm stilleri, ilişkinin istikrarını (bağlanımını) etkiler. Bu nedenle bu çalışma, cinsiyet, öğrenci durumu ve ilişki süresi kontrol edildikten sonra, bağlanma ve çatışma çözüm stillerinin, beliren yetişkinlikte flört ilişkisi bağlanımını ne ölçüde açıkladığını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır.

1.2. Araştırmanın Amacı

Araştırmanın amacı, Türk beliren yetişkinlerin romantik ilişki bağlanımını Rusbult'un yatırım modelini kullanarak incelemektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, ilişki bağlanımı ile bağlanma stilleri, çatışma çözüm stilleri, bazı demografik değişkenler (cinsiyet, öğrencilik durumu ve ilişki süresi) ve bağlanımın bileşenleri (doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği ve yatırım) arasındaki ilişki incelenmiştir.

Bu çalışmanın örnekleminin Yatırım Modeli kriterlerini doğruladığını kontrol etmek için ana analizler yapılmadan önce doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği ve yatırımın bağlanıma etkisi incelenmiştir. Aynı zamanda, yatırım modeli bileşenlerinin, bağlanma ve çatışma çözüm stillerinin cinsiyet ve öğrencilik durumuna göre değişip değişmediği de kontrol edilmiştir.

1.3. Araştırma Soruları

Mevcut çalışmanın araştırma soruları aşağıda listelenmiştir:

a) Türk beliren yetişkinlerin Yatırım Modeli bileşenlerinde (doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği, yatırım ve bağlanım), çatışma çözüm stillerinde ve bağlanma stillerinde cinsiyete göre anlamlı bir farklılık var mıdır?

b) Türk beliren yetişkinlerin Yatırım Modeli bileşenlerinde (doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği, yatırım ve bağlanım), çatışma çözüm stillerinde ve bağlanma stillerinde öğrencilik durumlarına göre anlamlı bir farklılık var mıdır?

c) Türk beliren yetişkinlerin romantik ilişki doyumu, seçeneklerinin niteliği ve yatırımı, Yatırım Modelinde belirtildiği gibi bağlanımlarını yordamakta mıdır?

d) Türk beliren yetişkinlerin bağlanma ve çatışma çözüm stilleri, cinsiyet, öğrencilik durumu ve ilişki süresi kontrol edildikten sonra doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği ve yatırımın katkılarıyla romantik ilişki bağlanımını ne ölçüde yordamaktadır?

1.3. Çalışmanın Önemi

Araştırmada, Rusbult'un Yatırım Modelini kullanarak, beliren yetişkinlikte romantik ilişki bağlanımının bağlanma ve çatışma çözüm stilleri aracılığıyla incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Çalışmada kullanılan model doğrultusunda romantik ilişki bağlanımını çatışma çözüm ve bağlanma stilleri aracılığıyla ölçmek, çalışmanın özgünlüğünü ortaya koymaktadır. Bağlanma stilleri (Butzer ve Campbell, 2008; Hazan ve Shaver, 1987), çatışma çözüm stilleri (Delatorre ve Wagner, 2019; General & McNulty, 2016) ve yatırım modeli (Campbell & Foster, 2002; Impett, Beals & Peplau, 2001) Türkiye örnekleminde olduğu gibi (Büyükşahin, 2006; Terzi İlhan ve Işık, 2017) romantik ilişkileri incelemek için birçok çalışmada kullanılmıştır. Yatırım modeli bileşenlerinin bağlanma stilleri (Mikulincer ve Erev, 1991; Pistole, Clark ve Tubbs, 1995) ve çatışma çözüm stilleri (Pistole, 1989; Rinehart, 1993; Shi, 2003) ile ilişkili olduğuna dair birçok çalışma vardır. Bu etkileşimler göz önünde bulundurularak, farklı değişkenlerin etkileri kontrol ettikten sonra, çalışmada bağlanma ve çatışma çözüm stillerinin bağlanımı ne ölçüde yordadığı, bu üç model ve teorik yaklaşımlar kullanılarak incelenmiştir.

Romantik ilişkiler, çoğunlukla ilişkinin genel bir değerlendirmesi olarak düşünülerek doyum perspektifinde incelenir (Butzer ve Campbell, 2008; Dyrenforth, Kashy, Donnellan ve Lucas, 2010). Ancak, ilişki tatmin edici olmasa da kişi ilişkide kalmaya devam edebilir (Rusbult, Martz ve Agnew, 1998). Yatırım Modeline göre doyum,

ilişkinin tek değerlendirme kriteri değildir; ancak, ilişkinin genel değerlendirmesinin bileşenlerinden biridir. Seçeneklerin niteliği, yatırım ve doyum birlikte, ilişkide devam etme arzusu olan ilişki bağlanımını yordar (Rusbult, 1980). Bu nedenle çalışma, Yatırım Modelindeki bağlanımını kullanarak romantik ilişki literatürüne katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Yatırım Modeli, romantik ilişkilerle ilgili çalışmalarda defalarca kullanılmış olmasına rağmen bu çalışma, örneklem olarak beliren yetişkinleri dahil ederek literatürü genişletmektedir. Romantik ilişkiler, beliren yetişkinlik döneminin ana gelişimsel amacı olduğu için (Arnett, 2000), çalışmada bu özel dönem dikkate alınmıştır. Çalışma ayrıca, ilişkideki bağlanımı, bağlanma ve çatışma çözüm stilleri açısından Türk beliren yetişkinler için veriler sunmaktadır. Aynı zamanda, yakın ilişkiyle ilgili çalışmaların çoğu evli bireylerle (Butzer ve Campell, 2008; Dyrenforth, Kashy, Donnellan ve Lucas, 2010) veya lisans öğrencileriyle yürütülmüştür (Hatcher, Kryter, Prus ve Fitzgerald, 1992; Rusbult, 1980).

Türkiye'de beliren yetişkinlik dönemi, 19-26 yaş aralığını temsil etmektedir. (Atak ve Çok, 2010). Türkiye'de ilk evlenmenin beliren yetişkinlik döneminin sonlarında yaşanmasından dolayı (TÜİK, 2020), bu çalışmada sadece flört ilişkileri ele alınmıştır. Ayrıca, beliren yetişkinlerin yüksek öğrenimlerine yirmili yaşlarında devam edebilecekleri düşünülerek, araştırmaya değişken olarak öğrencilik durumu da eklenmiştir. Bu sayede, öğrenci ve öğrenci olmayanlar arasında bağlanımın, bağlanma ve çatışma çözüm stillerinin ne ölçüde farklılaştığı araştırılmıştır.

Ek olarak, çalışmanın sonuçları, psikolojik danışmanlık uygulamalarına da katkıda bulunacaktır. Danışanların ruh sağlığı uzmanlarından yardım almalarının ana nedenlerinden birinin romantik ilişkilerle ilgili sorunları (Creasey, Kershaw ve Boston, 1999) olduğu düşünüldüğünde, çalışmanın bulguları ruh sağlığı alanında çalışan danışmanlara da katkı sağlayacaktır. Çalışma, bağlanımı yüksek ilişkiler geliştirmek için bağlanma davranışlarının, ihtiyaçlarının ve çatışma çözüm stillerininin dikkate alınması gerektiğini göstermektedir. Bu doğrultuda çalışma, danışanların ilişkileri ile ilgili konuları ele alınırken çatışma çözüm ve bağlanma stillerinin de incelenmesinin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Aynı şekilde, yapılan

arařtırmalar romantik iliřki beceri programlarının, iliřkilerin kalitesini ve baėlanımını artırdığını g stermiřtir (Dion, 2005; Hawkins, Blanchard, Baldwin ve Fawcett, 2008). Bu nedenle  alıřma, romantik iliřki programlarında baėlanımı geliřtirmek i in baėlanma ve  atıřma   z m stillerinin incelenmesinin  nemini vurgulamaktadır.

2. Y NTEM

 alıřmanın amacına uygun olarak, iliřkisel arařtırma y ntemleri kullanılmıř ve veri toplamada ama lı  rnekleme y ntemi uygulanmıřtır. Arařtırmanın ana veri analizi y ntemi olarak ise hiyerarřik  oklu regresyon analizi uygulanmıřtır. Betimleyici istatistikler, MANOVA ve eřzamanlı  oklu regresyon analizi de yapılmıřtır.  alıřmanın baėlımlı deėiřkeni iliřki baėlanımı, baėımsız deėiřkenleri ise doyum, se eneklerin niteliėi, yatırım, ka ınmacı baėlanma, kaygılı baėlanma, olumsuz  atıřma   zme stili, olumlu  atıřma   zme stili, boyun eėme ve geri  ekilmedir. Ek olarak cinsiyet, iliřki s resi ve  ėrencilik durumu demografik deėiřkenler olarak kullanılmıřtır.

2.1. Veri Toplama S reci ve  rnekleme

Arařtırmanın hedef  rnekleme, T rkiye'de en az bir aydır romantik iliřki yařayan, beliren yetiřkinlerdir. Ama lı  rnekleme y ntemi, belirli bir yař grubuna (19-26) ve iliřki durumuna ulařmak i in kullanılmıřtır. Veri toplamaya bařlamadan  nce bazı prosed rler takip edilmiřtir. İlk olarak,  l ek yazarları ile iletiřime ge ilmiř ve ilgili  l ekleri kullanmak i in izinleri alınmıřtır. Daha sonra,  alıřmanın ilgili protokoller i in uygun olduėundan emin olmak adına Orta Teknik  niversitesi'nden etik kurul onayı alınmıřtır (bkz. Ek A). Etik onay alındıktan sonra, t m ara lar  evrimi i bir anket platformu olan Google Forms'a aktarılmıřtır. Veriler, katılımcılara ulařtırılan  evrimi i bir link aracılıėıyla toplanmıřtır. Link, sosyal medya platformları,  niversiteler ve 19-26 yař arası kiřilerin daha  ok bulunduėu ortamlarda paylařılmıřtır.

 alıřmaya toplamda 664 kiři katılmıřtır.  alıřmaya sadece 19-26 yař arası ve en az bir ay fl rt iliřkisi olan katılımcılar dahil edildiėinden, kriterler dıřından kalan 54 kiři

veri analizlerinden çıkarılmıştır. Veri temizliği sonrasında en az bir aydır flört ilişkisi yaşayan, 19-26 yaş arası 610 katılımcı, veri analizine dahil edilmiştir. Katılımcıların konumları dikkate alındığında, katılımcılar 36 farklı şehirden araştırmaya katılmıştır. Katılımcıların çoğu Ankara ($n = 258$; %41,8), İstanbul ($n = 93$; %15,2) ve İzmir'den ($n = 44$; %7,2) katılmıştır. Erkek katılımcıların sayısı ($n = 28$; %46,04) kadın katılımcılardan ($n = 329$; %53,93) daha azdır. Katılımcılar, 19-26 yaşları arasında olup, ortalama yaşları 23.93'tür ($SS = 1.63$). Katılımcıların ilişki süreleri 1 ay ile 140 ay arasında değişmiş olup, ortalama 29.45 aylıktır ($SS = 26.73$). Katılımcıların 372'si öğrenci (%61), 238'i ise öğrenci değildir.

2.2. Veri Toplama Araçları

Veriler dört ölçek kullanılarak toplanmıştır: İlişki İstikrar Ölçeği (Büyükşahin, Hasta ve Hovardaoğlu, 2005), Yakın İlişkilerde Yaşantılar Envanteri-II (Selçuk, Günaydın, Sümer ve Uysal, 2005), Romantik İlişkilerde Çatışma Çözüm Stilleri Ölçeği (Özen, Salman-Engin ve Sakallı-Uğurlu 2016) ve araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanan Demografik Bilgi Formu.

2.2.1. İlişki İstikrarı Ölçeği

İlişki İstikrarı Ölçeği, ilişkinin mevcut durumunu doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği, yatırım ve bağlanım yoluyla ölçmek için Rusbult, Martz ve Agnew (1998) tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği ve yatırım alt ölçeğinde 10'ar madde, bağlanım alt ölçeğinde ise 7 madde bulunmaktadır. İlk üç alt ölçekte yalnızca 9'lu Likert tipindeki son beş madde, son alt ölçekte ise 9'lu Likert tipindeki tüm maddeler ölçümlerde kullanılır. Ölçeklerde belirtilen maddelerin ortalaması alınarak hesaplama yapılır. Puanların yüksek olması, ilgili alt ölçekte yüksek düzeyde olduğunu gösterir.

Türkçe çeviri ve uyarlama çalışmaları, Büyükşahin ve arkadaşları (2005) tarafından yapılmıştır. Güvenilirlik ve geçerlilik çalışmaları, araştırmacılar tarafından, romantik ilişkisi olan 325 üniversite öğrencisi ile yapılmıştır. Türkçe'ye uyarlanmış ölçeklerin Cronbach alfa güvenirlik katsayıları doyum için .90, seçeneklerin niteliği için .84,

yatırım için .84 şeklindedir. Ayrıca 2008 yılında Büyüksahin ve Taluy ölçeği revize ederek yedi yeni maddeyle Bağlanım bileşenini dahil etmiştir. Son versiyonun Cronbach alfa katsayıları sırasıyla .93, .83, .84, .70 olarak bulunmuştur. Ayrıca, bu çalışma için Cronbach alfa katsayıları hesaplanmış ve her bir alt ölçek için sırasıyla değerler .87, .74, .80 ve .83 olarak bulunmuştur.

2.2.2. Yakın İlişkilerde Yaşantılar Envanteri-II

Ölçek Fraley, Waller ve Brennan tarafından (2000) kişilerin bağlanma stillerini ölçmek amacıyla geliştirilmiştir. Kaygılı ve kaçınmacı bağlanma olmak üzere iki alt ölçeği bulunan ölçekte; toplamda 36, her alt ölçekte 18'er madde bulunmaktadır. Maddeler 7'li Likert tipinde derecelendirilmektedir. Hesaplamalar her alt ölçek için ortalama alınarak yapılmaktadır.

Türkçe'ye çeviri ve uyarlama, Selçuk, Günaydın, Sümer ve Uysal tarafından 2005 yılında, 112'si flört ilişkisi olan 256 üniversite öğrencisi ile yapılmıştır. Güvenilirlik analizleri, Cronbach alfa değerleri kaygı için .86 ve kaçınma için .90 olup yüksek iç tutarlılık katsayıları göstermiştir. Bu çalışma için Cronbach alfa katsayıları hesaplandığında ise, kaygı için .87, kaçınma alt ölçeği için .86 bulunmuştur.

2.2.3. Romantik İlişkilerde Çatışma Çözüm Stilleri Ölçeği

Ölçek, romantik ilişkilerde flört eden çiftlerin çatışma çözüm stillerini ölçmek için Özen, Salman-Engin ve Sakallı-Uğurlu (2016) tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Ölçeğin 6'lı Likert puanlaması olup (1 = Tamamen Katılmıyorum, 6 = Tamamen Katılıyorum), 4 alt ölçekten oluşmaktadır: pozitif çatışma çözme, olumsuz çatışma çözme, boyun eğme ve geri çekilme. Olumlu, boyun eğme ve geri çekilme alt ölçeklerinde 6 madde, olumsuz çatışma çözme alt ölçeğinde ise 7 madde bulunmaktadır.

Ölçeğin geçerlik ve güvenirliliğini test etmek için yapılan çalışmada, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi öğrencisi olan, 17-36 yaş arası, 200 katılımcı yer almıştır. Cronbach alfa değerleri alt ölçekler için sırasıyla .80, .82, .74 ve .73 olarak bulunmuştur. Bu çalışma için hesaplanan Cronbach alfa katsayıları ise pozitif çatışma

özme için .79, olumsuz çatışma özme için .79, geri çekilme için .75 ve boyun eğme için .72 bulunmuştur.

2.2.4. Demografik Bilgi Formu

Katılımcıların demografik bilgilerini toplamak amacıyla araştırmacı tarafından bir form geliştirilmiştir. Form; cinsiyet kimliği, yaş, konum, öğrencilik durumu, çalışma durumu, ilişki durumu, ilişkinin süresi, partnerle görüşme sıklığı, ilişkinin geleceğine yönelik niyetler ve çatışma sıklığı gibi değişkenleri içermektedir.

2.3 Verilerin Analizi

İlk olarak verilerin analizler için uygun olup olmadığını değerlendirmek amacıyla veri taraması yapılmıştır. Ölçeklerdeki ilgili ters maddeler yeniden kodlanmıştır. Analizlerden önce her bir ECR-R, CRSS ve RSS alt ölçeğinin puanlaması hesaplanmıştır.

Çalışmanın amacı olan bağlanım düzeyinin çatışma çözüm ve bağlanma stilleri ile ilişkisini araştırmak için çeşitli analizler yapılmıştır. İlk olarak, doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği, yatırım ve bağlanım arasındaki ilişkiyi kontrol etmek için yatırım modeli bileşenleri arasında Eşzamanlı Çoklu Regresyon analizi yapılmıştır. Daha sonra altı ayrı Tek Yönlü Çok Değişkenli Varyans Analizi (MANOVA) yapılmıştır. İlk üç MANOVA cinsiyet farkını araştırmak için, diğerleri ise öğrencilik durumu farkını ortaya çıkarmak için yapılmıştır. Ek olarak, Hiyerarşik Çoklu Regresyon analizi; cinsiyet, ilişki süresi, öğrencilik durumu, doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği ve yatırım kontrol ettikten sonra, çatışma çözüm ve bağlanma stillerinin bağlanımı ne ölçüde yordadığını araştırmak için uygulanmıştır. Tüm analizler, Mac için IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS 2017, Versiyon 25.0) programı kullanılarak yapılmıştır.

2.4. Çalışmanın Sınırlılıkları

Gerekli yaş grubuna ve ilişki süresine ulaşmak için, veri toplama, amaçlı örneklem ve kartopu yöntemleri ile yapılmıştır, yani katılımcılar rastgele seçilmemiştir. Bu

yöntemler araştırmanın örnekleme için belirli özellikleri sunsa da, araştırmanın Türkiye'deki beliren yetişkinler için genellenebilirliğini azaltabilir.

Verilerin çevrimiçi ölçekler kullanılarak toplanması, katılımcıların ölçek maddelerini farklı şekilde yorumlamalarına neden olabilir. Dahası, çevrimiçi veri toplamak, daha düşük bir yanıt oranıyla sonuçlanmış olabilir. Araştırma tasarımı ilişkisel olduğundan veriler üzerinde herhangi bir manipülasyon yapılmamıştır ve bir neden-sonuç ilişkisi sunulamamıştır.

3. BULGULAR

Çalışmada öncelikle değişkenler arasındaki ilişkiler incelenmiştir. Buna göre ilişki süresinin tüm diğer değişkenlerle anlamlı ilişkileri zayıf bulunmuştur. Sonuçlar, tüm yatırım modeli bileşenlerinin birbirleriyle anlamlı bir ilişkide olduğunu göstermiştir. Seçeneklerin niteliği hariç, tüm bileşenler birbirleriyle pozitif yönde ilişkilidir.

Kaygılı bağlanma stili yatırım ile pozitif; ilişki süresi, doyum ve bağlanım ile negatif ilişki içindedir. Kaçınmacı bağlanma stili ise doyum, yatırım, bağlanım ile negatif; kaygılı bağlanma ile pozitif ilişkidir. Negatif çatışma çözüm stili ilişki süresi, yatırım, kaygılı bağlanma ve kaçınmacı bağlanma ile pozitif; doyum ve bağlanım ile negatif ilişki göstermiştir. Pozitif çatışma çözüm stili ilişki süresi, negatif çatışma çözüm stili, kaçınmacı ve kaygılı bağlanma ile negatif; doyum ve bağlanım ile pozitif yönde ilişkilidir. Boyun eğme ise yatırım, kaygılı bağlanma ve pozitif çatışma çözüm stili ile pozitif; kaçınmacı bağlanma ve negatif bağlanma ile negatif ilişkilidir. Son olarak geri çekilme ise doyum, bağlanım, yatırım, pozitif çatışma çözüm stili ile negatif; seçeneklerin niteliği, negatif çatışma çözüm stili ve boyun eğme ile pozitif ilişkili bulunmuştur.

Cinsiyet farklılıkları açısından bulgular, erkekler ve kadınlar arasında anlamlı bir fark olmadığını göstermiştir. Öğrencilik durumu içinse bulgular yalnızca seçeneklerin niteliğinde anlamlı farklılık göstermiştir. Öğrencilerin seçeneklerin niteliği ortalama puanları ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.67$), öğrenci olmayanlara ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 1.47$) göre daha düşük bulunmuştur.

Örneklemin Yatırım Modeli'ne uygunluğunu ölçmek için doyumun, seçeneklerin niteliğinin ve yatırımın, ilişki bağlanımını ne derece yordadığı ölçülmüş ve tüm değişkenler ilişki bağlanım varyansının %40.4'ünü açıklamıştır.

Son olarak, Hiyerarşik Çoklu Regresyon Analizi ile bağlanımın, çatışma çözüm ve bağlanma stilleri tarafından ne derecede yordandığı ölçülmüştür. Analizin ilk adımında demografik değişken olan cinsiyet, ilişki süresi ve öğrencilik durumu kontrol edilmiştir. İlk adımda ilişki süresi ve öğrencilik durumu anlamlı yordayıcı olarak bulunmuştur. Buna göre, ilişki süresindeki artış ve öğrenci olmamak anlamlı olarak ilişki bağlanımını yordamıştır. İkinci adımda, yatırım modeli değişkenleri modele eklenmiştir. Sonuçlar ikinci modelde öğrencilik durumunun ve tüm yatırım modeli değişkenlerinin anlamlı olarak yordayıcı olduğunu göstermiş, ancak ilişki süresi anlamlılığını kaybetmiştir. Buna göre öğrenci olmamak, doyumun ve yatırımın yüksek olması seçeneklerin niteliğinin az olması ile ilişki bağlanımını anlamlı derecede yordamıştır. İkinci model toplam varyansın açıklanmasında %40 etki göstermiştir. Doyum, en güçlü yordayıcı olarak bulunmuştur. Üçüncü modelde, bağlanma stilleri eklenmiştir. Sonuçlar ikinci modeldeki anlamlı yordayıcılara ek olarak kaçınmacı bağlanmanın da anlamlı yordayıcı olduğunu göstermiştir. Buna göre öğrenci olmamak, doyumun ve yatırımın yüksek olması, seçeneklerin niteliğinin az olması ve kaçınmacı bağlanma göstermemek ilişki bağlanımını anlamlı derecede yordamıştır. Son modelde ise, çatışma çözüm stilleri eklenmiş ve üçüncü modeldeki yordayıcılara ek olarak pozitif çatışma çözüm stili de yordayıcı olarak bulunmuştur. Buna göre öğrenci olmamak, doyumun ve yatırımın yüksek olması, seçeneklerin niteliğinin az olması, kaçınmacı bağlanma göstermemek ve pozitif çatışma çözüm stiline sahip olmak, ilişki bağlanımını anlamlı derecede yordamıştır. Son model toplam varyansın %47'sini açıklamıştır.

4. TARTIŞMA

Çalışma bulguları, cinsiyete göre yatırım modelinde, bağlanma ve çatışma çözüm stillerinde anlamlı bir farklılık göstermemiştir. Daha önce yürütülen çalışmalarda, kadınların erkeklere kıyasla daha fazla doyum (Rusbult, Martz ve Agnew, 1998; Sacher ve Fine, 1996), bağlanım (Fitzpatrick ve Sollie, 1999; Rusbult, Martz ve

Agnew, 1998) ve yatırım (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986; Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999) gösterdiği bulunmuştur. Dahası, erkeklerin kadınlara göre seçeneklerin niteliğinde daha yüksek olduğu görülmektedir (Davis ve Strube, 1993; Duffy ve Rusbult, 1986). Ancak flört eden Türk üniversite öğrencileriyle yapılan bazı araştırmalarda, yatırım modeli değişkenleri ile cinsiyet arasındaki ilişkide farklı sonuçlar bulunmuştur. Aslan-Dölen (2014), erkeklerin ilişkilere daha fazla yatırım yaptığını bulmuştur. Hasta ve Büyükşahin (2005), Büyükşahin (2006) ve Kaynak (2014) tarafından yapılan çalışmalarda, cinsiyetin yalnızca seçeneklerin niteliğinde önemli ölçüde farklılaştığı bulunmuştur. Beşikçi (2008), yalnızca bağlanım açısından erkeklerin ve kadınların farklı olduğunu bulmuştur. Mevcut çalışma bulgularına benzer şekilde, Anlatan (2019) ve Öztekin (2016) üniversite öğrencileriyle yaptıkları çalışmalarında, cinsiyetin herhangi bir yatırım modeli bileşeninde anlamlı ölçüde farklılaşmadığını bulmuşlardır. Bu çalışmada cinsiyete göre anlamlı bir fark bulunamamasının nedeni, Türk kültürünün romantik ilişkiler üzerindeki etkisinden kaynaklı olabilir. Bir başka deyişle, Türk kültüründe flört ilişkileri evlilik öncesi deneme aşaması olarak değerlendirilip, bireyler gelecekte evlenmeyi hedefleyerek flört ilişkine başlayabilirler (Hortaçsu, 2003). Türkiye'nin kolektivist (Hofstede, 1980) ve cinsiyetçi bir ülke (Tekeli, 1995) olduğu yönündeki ifadeler dikkate alındığında, cinsiyet ayrımı gözetmeksizin, bireylerin ilişkilerinin geleceği konusunda daha fazla endişeye sahip olmaları düşünülebilir (Sakallı-Uğurlu (2010). Benzer bir şekilde, bu araştırmadaki katılımcıların çoğu, gelecekte evlenme beklentilerinin olduğunu belirtmişlerdir.

Bağlanma stillerine bakıldığında, bu çalışmada cinsiyet açısından anlamlı bir farklılık bulunamamıştır. Bağlanma modelinin temel varsayımı, hayatta kalma çabası ile cinsiyete bakılmaksızın bebek ve bakıcı arasındaki ilişkiye odaklandığında, bağlanma teorisi cinsiyet farklılıklarını yordamaz; başka bir deyişle, teori cinsiyet açısından tarafsız bir perspektife sahiptir (Del Giudice, 2019). Mevcut araştırmanın sonuçlarında olduğu gibi, birçok araştırmada da cinsiyet açısından anlamlı bir fark bulunmamıştır (Delevi, Sökmez ve Avcı, 2018; Shi, 2003). Bu çalışmada bağlanma stilleri açısından cinsiyet farklılığının anlamlı bulunamamasının nedeni, literatürde kaçınmacı ve kaygılı bağlanma stillerinin, daha az ilişki doyumu ve bağlanımı olan bireylerle

ilişkilendirilmesinden kaynaklanıyor olabilir (Dandurand, Bouaziz, Lafontaine, 2013). Bu bağlamda, çalışmadaki katılımcıların ilişki bağlanımları ve doyumları oldukça yüksek bulunmuştur.

Çatışma çözüm stilleri cinsiyet açısından ele alındığında da anlamlı bir farklılık bulunmamıştır. Mevcut araştırmanın bulgusu, Öner'in (2013) ve Gürcan'ın (2015) bulgularıyla benzerdir. Ancak bazı araştırmalar, kadınların erkeklere göre daha pozitif çatışma çözüm stilleri gösterdiğini belirtmiştir (Haferkamp, 1991; Rubin ve Brown, 1975). Öte yandan Pancaroğlu (2007), cinsiyet açısından yalnızca boyun eğme çatışma çözüm stiline farklılık gösterdiğini bulmuştur. Bu çalışmada anlamlı bir fark bulunmamasının nedeni, katılımcıların doyum ve bağlanım puanlarının yüksek olması ve katılımcıların çoğunun olumlu çatışma çözüm stilleri göstermesi ile açıklanabilir. Çeşitli araştırmalarda belirtildiği gibi, olumlu çatışma çözme stilleri, doyumu yüksek ilişkilerde gözlenmektedir (Cramer, 2000; Koydemir, Sun-Selişik ve Tezer, 2008; Özen, Salman-Engin ve Sakallı-Uğurlu, 2016).

Öğrencilik durumu, yalnızca seçeneklerin niteliğinde anlamlı bir fark göstermiştir. Öğrenci katılımcılar, seçeneklerin niteliğinde, öğrenci olmayan katılımcılara göre daha düşük puan almıştır. Bağlanma ve çatışma çözme stilleri, katılımcıların öğrenci olma ya da olmama durumlarına göre değişmemektedir. Tran, Judge ve Kashima (2019) tarafından yapılan meta-analiz çalışmasının bulgularına benzer bir şekilde, bu araştırmada seçeneklerin niteliği açısından öğrenci olan ve olmayan katılımcılarda önemli bir fark gözlenmiştir. Yatırım modelinin varsayımları göz önüne alındığında, çalışmanın sonuçları, öğrenci olmayan Türk beliren yetişkinlerinin seçeneklerinin niteliğinin daha fazla olduğunu göstermiştir. Bulunanın aksine, partnerlerin ilişki süresi ve yaşı arttıkça seçeneklerin niteliği azalır (Rusbult, 1986). Pawlowski ve Dunbar'a (1999) göre insanlar yaşlandıkça ve eğitimlerini tamamladıkça, olası bir flört faaliyeti için öz değerlendirme yaptıklarında, flört pazar değerlerinin azaldığını düşünürler ve bu da seçeneklerin niteliğinin azalmasına neden olur. Bununla birlikte, bu çalışmanın bulguları, öğrenci olmayan katılımcıların seçeneklerin niteliğini daha fazla rapor ettiklerini ortaya koymuştur. Yatırım modeli, doyum ve bağlanım seviyesinin artmasıyla, seçeneklerin niteliğinin azaldığını belirtir (Rusbult, 1983).

Mevcut çalışmanın örnekleme, hem öğrenci hem de öğrenci olmayan katılımcılarda yüksek düzeyde doyum ve bağlanım gösterirken, öğrenci olmayan katılımcılar daha yüksek seçeneklerin niteliği göstermiştir. Yani, öğrenci olmayan katılımcılar, daha yüksek seçeneklerin niteliğini göstermelerine rağmen düşük doyum ve bağlanım göstermemişlerdir. Dahası, romantik bir ilişkiye sahip olmak, beliren yetişkinlerin nasıl bir ilişki kuracaklarını ve sürdüreceklerini deneyimlemelerine izin verse de, Fincham ve Cui (2010), beliren yetişkinlerin yaşlanmayla birlikte romantik bir ilişki içinde deneyim kazandıkça, daha fazlasını keşfedebilmek için ilişkilerinde kaldıklarını belirtmektedir. Bu bağlamda, öğrenci olmayan beliren yetişkinlerin seçeneklerin niteliğinde yüksek olmasının nedenini, bu katılımcıların ilişki becerilerini geliştirdikçe ilişki içinde kalarak daha iyi alternatifler aramaları olabilir. Bununla birlikte, geleceğe yönelik ilişkisel beklentiler ve öğrencilik durumunun ilişkisine bakıldığında, öğrencilerin %87.1'i, öğrenci olmayanların ise %76.9'u evlenmeyi beklediklerini belirtmişlerdir. Öğrencilik durumu ve geleceğe yönelik beklentiler arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olduğu gözlemlenmiştir, [$\chi^2(3) = 23.84, p < 0.1$]. Buna göre, öğrenci olmayan katılımcılar daha az evlilik beklentisi göstermişlerdir. Aynı zamanda, gelecekte birlikte olmaya yönelik istekler, yüksek bağlanım ve düşük seçeneklerin niteliği ile ilişkilidir (Stanley, Rhoades ve Whitton, 2010). Bu nedenle, öğrenci olmayanların daha yüksek seçeneklerin niteliğini rapor etmelerinin nedeni daha az evlilik niyeti göstermeleriyle açıklanabilir.

Rusbult'un Yatırım Modelinin varsayımına paralel olarak bulgular, doyumun, seçeneklerin niteliğinin ve yatırımın, ilişki bağlanımının anlamlı yordayıcıları olduğunu göstermiştir. Spesifik olarak, doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği ve yatırım, bağlanımdaki varyansın % 40.4'ünü açıklamıştır. Önceki çalışmalarda (Le & Agnew, 2003; Tran, Judge & Kashima, 2019) olduğu gibi, bu çalışmada da doyum, bağlanımın en güçlü yordayıcısı olarak bulunmuştur. Daha önceki çalışmalarda olduğu gibi, ilişkide doyum ve yatırım, arttıkça, seçeneklerin niteliği azaldıkça, bağlanım da artmaktadır (Rusbult, Zembrodt & Gunn, 1982). Sonuçlar, yatırım modeli önermesinin Türk beliren yetişkinler örnekleme için geçerli olduğunu kanıtlamıştır.

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, bazı demografik değişkenler kontrol edildikten sonra, Yatırım Modeli değişkenlerinin katkılarıyla, bağlanma ve çatışma çözme stillerinin Türk beliren yetişkinlerin ilişki bağlanımını ne ölçüde yordadığını belirlemektir. Bu bağlamda, Hiyerarşik Çoklu Regresyon Analiz sonuçlarına göre, Türk beliren yetişkinlerin bağlanma ve çatışma çözüm stilleri; demografik değişkenler (cinsiyet, öğrenci durumu ve ilişki süresi) ve yatırım modeli değişkenleri (doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği ve yatırım) kontrol edildikten sonra, romantik ilişki bağlanımlarını yordamaktadır. Bulgulara göre; öğrencilik durumu, doyum, yatırım, seçeneklerin niteliği, kaçınmacı bağlanma ve pozitif çatışma çözüm stili bağlanıma ilişkin varyansın % 46'sını açıklamıştır. Öğrencilik durumu, doyum, yatırım ve pozitif çatışma çözüm stili bağlanımla olumlu, seçeneklerin niteliği ve kaçınmacı bağlanma ise olumsuz ilişki göstermektedir. Özetle, ilişkisinde daha fazla doyum ve yatırımı olan, , daha az seçeneklerin niteliğine sahip, daha az kaçınmacı bağlanma gösteren ve daha olumlu çatışma çözüm stiline sahip, öğrenci olmayan beliren yetişkinler, daha yüksek düzeyde romantik ilişki bağlanımı göstermektedir.

4.1 Kuram, Araştırma ve Uygulamaya Yönelik Çıkarımlar

Çalışma bulguları, yatırım modeli varsayımlarına benzer bir şekilde, yatırım modeli bileşenleri arasında aynı yönlü ilişkiler göstererek, modelin Türk beliren yetişkin örneklemini için de geçerli olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Aynı zamanda, yatırım modeli, bağlanım ve seçeneklerin niteliği arasında negatif yönlü bir ilişki olduğunu belirtmesine (Rusbult, 1980) rağmen, bu çalışmada öğrenci olmayan beliren yetişkin katılımcıların yüksek bağlanımla birlikte daha fazla seçeneklerin niteliği rapor ettikleri gözlenmiştir. Beliren yetişkinlerin hem ergenlik hem de yetişkinlik dönemi özellikleri gösterdikleri, ilişkilerinde güvenli bir temele sahip olduktan sonra çevrelerini keşfetmeye başladıkları belirtilir (Arnett, 2000). Bu nedenle, beliren yetişkinler bağlanım düzeyi yüksek ilişkilere sahip olup aynı zamanda seçeneklerinin niteliğinde de fazla olabilirler (Fincham ve Cui, 2010). Bununla birlikte, yatırım modeli, ağırlıklı olarak evli çiftler ve üniversite öğrencileri ile yapılan çalışmalarda incelenmiştir. Bu çalışma, beliren yetişkinlik döneminin özelliklerini de göz önüne alarak, flört ilişkilerinde öğrenci olmayan katılımcıları da içermiştir ve sonuçlar bağlanımın öğrenci statüsünden etkilendiğini göstermiştir.

Fincham, Stanley ve Rhoades'in (2011) belirttiği gibi, beliren yetişkinlerin çoğunun evlilik düşüncesi veya romantik bir ilişkiye sahip olmak istemesi ve çatışmaların, anlaşmazlıkların sıklıkla ilişkilerin ilk aşamalarında meydana gelmesi, beliren yetişkinlik döneminde ilişki eğitiminin verilmesinin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu'nun (2020) son raporuna göre ilk evlenme yaşı, erkeklerde yaklaşık 28 iken kadınlarda 25'tir. Bu nedenle, flört ve evlilik öncesi ilişkiler için müdahale ve önleme programlarını gündeme almak önemlidir. Doyum, seçeneklerin niteliği ve yatırımın, ilişki bağlanımının en güçlü yordayıcıları olduğu göz önünde bulundurularak, çiftlere yönelik ilişki eğitimi programları hazırlanırken, kaçınmacı bağlanma ve pozitif çatışma çözüm stilleri de dahil olmak üzere, bağlanımın tüm yordayıcıları dikkate alınmalıdır.

Bu çalışma, bağlanımın öğrencilik durumundan etkilendiğini göstermiştir. Bulgular, sadece üniversite yıllarında değil, mezuniyet sonrasında da romantik ilişkilerle ilgili eğitim ve seminerlere yer verilmesinin önemli olduğuna işaret etmektedir. İlişkiyle ilgili eğitimlerin ve derslerin büyük bir çoğunluğu üniversite ortamlarında gerçekleştirilse de farklı ortamlara uyarlanmış çeşitli programlar (Markman ve Rhoades, 2012) ve geçtiğimiz yıllarda yapılan meta analiz çalışmaları, üniversite ortamı dışındaki ilişki eğitimlerine katılan çiftlerin ilişkilerinin bu eğitimlerden olumlu yönde etkilendiğini göstermiştir (Hawkins ve Erickson, 2015).

Çiftlerin psikolojik danışmaya başvurmalarındaki temel neden, çoğunlukla bağlanma ihtiyaçlarının giderilmemiş olması veya etkisiz yöntemlerle çözülmeye çalışılan çatışmalardır (Solomon, 2009). Bu nedenle, ilişkiyle ilgili konularda çalışan ruh sağlığı çalışanlarının bu çalışmanın bulgularından yararlanması beklenmektedir. Danışanların bağlanma ve çatışma çözme stilleri hakkında içgörü sağlamalarına destek olmak, çatışmaları daha iyi anlamalarına ve çözümlemelerine, bağlanma ihtiyaçlarını karşılamalarına ve bağlanımlarını daha da artırmalarına yardımcı olacaktır. Hood (2014), bireysel psikolojik danışma seanslarına katılanlarla yaptığı ön test ve son test çalışmasında, kaygılı ve kaçınılmalı bağlanan danışanlarda anlamlı bir fark bulmuş ve danışanların daha fazla güvenli bağlanma geliştirdiğini bulmuştur. Bowlby'nin (1988) belirttiği gibi, bağlanma stilleri gelişime açıktır ve değiştirilebilen içsel çalışma

modellerinden etkilenirler. Risksiz ve güvenli bir ortam sunan psikolojik danışman hizmeti, danışanların bağlanma geçmişinin önceki ve mevcut ilişki inançları üzerindeki etkilerini keşfetmelerine ve içselleştirmelerine yardımcı olur (White, 2004). Bu farkındalık sayesinde danışanlar, geçmişte ve günümüzde karşılanmamış bağlanma ihtiyaçlarını fark edebilir ve güvenli bağlanımlarını artırabilirler (Wachtel, 2010).

Bu çalışma, pozitif çatışma çözme stillerinin, flört ilişkilerindeki romantik ilişki bağlanımını yordadığını göstermiştir. Bu nedenle, flört ilişkilerinde çatışma davranışlarının incelenmesi, uygun yöntemlerin geliştirilmesi açısından önemlidir (Creasey, 2002). Ayrıca, bağlanma stilleri, bireylerin çatışmayı nasıl algılayıp çözdüklerini belirler. Bir çatışma durumunda, içsel çalışma modelleri etkinleştirilir ve bu da partnerlerin çatışma çözüm davranışlarını etkiler (Shi, 2003). Bu nedenle, ruh sağlığı uzmanları, çalışmanın bulgularından faydalanarak danışanlarını pozitif çatışma çözme stillerini geliştirmeleri için eğitebilirler.

4.2 Gelecekteki Araştırmalar İçin Öneriler

Cinsiyet kimlikleri, yatırım modeli bileşenleri açısından farklı kültürlerde incelenmiştir (Duffy ve Rusbult, 1986; Kurdek, 1995). Ancak çoğu çalışmada olduğu gibi, bu çalışmada da toplanan veriler, istatistiksel açıdan yeterli cinsiyet kimliğini temsil edememiştir (Frohard, Dobson, Clark, Doull ve Saewyc, 2016). Bu nedenle, gelecekte yapılacak çalışmalarda daha geniş bir örnekleme ulaşılması ve cinsiyet kimliklerini temsil eden bu örneklemede yatırım modelinin sınanması önerilmektedir. Ayrıca, beliren yetişkinlik döneminin özellikleri dikkate alınarak bu araştırmada sadece flört ilişkilerine yer verilmiştir; bu nedenle evli, birlikte yaşayan ve nişanlı çiftlerin de ilerideki çalışmalarda araştırılması önerilir.

Çeşitli çalışmalar, bağlanımın cinsiyete göre değiştiğini göstermiştir (Fitzpatrick ve Sollie, 1999; Rusbult, Martz ve Agnew, 1998). Ancak bu çalışmada bir cinsiyet farkına ulaşılamamıştır. Türkiye’de yapılan bazı araştırmalarda cinsiyet farkı bulunurken (Aslan-Dölen, 2014; Hasta ve Büyüksahin, 2005; Büyüksahin, 2006; Kaynak, 2014; Beşikçi, 2008), bazı araştırmalarda bulunmamıştır (Anlatan, 2019; Öztekin, 2016).

Dolayısıyla, bağlanım ve cinsiyet farkına ilişkin Türk örneklemiyle yürütölmüş çalışmaların incelendiğı bir meta-analiz çalışması yapılabilir.

Çalışmada, en az bir aylık flört ilişkisine sahip Türk beliren yetişkinlerin ilişkilerinde yüksek düzeyde doyum ve bağlanıma sahip olduğı bulunmuştur. Gelecekte yürütölecek çalışmalarda, düşük doyum ve bağlanıma sahip çiftlerin, bağlanma ve çatışma çözme stilleriyle bağlanımları arasındaki ilişki araştırılabilir.

Gelecekte boyamsal araştırmalar yürütölerek, değişkenler arasındaki ilişkinin zamanla nasıl değiştiğı ortaya konulabilir. Ayrıca, bu çalışmada nicel veriler, katılımcılardan ölçekler aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Gelecekteki çalışmalarda, katılımcıların bireysel deneyimlerini derinlemesine paylaşabilecekleri nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden yararlanılabilir.

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