

MEANING OF LIFE IN ADULTS:
THE ROLE OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA AND PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

by

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MEANING OF LIFE IN ADULTS: THE ROLE OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA AND
PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

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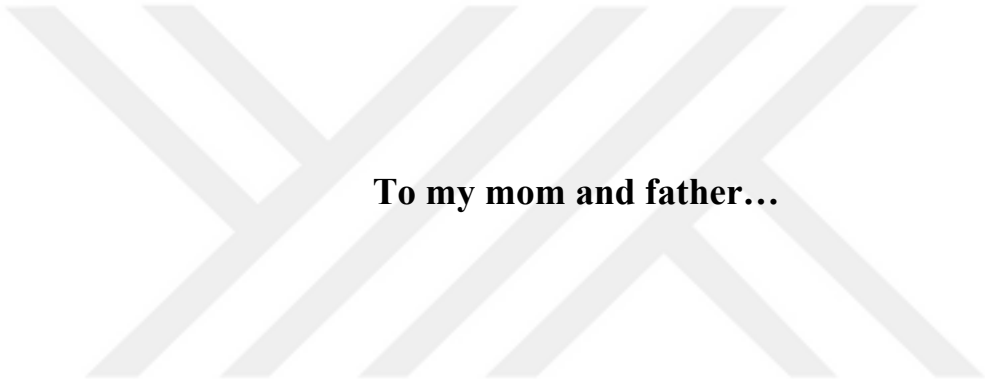
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To my mom and father...

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the role of childhood trauma and psychological resilience on the meaning of life among adults was examined. 400 adult participants between the ages of 18 and 60 participated in the research. Participants were administered a "Personal Information Form," "Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ-33)," "Meaning in Life Scale," and "Psychological Resilience Scale for Adults." The collected data were analysed using SPSS 26.0 software. Spearman's Rho correlation was applied to investigate the relationship between the meaning in life and childhood trauma and psychological resilience levels among adults. Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to identify predictors of levels of meaning in life. Additionally, the levels of meaning in life were compared across participant variables, including gender, age, marital status, number of children, employment status, education level, and socioeconomic status. According to the findings obtained from the research, a negative, weak, and significant relationship was found between scores of meaning in life and emotional abuse, emotional neglect, overprotection-control, and childhood traumas. It was also found that scores of meaning in life were moderately associated with self-perception, future perception, structural style, social competence, family cohesion, social resources, and psychological resilience. When examining the predictors of meaning in life scores, it was found that psychological resilience was the strongest predictor of meaning in life scores in adults. The results indicate that age groups, childhood trauma, and psychological resilience play predictive roles in adults' levels of meaning in life, while childhood trauma loses its predictive role when the psychological resilience variable is considered. There was a significant difference between meaning in life and age, marital status, number of children, employment

status, and socioeconomic status, while there was no significant difference between meaning in life and gender and education level.

Keywords: Meaning in life, psychological resilience, childhood trauma



ÖZET

Bu araştırmada, çocukluk çağı travmaları ve psikolojik dayanıklılığın yetişkinlerde yaşamın anlamı üzerindeki rolü incelenmiştir. Araştırmaya, 18-60 yaşları arasında 400 yetişkin birey katılmıştır. Katılımcılara, “Kişisel Bilgi Formu”, “Çocukluk Çağı Travma Ölçeği”, “Yaşamda Anlam Ölçeği”, “Yetişkinler için Psikolojik Dayanıklılık Ölçeği” uygulanmıştır. Elde edilen veriler SPSS 26.0 paket programı ile analiz edilmiştir. Yetişkinlerde yaşamın anlamı ile çocukluk çağı travmaları, psikolojik dayanıklılık düzeyleri arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi için Spearman's Rho Korelasyonu uygulanmıştır. Yaşamın anlamı düzeylerinin yordayıcılarını tespit etmek için hiyerarşik regresyon analizi uygulanmıştır. Ayrıca, katılımcıların cinsiyet, yaş, medeni durum, çocuk sayısı, çalışma durumu, eğitim düzeyi ve sosyoekonomik durum değişkenlerine göre yaşamda anlam düzeyleri karşılaştırılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda elde edilen bulgulara göre, yaşamda anlam puanları ile duygusal istismar, duygusal ihmal, aşırı koruma-kontrol, çocukluk çağı travmaları arasında negatif, zayıf ve anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmuştur. Yaşamdaki anlam puanlarının benlik algısı, gelecek algısı, yapısal tarz, sosyal yeterlilik, aile uyumu, sosyal kaynaklar, psikolojik dayanıklılık ile orta düzeyde ilişkili olduğu bulunmuştur. Yaşamda anlam puanlarının yordayıcıları incelendiğinde, yetişkinlerde yaşamda anlam puanlarını en güçlü yordayan değişkenin psikolojik dayanıklılık olduğu bulunmuştur. Sonuçlar, yaş grupları, çocukluk çağı travmaları ve psikolojik dayanıklılığın yetişkinlerin yaşamda anlam düzeyleri üzerinde yordayıcı role sahip olduğunu gösterirken, psikolojik dayanıklılık değişkeni söz konusu olduğunda çocukluk çağı travmalarının yordayıcı rolünü kaybettiğini göstermiştir. Yaşamda anlam ile yaş, evlilik durumu, çocuk sayısı, çalışma durumu, sosyoekonomik durum değişkenleri arasında anlamlı bir

farklılık bulunurken; yaşamda anlam ile cinsiyet ve eğitim seviyesi arasında anlamlı bir farklılık bulunmamıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Yaşamın Anlamı, psikolojik dayanıklılık, çocukluk çağı travması



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ABBREVIATION LIST

n : Number of samples in the sample/group

% : Percent

● : Average

SD : Standard deviation

p : Significance level

t : t value

F : ANOVA statistic value

r : Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient

B : Regression coefficient

SE : Standard error of regression coefficient

β : Standardized regression coefficient

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Rationale

The meaning of life has been one of the most fundamental and profound existential questions throughout the history of humanity. Particularly during adulthood, individuals question life's purpose and seek meaning. The investigation of the research domain pertaining to the impact of childhood traumas and psychological resilience on the quest for meaning among the general population emerges as a significant scholarly endeavour in this particular setting. Understanding how negative experiences during childhood influence the search for meaning and the matter of psychological resilience in this process constitutes the focal point of this study. The target of this introduction is to offer a concise summary of the prevailing body of literature concerning childhood trauma and psychological resilience during adulthood, with a particular emphasis on their pertinence to the concept of life's meaning.

For centuries, the pursuit of meaning in human existence, an inherent aspect of human life, has engrossed individuals ranging from ancient philosophers and theologians to modern psychologists and scholars in various academic disciplines. In contemporary times, situations where individuals are not constantly engaged with self-perception or another task, manifesting as an "existential void" or "meaninglessness," can become highly significant (Corey, 2008). The notion of existential meaning plays a pivotal role in shaping one's level of involvement in life and their propensity to progress. As stated by Viktor Frankl, meaning in life is considered an innate human drive for the continuation of life, and it is examined in two different directions: the seek for meaning and the presence of meaning (Steger et al.,

2008). As posited by Steger et al. (2008), the conceptualization of meaning in life contains a determinant that exerts an impact on the initiation of affective states and aids individuals in attaining self-awareness. According to their perspective, the pursuit of significance is a pivotal phase within the inherent trajectory of human existence, intricately linked to the decision-making processes, cognitive abilities, and aspirations of individuals.

Along with the theme of popular culture, there are more material, physical, sociological, and spiritual issues that people today struggle with than ever before. The fundamental qualities of humans may also be affected by this increased complexity. Reflecting on existential questions, being unable to consider the meaning of existence, and feeling meaningless have become severe, deeply felt issues for people (Frankl, 1992; Yalom, 2013).

Rollo May (2017: 11) begins his book "The Discovery of Being" with the words: "We face a paradox in the age we live in." Never in history have radios, televisions, and satellites broadcast so much information, and never before have we felt such deep inner doubt about our existence. Our inner clarity decreases as objective reality grows. With these remarks, May hopes to bring attention to the increased desperation of modern people to discover a meaningful existence, highlighting how our inner clarity weakens as the number of objective realities rises. People in today's society believe that finding life's purpose is worthwhile.

According to Adler (2017), no one can live a meaningless existence. The meaning we give anything helps us understand what it means. In other words, we do not view reality as it is but rather as we have previously understood it. Our world is a perceptual totality of significant interactions, yet it is also complete with mistakes and misconceptions. Every person has a particular and distinct "life meaning and

purpose." According to Adler, meanings are not determined by circumstances; instead, we define ourselves through the significance we give to events (Taş, 2011).

Assuming that individuals are unique entities, it may be argued that each person's search for meaning concerning their difficulties will be distinct (Van Deurzen & Arnold-Baker, 2017: 365). In line with their own subjective reality and inner world, each person will interpret the personal significance of their life. Thus, despite the various points of view in determining the purpose of life, the definitions provided are subjective (Baş & Hamarta, 2015).

Our intrinsic yearning for fulfillment, enjoyment, and a sense of direction are addressed by the search for meaning, which extends beyond just survival. Additionally, it affects societal cohesion, personal growth, and psychological well-being.

One of the fundamental reasons for the vital importance of meaning in life for individuals lies in its profound impact on psychological well-being. Numerous research studies consistently demonstrate that individuals who regard their lives as infused with a sense of purpose generally attribute this to report higher levels of pleasure, life satisfaction, and overall mental well-being. Viktor Frankl, a Holocaust survivor, and psychiatrist, emphasized in his well-celebrated masterpiece "Man's Search for Meaning" that even amid unimaginable suffering, finding a purpose can be a source of resilience and psychological strength. Frankl (2009) states that individuals who find meaning can demonstrate resilience even in challenging circumstances. Following the assertions put forth by Frankl (1959), it is posited that individuals do not exhibit a passive response to their surroundings and are not driven exclusively by the pursuit of pleasure, as emphasized in psychoanalytic theory. The concept surrounding the significance of human existence, sometimes known as the "will to

meaning," holds considerable influence over human behaviour. The central hypothesis posits that when human beings encounter a dearth of purpose or significance in their lives, commonly known as an existential vacuum, it might result in the development of psychopathological disorders that serve to occupy the psychological gap. Frankl's theory postulates a comprehensive hypothesis, proposing that the presence of meaning and significance in the lives of people is a fundamental determinant of psychological health.

According to Eisenbeck et al. (2021), the significance of life's meaning and the utilisation of coping strategies centred around meaning are pivotal in mitigating the adverse consequences associated with psychological distress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression. When persons maintain a clear and defined feeling of purpose, they are likelier to experience lower stress levels, anxiety, and depression. The establishment of satisfactory self-perception and the attainment of life satisfaction have been found to be interconnected with the cultivation of feeling of meaning in life (Yüksel, 2012). The aforementioned correlation arises from the notion that a life imbued with significance offers a structural basis through which challenges can be contemplated within a wider context. Individuals who believe their actions contribute to something greater than themselves often report higher levels of motivation, hope, and emotional well-being (Steger & Frazier, 2005). Thus, meaning in life can indeed significantly contribute to psychological well-being.

Empirical studies conducted in the field have additionally demonstrated an inverse correlation between sadness and the sense of significance in life. Dursun et al. (2022) conducted a study juxtaposing individuals diagnosed with generalised anxiety disorder (N=38) to a control group (N=31). The findings indicated that individuals with the disorder displayed heightened levels of fear related to mortality, as well as

diminished levels of resilience and existential significance. The study also found that life's purpose predicts death anxiety. Furthermore, empirical evidence derived from several research investigations suggests the existence of a negative connection between the existential construct of life's significance and the frequency of depression-related symptoms among people in the adolescent stage of development. Hedayati and Khazaei (2014) conducted a study with a sample size of 215 college students, whereby they observed a detrimental connection between depression and many aspects of life's meaning, such as "presence" and the "search for meaning." Furthermore, Parra (2020) has extensively shown a enormous inverse correlation involving the existential construct of life's meaning and symptoms of depression amidst a global epidemic.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the negative influence of existential concerns on depressive symptoms. Concurrently, parallel investigations have emphasised the potential of life's purpose to function as a safeguarding and governing element in mitigating depression. The study conducted by Park et al. (2020) provided evidence supporting the idea that the perception of the meaning of life is associated with a decline in symptoms of depression and a concurrent elevation in positive emotional experiences as time progresses. The researchers' investigation yielded that "the presence of meaning in life exhibits a robust safeguarding effect against the development of depressive symptoms in the future while promoting positive emotional experiences over an extended period" (p. 3037). Moreover, this protective influence was unaffected by demographic variables and stress-related encounters.

The search for meaning also holds considerable importance in personal development. A meaningful life encourages individuals to self-reflect, discover their passions, and set meaningful goals. Individuals who exhibit an awareness of purpose

are inclined to actively pursue experiences that are in accordance with their personal beliefs. This inclination ultimately facilitates a more profound comprehension of their own identity and their position within the broader context of the world (Baaesler & Oerter, 2003; Lin, 2001; Wong, 1998). Scientific research suggests that a strong connection exists between the presence of meaning in life and the occurrence of burnout, with a unfavourable connection observed. Additionally, an upward correlation has been identified between the presence of a particular source of meaning in life and the subjective perception of personal achievement and competence (Krok, 2016; Park et al., 2020).

The conviction and perception that life has intrinsic value is said to be a necessary component of mental welfare and human growth, according to Ryff and Keyes (1995). The belief in question has positive associations with the perception and encounter of liberty, accountability, and self-determination, as well as an optimistic outlook on life, the future, and one's own self. It is associated with pursuing and achieving existential goals and fully accepting hardship, resulting in happiness and self-realization. Ryff's model of Psychological Well-Being (PWB) encompasses all of these facets within its dimensions.

Along with that, the concept of life's purpose fosters a heightened awareness of one's obligations and liability. When individuals realize the impact of their choices and actions on their journey and the lives of others, they become motivated to make intentional and positive decisions. This sense of responsibility fosters personal growth and contributes to an ongoing personal development cycle (Brogaard & Smith, 2005).

At a broader societal level, the search for meaning also contributes to social harmony and collective well-being. Humans who embrace a collective sense of purpose and shared values are more inclined to collaborate in pursuit of mutually

agreed-upon objectives. This harmony fosters community, empathy, and collaboration for building solid relationships and supportive networks. Moreover, within theoretical frameworks that prioritise the significance of spiritual influences (e.g., Lerner, 2004; Starnino et al., 2012), the concept of meaning in life is shown as a variable that has the potential to enhance individuals' overall psychological well-being and mitigate challenges related to psychosocial adaptation (Lin and Shek, 2019).

In a societal context wherein individuals derive significance from their existence, it is probable that the prevalence of social isolation and alienation would diminish. Particularly in modern times, where technological advancements sometimes lead to disconnection, this situation can be alleviated through meaning in life. A shared search for meaning can bridge gaps among different cultures, religions, and histories, fostering understanding and tolerance between groups. Furthermore, empirical investigation conducted in the realm of psychology has yielded data indicating that the practise of cultivating feelings of community offers the capacity to impact our capacity to discern and attribute purpose and importance to our existence (Stillman et al., 2009; Lambert et al., 2013).

In conclusion, pursuing meaning in life is far from a philosophical abstraction; it is a deeply rooted fundamental need within human nature. The significance of meaning in life extends beyond individual well-being, reaching personal development and societal harmony. It enhances psychological well-being, motivates individuals to strive for personal growth, and nurtures a sense of community belonging. As we continue to explore the depths of what it means to lead a meaningful life, we can uncover our personal potential and our capacity to create a more harmonious and purposeful world for everyone (Ryff 1995; Stillman et al., 2009; Lambert et al., 2013; Lin and Shek, 2019).

Hence, examining factors influencing life's meaning is of great significance. In broad terms, the existing body of published works emphasises the multifaceted character of the concept of meaning in life and its correlation with psychological, biological, and social determinants. Understanding the underlying mechanisms of meaning in life is crucial for developing interventions and strategies to strengthen meaning in life among individuals and communities facing various challenges. The key objective of this study is to get a thorough comprehension of the bearing that early-life traumas and psychological resilience have on the development of life's meaning.

In the early stages, the actions and attitudes of parents or caregivers towards the environment and the child play a significant role in adolescence (Coleman, 2014). Individuals who experience pressure and neglect during childhood/adolescence encounter various mental, physical, and social problems. Individuals who suffered abuse and neglect during their youth are more inclined to acquire long-term psychopathological conditions (Schrader-McMillan et al., 2014). Additionally, traumatic situations do not always lead to adverse outcomes. Conducting a comprehensive review of the existing scholarly works reveals that many people might face unfulfilled desires or distressing childhood situations, which do not always turn into traumatic experiences (Hunter, 2012). Moreover, emotional or physical neglect and abuse are recognized to lead to crucial issues that affect future life quality.

There are studies emphasizing that traumatic or abusive situations can be processes that support individuals in redefining meaning in their lives (Bonanno, 2004; Wingo et al., 2014). Following these stages, individuals create opportunities to perceive themselves and their experiences anew by seeking new possibilities. It is underscored that individuals need a reason to cope with life's challenges and be

resilient. They create this reason by questioning and finding the meaning of life. Individuals with high psychological resilience, who manage to resist the challenges they face, are those who have personal goals and a purpose of leading a more meaningful life (Bonanno, 2004). The existence of human beings who exhibit a belief of meaning in their life is widely acknowledged, as they demonstrate a greater capacity to navigate challenges and exhibit higher degrees of psychological resilience (Bethell et al., 2019).

Approaches to resilience in the literature often refer to "reintegration" or "adaptation" as the outcome. One of the proposed resilience approaches, Richardson (2002), discusses "innate" resilience. The implication is that humans are naturally survival-oriented and naturally draw upon their inner strengths. Similar to the perspectives of advocates of the humanistic model, the discussion here revolves around the idea that internal motivation is the primary force behind survival. Meaning, goals, values, and dreams are considered the driving forces of an individual's life. The absence of these driving forces leads to distress, and when this distress reaches severe levels, it can extend to the point where a person's life might end. Resilience is defined as successfully returning to normal functioning despite challenging life circumstances (Masten, 2001), and adapting in the face of disasters, traumas, difficulties, and ongoing significant life stresses (Newman, 2005). Adapting to life's lasting changes and challenges is related to resilience and meaning.

Frankl (1992) has stated that living a meaningless life is impossible in concentration camps. If they have a goal, individuals who face death continue to live life fully and enthusiastically with a sense of purpose, leading to a higher quality of life (Yalom, 2013). It is possible to interpret the foundation of spiritual resilience and psychological well-being as the need to accept and transform inevitable suffering

through understanding. Therefore, resilience relies on an individual's inherent strengths and ability to cope with and endure negative experiences and suffering. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on the mental background (Tedeschi et al., 2018).

The tight interconnection between the existential desire to find purpose in life and the critical concept of resilience in psychological theory has been well recognised (Neimeyer, 2000). Wong (2012) has defined a meaningful life as a dynamic interaction between positive and negative experiences. On the other hand, it is characterized as the ability to accept one's limitations when evaluating all experiences and feeling responsible for managing the balance between them (Wong, 1998). The attainment of a purposeful existence is contingent upon an individual's aptitude to effectively navigate adversities in order to attain a state of equilibrium that is most advantageous. In this context, psychological resilience, the ability to successfully return to normal functioning despite challenging life circumstances, performs a substantial impact in finding meaning in life, even in difficult life conditions (Masten, 2001).

In summary, research indicates that psychological resilience and childhood trauma play a significant role in the relationship with the meaning of life. Greater amounts of resiliency might offer a safeguard against the emergence of depression-related symptoms and promote overall well-being in those who suffered childhood trauma. Various elements, including the perception of meaning and purpose in life, familial resilience, and external protective factors, carry a vital part in fostering resilience among those who have undergone childhood trauma.

1.2. Significance of The Study

The study's significance lies in its examination of the correlation between The philosophy of what life is all about and the ability to withstand adversity and childhood traumas. This research contributes to our comprehension of the mental well-being of individuals who have encountered trauma, as well as the factors that safeguard their psychological resilience. Psychological resilience becomes essential for preserving one's psychological well-being after traumatic circumstances in life (Shen et al. 2021).

Processes that allow individuals to reconsider their life include stressful or traumatic events. By exploring new possibilities and coming up with creative solutions following completing these processes, people do in fact give themselves the chance to fully understand themselves and what they have experienced (Basım & Çetin, 2011; Holly & Costar, 2005). The measure of psychological resilience exhibited by the man or woman is the component that facilitates the conversion of risk factors into protective ones (Almedom & Glandon, 2007). The people who have personal objectives and a desire for a more meaningful existence are those with high psychological resilience who are able to persevere in the face of adversity (Terzi, 2016). It is thought that those with a sense of purpose in their lives are more resilient psychologically and can overcome adversities more readily. Resilience and meaning are both attached to how successfully one adapts to life's constant changes and challenges.

A considerable association between a person's level of meaning in life and elements like childhood trauma and psychological resilience is anticipated based on the findings of the research that has been conducted and what has been stated in the pertinent field literature.

The existing body of literature pertaining to the construct of meaning in life has primarily concentrated on the young adult phase, with a noticeable dearth of comprehensive investigations that specifically examine these three variables within the context of adulthood, as determined by a thorough survey of the extant research in the subject. Adults might have a high level of purpose in their lives since they are a greater probability to experience highly stressful life events and have to assume responsibility when faced with crises. As a result, adults were chosen as the participants of this study.

In conclusion, no research has been discovered that thoroughly examines the factors of meaning in life, psychological resilience, and childhood trauma in adults after analysing the available domestic and foreign studies. The present research aims to look into the connectivity among the three variables under inquiry. The aim of this approach aims to provide insight on the development of programmes while guiding meaning-based prevention and intervention activities. It also explores the potential link between psychological resilience which is thought to be related to the meaning of life in adulthood and childhood trauma.

The anticipated conclusions of this research inquiry are poised to enhance comprehension regarding the significance of life's meaning among adults, as well as to increase recognition of adverse life events that exert substantial effects on meaning and psychological resilience. These observations have been consistently documented in research spanning both childhood and adulthood. In terms of the programmes, planning, and preventive and intervention efforts to be implemented, this study is expected to offer significant benefits, especially for psychologists, psychological counsellors, and psychiatrists. It aims to provide a functional perspective on questioning the meaning of life and coping with crises in adulthood. In this regard, a

planned path to enhance people's sense of life meaning could be created by selecting an approach and interventions that are sensitive to early trauma and encourage psychological resilience. In this approach, it is believed that the findings from the research would be an invaluable resource in preventive and educational activities, boosting both individual and social well-being.

The conclusions and recommendations of this research investigation are anticipated to offer guidance for subsequent research focused on comparable variables due to the lack of studies that are comparable to it. The study is also seen to have significance outside of educational sciences' guidance and psychological counselling fields. The study's consequences cross disciplinary boundaries. To enhance social-emotional learning and meaning-based learning, educational programmes in undergraduate and graduate programmes in the field of educational sciences should be established. Individual and group interventions that foster psychological resilience can give teachers and students the chance to put newly acquired knowledge into practise while assisting people in their search for meaning.

Additionally, K–12 schools could implement a trauma-sensitive approach to be proactive and supportive in crisis or traumatic situations. A meaning-based educational process could be facilitated by the use of a social-emotional learning strategy, which could aid students in understanding sense of newly acquired knowledge. The knowledge raised as a result of the study's findings is anticipated to be an invaluable resource for educational programmes. Based on this insight, programmes might be created to assist people in learning the purpose of their lives at every stage of life.

An additional advantage lies in the anticipation that the results of this investigation will yield major benefits to the realm of psychological counselling and

guidance on a broader scale. It is expected to offer guidance for future research endeavours, inform educational policymakers in the development of educational policies, and support professionals seeking education in the discipline of psychological counselling.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

This study aims to examine the predictive power of childhood traumas and psychological resilience on adults' meaning in life.

1.4. . Research Objectives

The research problems formed in line with the aim of this study are as follows:

1. Do meaning of life in adults differ significantly according to some demographic variables?
2. Is there a conclusive relationship between the meaning of life in adults and childhood traumas and psychological resilience?
3. To what extent do demographic characteristics, childhood traumas and psychological resilience predict the meaning of life in adults?

1.5. Assumptions

The findings of this research are based on some assumptions. These are:

1. That all adults who voluntarily participated in the study responded to the data collection tools in a way that reflects their real situation and that they sincerely answered the questions in all data collection tools,
2. The methods for gathering data utilised in the study adhere to the criteria of reliability and validity,

3. It will be assumed that the Personal Information Form used in the study measures the demographic information of the individuals, the Childhood Traumas Scale measures the childhood traumas of the individuals, the Meaning in Life Scale measures the meaning in life level of the individuals and the Psychological Resilience Scale for Adults measures the psychological resilience level of the individuals.

1.6. Limitations

The present investigation exhibits certain limitations with regard to the composition of the sample and the employed measuring instruments. Limitations of the research

1. The scope of this study is limited to the significance of life, childhood traumas, and resilience in psychology in adults.
2. In terms of time and sample, the study is limited to adult individuals who voluntarily participated in the study living in Turkey in 2020-2021.
3. This research is limited to the qualities measured by the measurement tools used in the data collection process; Personal Information Form, Childhood Traumas Scale, Meaning in Life Scale, Psychological Resilience Scale for Adults.

1.7. Definitions

The World Health Organisation (WHO) notifications that childhood trauma is the actions and situations with negative content that are shaped by emotional, physical, sexual abuse and other forms of abuse that have a deleterious influence on physical health, safety, psychological health of children under the age of 18, or on the emotional health that affects the trust in their relationships with people.

The concept of psychological resilience is defined as the ability to recover quickly from mental illness, disease, differences or negative situations; to recover

quickly; to recover quickly after being offended or angry; to be flexible (Ramirez 2007).

Meaning in life has been delineated as including factors such as making life easier, reaching goals and making the individual's possessions in a way that he/she will be satisfied (Wong, 1998). According to Wong, the concept of "meaning" is success, religion, relationships, personal transcendence; according to Emmons (1999), it is intimacy, success, religion-spirituality and being productive.



CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This part expresses the conceptual framework of meaning in life, childhood trauma, psychological resilience. First, information was given about theoretical framework for meaning in life. Secondly, information was given about psychological resilience and the theory of this concept. Then, the third variable, childhood traumas was explained. At the end of the chapter, the distinction between the variable under consideration and the autonomous variable was elucidated.

2.1. Meaning in Life

2.1.1. The Historical Development of the Concept of Meaning in Life

The scholarly literature indicates that investigations of an academic form prioritise the examination of behavioural-objective evidence over subjective sensations and emotions. Research in the field of psychology has frequently exhibited a preference for investigations focused on pathological aspects rather than emphasising the study of healthy and positive foundations. Over time, the fundamental principles of positive psychology were laid down, resulting in the shift of the notion of "meaning in life" from the realm of philosophy to the domain of psychological literature (Frankl, 1959; Park et al., 2009; Park et al., 2004). Following the completion of World War II, there was a notable rise in the number of research endeavours that concentrated on positive phenomena within the field of psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The field of psychology commenced to incorporate research on the notion of meaning in life following the conclusion of World War II. The research conducted by Frankl, a prominent figure in existential

psychology, has garnered significance; nonetheless, it has gotten comparatively less attention when compared to other manifestations within the field of positive psychology (Debats, 1996).

Throughout history, individuals have had a persistent inclination to understand themselves and their environment, which has been manifested through many cognitive and behavioural mechanisms (Ryff & Singer, 1998; Steger et al., 2008). Nevertheless, the available literature has yet to thoroughly investigate the degree to which people get meaning from their lives (Kennedy et al., 1994). Psychology must adequately include experimental research on meaning in life, especially within the last four decades (Steger et al., 2008).

2.1.2. Definition of Meaning in Life

The pursuit of existential significance is an intrinsic and fundamental facet of the human condition. Although cultural variations exist in the approaches to this quest, the underlying process is universally observed (Reker & Chamberlain, 2000). Emmons (2005) posits that there exists a prevailing notion regarding the distinctive drive inherent in humans to engage in the process of synthesising life occasions and encounters with the purpose of deriving meaning. The need for purpose serves as a mechanism by which humans strive to establish a feeling of stability in the face of the constant flux of our existence (Baumeister & Vohs, 2002). The concept of meaning serves as both an inherent human drive and a crucial framework for promoting well-being, facilitating a healthy lifestyle, and effectively adjusting to life's evolving circumstances (Reker, 2000, p. 39). When evaluating the existential significance of life, the objective is to deliberate upon the diverse array of experiences and objectives that confer personal value and purpose to one's existence, as opposed to contemplating the overarching universal meaning of life. Hence, the subjective

encounter with significance is distinct and mirrors the underlying motifs inside an individual's existence. The implications of historical events, cultural norms, socio-demographic characteristics, and stages of development on individuals' values and beliefs is of great significance in determining the particular nature of created meaning (Prager, 1996).

Individuals do not exist in a state of isolation. According to Bar-Tur et al., (2001), individuals possess familial links, reside within social groups, and exhibit shared characteristics related to ethnicity, gender, and occupation, which form distinct interpretations and understandings (p. 255). Hence, the conditions at hand exert an influence on the interpretation that individuals formulate. Despite a general agreement regarding the significance of the pursuit of meaning, there still needs to be a cohesive theoretical framework or conceptual understanding of the nature of this endeavour (e.g., Reker & Chamberlain, 2000; Steger, 2009). The concept that the process of creating meaning involves two fundamental components, namely the quest for meaning and the achievement of meaning, has been widely acknowledged in several theoretical frameworks (e.g., Frankl, 1963; Reker, 2000; Steger et al., 2006).

The recognition of the importance of experiencing a sense of purpose in life has been extensively recognised due to its diverse physiological and psychological consequences. However, examining the factors contributing to individuals' experience of this sense of meaning is equally vital. Empirical evidence supports that meaning can be derived from many sources, such as interpersonal interactions, religious activities, and personal growth (O'Connor & Chamberlain, 1996). It is well observed that individuals find meaning in several aspects of their lives (Pöhlmann et al., 2006). Furthermore, scholars have put forth the proposition that the acquisition of meaning

from many different places can offer a safeguard, particularly in situations where the preservation of meaning within a particular domain is in jeopardy (Heine et al., 2006).

2.1.3. The Concept of Meaning in Life

Achieving goals that give one's life purpose is closely tied to finding meaning in one's own life. It varies from person to person. It is a motivating factor for sustaining life (Frankl, 1992). Steger (2009) posits that the notion of meaning in life is a comprehensive construct incorporating characteristics related to understanding and purpose. Recently, there has been a redefinition of life's meaning, which now pertains to the degree to which a person's life is marked by significance and value (Heintzelman & King, 2014; Steger, 2012). Therefore, the construct encompasses a cognitive element about coherence, a motivational element related to goals and purpose, and an emotional element involving emotions of contentment, fulfilment, and a perception of life's meaningfulness.

The phenomenon of life's meaning has been reviewed in connection with more positive phenomena until today. For example, life satisfaction and positive and negative emotions and moods are evaluated in this context (Ryff & Singer, 1998; Steger et al., 2008). Additionally, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) stated that meaning in life and life purpose are two inseparable constructs and they evaluate them within positive psychology. Consequently, the phrases of meaning in life and purpose in life are frequently employed alternately within the existing body of literature. According to Yalom (2013), being devoid of significance in life might be characterised as a state of meaninglessness.. This situation was evaluated in two ways as "existential emptiness" and "existential neurosis". "Existential emptiness" is felt as a feeling of boredom, calmness, and emptiness. Frankl stated that such a person would not be able to find his or her goal and path and would not be able to realize what he or

she wanted to do when he or she was free. If there are clear clinical indicators along with feelings of meaninglessness, one speaks of existential neurosis (cited in Yalom, 2013). Existential neurosis is synonymous with a crisis of meaninglessness.

Existential neurosis is referred to if the individual is progressing with clear clinical indicators along with clear feelings of meaninglessness (Yalom, 2001).

The phenomenon of the existential vacuum is frequently seen in contemporary times (Frankl, 2018, p. 120). The existence of an existential vacuum has been acknowledged as a primary determinant of numerous disorders, encompassing but not restricted to sadness, aggression, and substance abuse. Individuals with a profound sense of meaninglessness are characterized by a lack of cognizance regarding a purpose that holds sufficient value to justify their existence. The key to surmounting this state is contingent upon exploring and comprehending the existential significance of being (Frankl, 2018, p. 137).

According to Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), the tenets of meaning and purpose in life are interconnected and form a cohesive system. Both ideas fall within the purview of positive psychology. Battista and Almond (1973) see life with meaning as related to the view of the phenomenon of life and the perception of meaning. In this case, personal beliefs and having a goal in life are necessary. Ryff (1989), alternatively, considers meaning in life as a more comprehensive definition that includes the phenomenon of goals.

Maddi (1970), in his article "The Search for Meaning", states that existential disturbance arises from "a broad failure in the quest for meaning in life" (Yalom, 2001). Frankl (2009) states that the elderly come to therapeutic support because of their intense search for meaning over traumas that have long-term effects. Reker and Wong (1988) stated that meaning in life increases with age. In support of this

approach, Krauser (2007), as a result of his interviews with the elderly, concluded that the elderly struggle effectively with the effects of the traumas they have experienced. Therefore, it is possible to talk about a situation that gains meaning with age and is observed in the therapeutic process.

2.1.4. The Theoretical Approaches to Meaning in Life

The profession of philosophy examines the existential implications of human existence, while psychology explores the diverse elements that help define the value of individuals' lives. Psychology explores how humans perceive and interpret meaning, including its sources, personal significance, the active pursuit of meaning, and the subsequent impacts of meaning on their lives (Steger & Kashdan, 2013, p. 104). The theoretical approaches of the meaning of life encompasses various perspectives, including logotherapy, existential psychology, humanistic psychology, and gestalt therapy. These approaches provide different insights into the nature of meaning and how individuals can find purpose and fulfilment in life. The concept of meaning in life, initially undertaken within the realm of psychology, was further investigated by Victor Frankl, the originator of logotherapy, in collaboration with Alfred Adler, a pioneer in individual psychology. Following the subsequent rise in prominence of positive psychology, a field dedicated to exploring ways in which individuals can enhance their overall well-being and experience more happiness, the examination of the idea of meaning in life has persisted (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000: 6).

Victor Frankl is widely recognised for his groundbreaking contributions to the field of psychology, particularly in the area of existential philosophy and the exploration of life's meaning. Frankl's seminal work, "Man's Search for Meaning,"

holds a pivotal position in the realm of conceptualising the existential significance of human existence.

The "logos" in "logotherapy" proposed by Frankl (2009) corresponds to the Greek philosophy of "meaning" and Frankl called his approach as meaning therapy. The pursuit of meaning, as addressed by Frankl, serves as the primary motivator in everyone's existence.. This search for meaning is a principle of a natural and healthy life. Frankl (2018: 117) asserts that the individual's search for meaning is a fundamental drive in their life. He defines this drive as the "will to meaning." This meaning is unique to each person and can only be discovered by the individual. Frankl (2018: 120) posits that the significance attributed to life is subject to individual variation, fluctuating not only between individuals but also within the same individual through time, even on an hourly basis. Frankl posits that there exist three distinct ways by which an individual might discover and derive meaning in their existence. One method is producing a piece of work or completing a task. Another method is gaining first-hand experience or interacting with another individual. Finally, the third approach is confronting unavoidable suffering without attempting to evade or avoid it. In essence, the author posits that individuals can attain a sense of purpose in their lives by pursuing and enacting advantageous behaviours for both personal well-being and the betterment of society, cultivating affectionate connections with others, and confronting immutable circumstances. Also, Logotherapy essentially consists of three main principles including as following (Frankl, 2009):

- Human life has meaning.
- In order to make life meaningful and to integrate it with this purpose, one's main motivation is to search for meaning.
- Meaning can be found even in the presence of suffering.

In existential psychology, "meaning in life" is built on the purpose of one's life in the universe as a species. The inquiry into the significance of one's existence, commonly referred to as "meaning in the universe," constitutes a distinct question within the realm of philosophical discourse. Meaning in the universe includes the meaning of purpose. Having a sense of meaning has a lot to do with having activities that can be accomplished or having a goal or goals. Meanings are always different because they are unique, but they are never lacking. Life is never without meaning (Yalom, 2001).

Under the themes of cosmic meaning and personal meaning, Yalom (2000) studied the meaning of life. The concept of cosmic meaning is an expression of a transcendent power that bestows purpose and significance upon humanity. The existence of cosmic significance allows for explaining a wide range of phenomena, imbuing everything with inherent meaningfulness. Life acquires significance through a profound connection that may be attributed to the supernatural, religious beliefs, or existential contemplations. Within this particular framework, it is commonly seen that individuals tend to interpret cosmic significance as being both divine and perfect while also seeing it infused with profound meaning. In contrast, personal meaning diverges from cosmic meaning because it does not centre around a particular interpretation. The number of interpretations can be equal to the number of individuals. The concept of personal meaning comprises interpretations that are not rooted in religious beliefs and pertain to worldly matters. One viewpoint to consider is that of existential philosophers, such as J.P. Sartre and A. Camus, who argue that the world is characterised by absurdity, as referenced by Yalom (2000). Individuals possess the capacity to construct personal significance in their lives, even in the absence of a universal or all-encompassing meaning.

Adler's theory of personal psychology posits that a central objective influences an individual's psychological existence. For an individual to possess the ability to perceive, sense, experience desires, and have aspirations, they need to be oriented towards a specific objective and actively establish goals. Establishing goals is vital in facilitating progress and development within the realm of psychological existence. Specific individuals may lack explicit objectives, yet it is plausible to discern their aspirations based on their observable behaviours. The field of personal psychology examines various psychological states within the context of individual goals (Adler, 2004).

Gestalt therapy, a prominent psychological framework, posits that individuals ascribe significance to all elements and are inherently unable to exist without attributing meaning to the environment in which they navigate their existence. Attributing significance to a location is contingent upon an individual's presence within a distinct milieu. When an individual communicates a situation verbally to another individual, they ascribe significance, and the significance ascribed by all individuals is oriented towards that individual (Clarkson, 1991).

Overall, these theoretical frameworks provide valuable insights into the nature of meaning and how individuals can cultivate a sense of purpose and fulfillment. Logotherapy, existential psychology, humanistic psychology, and gestalt therapy all emphasize the importance of subjective experiences, personal growth, and aligning one's values and goals with a sense of meaning. Through the examination and contemplation of these many points of view, individuals have the opportunity to acquire a more profound comprehension of their own identity and their position within the broader context of the world. Consequently, this process can ultimately

contribute to the cultivation of a life that is imbued with greater significance and satisfaction.

Since the investigations reported in the literature are academic in nature, it can be observed that they tend to focus on behaviorally objective information as opposed to emotions and subjective experiences. In psychology-centered research, pathology-centered research has been preferred rather than healthy and positive foundations. Over time, the foundations of positive psychology were laid and the concept of "meaning in life" was transferred from philosophy to psychology literature (Frankl, 1959; Park, Peterson, & Brunwasser, 2009; Park et al., 2004). After World War II, the number of studies on positive phenomena in psychology began to increase (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It was also after World War II that research on meaning in life found a place in psychology. At this point, it is possible to emphasize that although it gained importance with the research of Frankl, one of the representatives of existential psychology, it received less attention than other positive psychology expressions (Debats, 1995).

People have always felt a strong desire to understand themselves and their surroundings and have expressed this desire through mental and behavioral means (Ryff & Singer, 1998; Steger et al., 2008). However, finding meaning in one's life has been under studied (Kennedy et al., 1994). Insufficient attention has been given to the exploration of meaning in life within the subject area of psychology, particularly in the past four decades (Steger et al., 2008).

2.2. Psychological Resilience

Psychologist Suzanne Kobasa devised a notion of psychological resilience. Kobasa (1979) conducted a longitudinal study on the senior managers of the Illinois Bell Telephone Company, who experienced many distressing events after losing their

jobs at the end of the 1970s, to find the consequences of distress. It was found that senior executives responded in two different ways in times of distress. He observed that some managers and workers were healthier and had fewer mental and medical problems than other workers (Kobasa, 1979; 1982). Consequently, it was thought that there are some personal aspects that protect against the negative effects of overstress. In line with his approach, he researched the personal aspects he identified as 'Psychological Resilience - Hardiness' (Williams, 2001). Psychological resilience has been recognised as an essential component in mitigating the detrimental effects of adversity and facilitating resilience against it. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in providing a safeguard against the adverse consequences of challenging circumstances. Since it would be difficult to differentiate social and environmental causes when trying to combat adversity, studies on combating adversity have evolved into psychological resilience (Ramirez, 2007).

Ramirez (2007) defines resilience in terms of individuality as the ability of individuals to acquire a positive perspective about themselves in troubled life situations. Karairmak and Çetinkaya (2009), in their research, define psychological resilience as an important aspect of individuality in maintaining a positive emotional state in distressed life situations. Crowley, Hayslip, and Hobdy (2003) also concluded that there is an affiliation throughout psychological resilience and techniques of struggle in different life situations. Individuals with high psychological resilience do not choose to walk away by making more use of techniques in the form of troubleshooting and planning when they encounter troublesome life situations. For this reason, people with effective coping skills and psychological resilience suffer less distress and have fewer signs of discomfort (Klag & Bradley, 2004)

From this vantage point, psychological resilience can be typified as an individual's capacity to effectively navigate and adjust to challenging circumstances, even during periods of heightened personal adversity. The general view of psychological resilience, which some sources refer to as a psychological trait, is that it is very important for the individual to maintain positive progress because reasons such as giving up or being bad in a bad situation prevent progress, while psychological resilience allows for continuous effort and progress (Masten, 2007).

Numerous definitions have been proposed to elucidate the multifaceted construct of psychological resilience; many dimensions have been delineated within these definitions. In their literature research, Masten et al. (1990) conducted an evaluation of the shared characteristics found in various interpretations. Additionally, the authors assessed psychological resilience across three primary dimensions (Masten et al., 1990). Cicchetti (2010) considers the pretence of psychological durability as a living stage that allows people who encounter danger factors in the early stages of life to achieve positive outcomes through many protective factors. Therefore, this concept is based on three main factors. These are "risk factors", meaning adaptation and serious adversity, "protective factors", which aim to reduce or eliminate the impact of risk factors, and "positive outcomes", which are associated with the positive functionality of the traumatic aspects of risk factors through protective factors. Individuals who have not been traumatized at a certain stage of life may show coping strategies that make them strong and successful, but they cannot be characterized as mentally sound. Exposure to risk factors is a prerequisite for psychological resilience to work in a given society (Masten, 2001; Cicchetti, 2010)

The primary fundamental aspect of resilience pertains to the recognition that persons who possess the capacity to effectively navigate and overcome challenges tend

to exhibit a strong sense of self or personal efficacy, enabling them to persevere and achieve greater levels of success than what may be considered optimal. The biographical narratives of individuals who have achieved fame or success despite their impoverished and challenging upbringing bear relevance to this fundamental principle. This relevance is similar to what can be seen in systematic resilience research that seeks to identify the variables by which children growing up with great risk and communities alike can achieve success. The second crucial element of psychological resilience pertains to the capacity of someone to effectively adapt to and cope with challenging circumstances. In this type of resilience research, the main cause of distress, such as divorce and domestic violence, was considered as the main reason. The third psychological resilience issue refers to experiencing traumas such as the loss of a loved one, natural disasters, and accidents. Research pertaining to the third category encompasses investigations into individual matters and transformations that hold significant weight in mitigating the repercussions of traumatic experiences (Masten 2001; Tümlü & Recepoğlu, 2013).

During everyday life, human beings experience many situations that are difficult to cope with and cause many different feelings to progress. These events are sometimes vital situations such as the loss of someone who is very important, physical ailments, natural ailments or being attacked by someone. At this point, individual reactions and actions that vary considerably from person to person are also involved. The predominance of the negative emotional state of these feelings requires the need to express the distress experienced by the person. With the distress, it is necessary for the individual to carry out more solution-centered, adaptive activities. This stage is very necessary for mental well-being. What needs to be realized regarding psychological resilience is to act according to the prediction of the results by examining the state of

the person in a healthy way (Masten 2001). Psychological resilience refers to the ability to repair damage and become stronger against life's adversities. On the one hand, it also refers to coming back to life. It is therefore a personal stage that multiplies the potential for living, allowing people to move forward in learning, creativity and activism through experiences. People's associations of beliefs and actions, multiplied by environmental assistance, allow them to increase their level of flexibility and tolerance in order to advance their personal life experiences (Özbay & Palancı, 2000).

2.2.1. Factors affecting psychological resilience

Several studies on resilience have looked at the effect of personal characteristics such as age, education, gender, or length of employment on resilience levels (Klag & Bradley, 2004; Maddi et al., 2006) and found inconsistent data. Therefore, analyzing the relevance of resilience to various demographic variables may benefit a better understanding of this view.

In the literature, the presence of more negative attributes and individuality issues and pathological diseases can be explained by the lack of research on mental well-being. In this direction, it is possible to state that more importance is attached to identifying bad situations and choosing techniques to combat them. Self-empowerment, which is often mentioned as one of the important elements to increase life satisfaction, is important in terms of improving performance. Along with its positive effects on physical health, it prevents depression and improves social relations (Bonnano et al., 2005).

Many factors can be mentioned regarding the scope of psychological resilience. Additionally, the research indicate that these elements can be categorised into three primary groups: family assistance and adjustment, individual attributes, and

environmental assistance (such as colleagues and social surroundings) (Haase et al., 2004).

Personal qualities include sociability, physical abilities, communication skills, intelligence and self-sufficiency, and talent (Bonnano et al., 2005). Studies focusing on familial aspects emphasize the importance of relationships with only one parent or a person who is a parent.

Environmental support that enhances resilience can include friends, teachers, neighbours and others who support individuals in their efforts to overcome difficulties (Bonnano et al., 2005).

When considering family help and adaptation, it is stated that having people other than the family by one's side is also very important at this stage, such as having a supportive educational environment in difficult situations and having hobbies that expect to work with social interaction (Maddi et al., 2006).

2.3. Psychological Trauma

Psychological trauma is presented with a disempowering content (Herman, 1992). Trauma renders the individual helpless and powerless due to the damage it causes. In this framework, three situations that cause traumatic effects are stated. The traumatic situation may be experienced by the individual himself/herself, witnessed, or experienced by someone he/she loves and is close to. The occurrence of a traumatic experience can also be categorized into three categories, namely, the occurrence of the traumatic experience by the person himself/herself, natural disasters and accidents (APA, 1994). It can be stated as situations that many people may experience at some stage of their lives. Throughout life, people experience multiple distress factors and traumatic events. Due to these events, some of these people lose their functionality and

start to experience physiological and psychological problems. Although some people are exposed to negative life events, it is seen that they can adapt to this situation and struggle by producing solution alternatives (Basım & Çetin, 2011; Holly & Costar, 2005).

Psychological trauma can be mentioned when a risk situation that occurs in the external universe to the existence of the individual causes a situation that may leave the individual's potential to fight this risk incomplete. It can be evaluated as a result of extraordinarily stressful events that destroy the person's acceptance of being safe and make them feel helpless in a dangerous world. Traumatic events typically encompass situations that pose serious danger to an individual's life or personal safety. Any circumstance that leads to the isolation or helplessness of an individual can result in trauma, even in the absence of physical violence.. In other words, the more frightened and helpless a person feels, the more traumatized they are (Herman, 1992).

Trauma is addressed through the experience of the survivor. After two different people are exposed to the same harmful event, one may experience trauma while the other may be relatively problem-free. Therefore, it is possible to accept that a particular event is traumatic for everyone. On the other hand, it is not possible to consider any event as non-traumatic. Not having experienced trauma cannot be handled with any impact dimension (Herman, 1992). To summarize, the traumatic content of the event differs from individual to individual. The term of trauma is frequently linked to profound life occurrences, including personal experiences or observations of violence, warfare, the death of a loved one, sexual abuse, road accidents, and the diagnosis of a life-threatening illness. (Berenz et al., 2018). In addition, difficulties in relationships, problems in attachment processes, and vital situations with systematic dimensions

within the family can also have a traumatic impact on the existence of the individual (Dalton et al., 2013).

2.3.1. Childhood traumatic experiences

Freud defined trauma as the reactivation of repressed but unresolved conflicts in childhood in adulthood. Traumatic situations re-emerge with defense mechanisms such as regression, rejection, and suppression (Karakaya & Coşkun, 2008).

Childhood is the period when the child will be in difficulty in the face of traumatic situations due to the low strength to fight against trauma (Şar 2007). Therefore, according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations, children who have not yet reached cognitive and physical maturity need special protection and care. In addition, all individuals are recognized as children before the age of 18, except in the case of early adulthood (Nation 1989). Since children do not reach cognitive and physical adulthood, it may not be healthy for them to report trauma. For this reason, a definition of trauma from a developmental point of view is needed. All behaviors by parents, caregivers or adults who are responsible for the upbringing of the child that have a negative impact on the progress of the child are included in the definition of this concept (WHO, 2016).

Individuals may experience traumatic situations that may cause many immediate and long-lasting negative outcomes, especially in the first periods of their lives, which is called the early childhood stage. Children and adolescents are more at risk when it comes to traumatic experiences (Kessler et al., 2010). The enormous nature of traumas in the development and configuration of personality has become it a prominent topic within the field of psychology, prompting extensive examination and analysis of their consequences.

Traumatic experiences should not only be analyzed with external indicators, but also the meanings they exhibit for the child (Freud, 2000). The child sometimes sees the traumatic situation he/she has experienced in his/her dreams and tries to struggle with the distressing situation he/she encounters by repeating it in his/her conversations and games. The same situations also occur in adults. Freud states that childhood traumas have a strong impact and are linked to the stages of progression (Snowden, 2011).

Childhood traumas can be witnessing a natural disaster, an accident, or the loss of someone at an unexpected time, as well as physical, emotional abuse and neglect caused by the family and environment. The individuals who bear the responsibility for the nurturing and guidance of children exert a considerable influence on their journey towards adulthood and the development of their own identities (Şenkal & Işıklı, 2015). For this reason, the scope of information on both abuse and neglect gains importance.

2.3.2. Causes of childhood traumatic experiences

How and to what extent children's needs are met by adults who care for them, and whether they are emotionally and physically neglected or abused, also determine the way the rapidly developing child's brain comprehends the universe. This also affects the acquisition of cognitive neural pathways, essentially drawing attention to the kind of relationship the child develops with himself and the universe around him. The whole attitude towards external and internal stimuli also influences the formation of individual schema. The relationship with life, life situations and the people he/she is related to continues to be shaped accordingly (Van Der Kolk, 2018).

Childhood traumas, in other words, abuse and neglect experienced by children, have been experienced since the existence of humanity, and their consequences have caused social problems. The fact that the abuse and neglect experienced by children differs in every culture leads to internalization and lack of attention. Thus, it prevents the existing problems from being addressed in real terms (Kaytez et al., 2018).

Child abuse and neglect can cause insecure attachment and can be passed from generation to generation through this means. It is thought that people who have been abused and neglected in childhood may have effects from the subjective stages of verbal or physical violence against children in adulthood (Özgentürk, 2014). In other words, it is stated that if an individual with a negative childhood experience cannot cope with his/her problems, he/she will show behaviors that will continue the trauma, thus creating a cycle (Widom, 1992).

The causes of childhood traumas including inadequate financial situation, large number of siblings and indifferent parental attitudes (Polat, 2001), low level of education, troubled parent-child relationship (Kara et al., 2004), insufficient social support, marginalization (Güler et al., 2002), disorganized family environment, stepparent situations where the child cannot express himself/herself (Taner & Gökler, 2004), experiencing troubled life situations (Polat, 2001), substance abuse by family members or one of the parents (Taner & Gökler, 2004), having parents who do not have advanced problem-solving skills (Polat, 2001), teenage pregnancy and marriage (Polat, 2001) as well as migration and wars (Örsel et al., 2011).

In short, all experiences of neglect and abuse within childhood traumas create very important effects that cause individuals to experience traumatic situations related to danger factors in mental, social, academic and many other places (Perez & Widom,

1994; Afifi et al., 2016). It is stated in the literature that some of the people who experience situations related to these danger factors can create positive functional movement patterns in these difficulties and explain this state with the expression of mental resilience (Masten, 2001). It is also emphasized that the trauma experienced affects brain development and may even cause permanent problems (Bick & Nelson, 2016).

2.3.3. Definition and symptoms of childhood traumas

Childhood trauma refers to instances of physical, psychological, or sexual abuse that happen to a person or witnesses from infancy through maturity, as well as adverse circumstances that disrupt the cognitive well-being of the kid in a distressing manner (Herman, 2011). Neglect and abuse, which are commonly encountered in childhood traumas, prevent the child from progressing as a result of children experiencing physical, emotional, mental and social limiting situations by their parents or other people (Monnat, & Chandler, 2015). The World Health Organization (1999) defines child abuse as many negative problems that affect children's health and may hinder their physical and psychological progress, sexual abuse, exploitation for any purpose, emotional deception and all such situations. Child neglect, on the other hand, referred to as the failure of those who are liable for the kid's care from birth to provide the adequate physical and psychological attention that the child needs to develop and grow, so that the child outgrows these feelings and attitudes. The difference between these two phenomena is that neglect involves passive, and abuse involves active behaviors.

Childhood trauma presents unique challenges in the realm of treatment due to its frequent association with abuse or neglect originating from the child's immediate surroundings. Even if the abuse by the child's close environment is a one-time event, the child continues his/her life with the fear that the abuse will happen again (Dedeler,

Öpöz, & Öztürk, 2016). The neglect and abuse of children is an essential challenge that affects not only the child and his/her family who experience and witness it, but also the society in which the child is involved. (Taner & Gökler, 2004). Childhood traumas do not occur only in a certain financial or social group, but are seen in all segments, at many social and financial levels and cause depression (Bostancı et al., 2006).

2.3.4. Types of childhood traumas

Trauma is defined as any event that occurs suddenly and causes a physical or psychological damage to the person. Terr (1991) defines psychological trauma as a situation in which one or more damaging external factors that occur at a time when the person does not expect it, that the person has experienced in the past, that the struggle and defense mechanisms are not sufficient and that maintains a feeling of helplessness for a non-permanent time. The increase in the scope of the term trauma was first seen after the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. Psychological changes detected in soldiers coming from the war drew attention to the psychological aspect of their traumas and made the indicators of psychological traumas more visible (Kokurcan & Özsan, 2012).

Apart from the situations mentioned above, terrorism, natural disasters, fear, hopelessness, failure, accidents or the experience of a loved one can also cause trauma. The cause of 9-10% of deaths in the world is related to trauma and more than 45 million people continue their lives with moderate or severe disability due to trauma every year (WHO, 2010). Traumatic events that can occur at all stages of a person's life can be considered central to the comprehension of childhood traumas. Traumas in childhood can be caused by individual problems as well as natural disasters (Van der Kolk, 2018).

WHO (2006) defines negative behavior against children as follows: 18 years of age, which can occur in all periods of development and in all kinds of social areas, and

which causes all kinds of negative effects on the child's survival, the prevention of positive mental or physical progress, and the healthy development of self-confidence. It also includes emotional, physical or sexual commercial or other forms of abuse, whether emotional, physical or sexual, by parents or other individuals in charge of the kid's health and welfare family members, or others. WHO defines child abuse and neglect as the totality of all negative acts against the child, including all negative mental behaviors that are related to the child's obligations, self-confidence, and abilities and that hinder or harm the child's progress and the child's ability to continue his/her life in a comfortable and healthy way. This term encompasses the act of disregarding the child's well-being, as well as subjecting the youngster to bodily or psychological harm, with the intention of gaining certain advantages.

When childhood traumas are analyzed, it is stated that the most common causes of trauma are sexual, physical and mental abuse, emotional or physical violence in the family, poor financial situation and the problems caused by this, absence of one or both parents, social violence and health problems. Adaptation problems caused by changing cities suddenly or too many times, health problems with life-threatening risks, loss of a loved one, torture, terrorism, natural disasters and war are also included in traumatic events (Berenz et al., 2018; Forman-Hoffman et al., 2013; Fraser et al., 2013). While the abuse aspect of bad experiences in childhood is evaluated in three ways as emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, it is determined that the disruption of the family phenomenon is gathered under the headings of mental illness, alcohol and substance abuse of one of the parents, one of the parents being involved in crime and the mother being a victim of violence (Felitti et al., 1998).

Physical neglect refers to the adverse consequences experienced by a child due to the inability of those responsible for their care, such as parents or guardians, to fulfil

essential requirements. These include providing sufficient nutrition, attending to the kid's healthcare needs, and ensuring appropriate personal hygiene (Taner & Gökler, 2004).

Physical abuse, on the other hand, is defined as intentional, physically harmful and mentally degrading acts against the child (Finkelhor & Korbin, 1988). WHO (2002) defines physical abuse as the disruption of the child's health, self-confidence, and progress after intentional physical force against the child. It is also detailed as physical abuse when a child is subjected to violence by a family member or by his/her parents in a way that leaves scars on the child's body for more than 48 hours. In addition, acts such as slapping or punching the child, shaking the child, preventing the child from breathing, beating the child, tying the child up or locking the child in a place to limit his/her behaviour, and injuring the child can be specified as violent behaviours (Kaplan et al., 1999). Previous studies state that the incidence of physical abuse in the society is higher than what is recorded. The reason for this situation is that the situation that is expressed as abuse is stated as an accident in the records. Emotional abuse is when children or adolescents are badly affected and deprived of love, attention and care (Finkelhor & Korbin, 1988; Kara et al., 2004).

2.4. The Relationship among Meaning in Life, Childhood Traumas and Psychological Resilience

The fact that there are many studies focusing on the courage to struggle with distressing situations together with the levels of mental well-being reveals the need to examine the techniques of struggling with distress and bad situations in terms of individual differences and method differences (Özbay & Palancı, 2000; Karairmak, 2006). At this point, it is crucial to direct attention towards the elucidations provided

by individuals as they make sense of the events they encounter, as well as the attitudes they display when grappling with those circumstances. The response constructive created will allow the individual to struggle with the situation. In this way, the continuity of mental well-being will be possible as adaptation to the event will be possible. The person will be able to find the strength to recover by returning to himself/herself again. The ability to find this strength depends on the ability to think about what they have and to act in this direction (Özbay & Palancı, 2000).

Since people's ability to come back to themselves will be shaped depending on their ability to use their existing abilities, it has been proven in many studies that distress and quality of life are inversely related (Ramirez, 2007). Hence, it is possible to argue that the ability to regain one's composure may be useful in combating the conditions that cause distress. It is appropriate to say that psychological resilience, which is a concept that needs attention, is a quality that minimizes the negative effects of distress and at the same time creates harmony (Jacelon 1997). In many studies on the subject, it is stated that this quality may be related to some genetic factors, but the environmental effect is also important (Block and Block 1980). However, research has also indicated that psychological resilience is a personal aspect that can be learned. Psychological resilience is a concept that is comprehended, learned, and progressed through the realities faced.

It has been identified that employees with higher resilience in mental health are more productive and successful (Maddi, et al., 2006). Psychological resilience softens the impact of adversity by differentiating the perception of attachment, management and difficulty aspects, past states or current situation, and reduces the negative impact of adversity by affecting mental analysis and struggle. Lack of commitment, feeling weak and perceiving change as a risk leads to alienation (Lambert et al., 2003).

Mentally healthy people look at themselves and the universe from a different perspective (Maddi & Kobasa, 1984).

Among people who have been affected by traumatic situations, those with high psychological resilience often did not exhibit many or few indicators of mental illness. However, they have shown that they continue to fulfill their personal and social obligations and expect to experience a different set of tasks and experiences (Nicholas, 1993). Kobasa (1982) stated that people who are strong in the face of adversity show some typical behaviors when they face life. These qualities encompass a willingness to embrace diversity, the capacity to concentrate on tasks at hand, and a sense of self-efficacy in handling various circumstances. In short, psychological resilience is also stated as a source of endurance when compared to the events in our troubled lives (Terzi, 2008).

Norfolk (1989), who states that an individual can lead a happy, enjoyable and energetic life by knowing how to manage adversity, states that resilient people who learn to fight adversity can make good use of the opportunities provided by life without collapsing in the face of negative aspects of life. Psychological resilience makes it easier for people to cope with difficult life conditions (Judkins & Rind, 2005; Lambert & Lambert, 1999), to assimilate the work they perform and the group they belong to by supporting them to cope with adversity. In this setting, it enables the integration of persons who show a strong psychological resilience. Therefore, those who possess a high level of psychological resilience demonstrate a greater level of commitment to the group and exhibit a decreased likelihood of disengagement or abandonment. Psychological resilience serves to mitigate the adverse consequences of distress and alleviate the stress that precipitates the development of illnesses.

People with higher psychological resilience are more active in their daily activities and work. They are in control of their lives and see rapid change as a chance for progress. Individuals exhibiting a smaller degree of resilience, conversely, tend to depart expeditiously and encounter challenges when attempting to acclimatise to other environments (Klag & Bradley, 2004). Terzi (2008), who gives a resilience approach to personal well-being, states that psychological resilience is an aspect of individuality that helps to combat adversity. Additionally, it is emphasized that individuals need a reason to cope with life's challenges and be resilient. Individuals create this reason by questioning and finding the meaning of life. Individuals with high psychological resilience, who manage to resist life's challenges, have personal goals and a purpose for leading a more meaningful life (Bonanno, 2004). Hence, it is well acknowledged that those who retain a comprehension of the importance of meaning in their existence exhibit enhanced capacity to overcome challenges and demonstrate heightened psychological resilience (Bethell et al., 2019).

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, previous studies on psychological resilience, meaning of life and childhood traumas are included.

3.1. Studies Related to Meaning in Life and Demographic Variables

This section discusses the association between the notion of purpose in life and demographic variables.

3.1.1. Age

The current body of literature pertaining to the topic of purpose in life and ageing exhibits a range of diverse results.. Some studies have linked meaning in life to high age, but others have not. The studies are described below.

In their study, Reker et al. (1987) investigated the interaction underlying demographic characteristics and the structure of meaning in life, as well as their correlations with life attitudes and well-being. A cohort of 300 participants, encompassing persons of both genders, was subjected to analysis across five discrete phases of development, spanning from early adulthood to advanced age. The study's conclusions indicate an upward association between age and both life meaning and acceptance of death. In contrast, goal seeking and future meaning exhibited a decline with advancing age. Similarly, Baikeli et al. (2021) examined how age moderates the time-based perspective and purpose in the life of Chinese people. 334 individuals aged 18–65 years separated into three groups: emerging (18–24), young (25–44), and middle-aged (45–65) had participated in this study. Middle-aged adults had more purpose in life and searched for it less often than emerging adults. Importantly, age

attenuated the link between time perspective and meaning search. Future time perspective positively correlated with meaning search in emerging and young adults. For middle-aged people, the present-hedonistic time view was positively associated with life meaning, while the future time perspective was adversely related. The data imply that adulthood time perspective and meaning in life vary by age.

Karataş (2022) probed the modulating impact of self-transcendence and psychological mindfulness on the effects of attributions of meaning and purpose to life, as well as schema categories, on psychological symptoms. The sample for this research investigation consisted of 400 individuals who were young adults aged between 18 and 35 years. Significant variations in attributions of purpose to life were noted across people of different age groups. Specifically, individuals between the ages of 30 and 35 exhibited more significant attributions of purpose than individuals aged 18 to 23. In their research, in which crested Akgül (2014), Aydın (2015), Kaya (2021) and Yıldırım Usta (2021) inspected several factors with meaning in life, they arrived at deductions that corroborated the findings of Reker et al. (1987), Baikeli et al. (2021) and Karataş (2022).

Indeed, existing research in the academic literature have reported findings that indicate the absence of a causal connection between the variable of age and the feeling of meaning in life.. In a study by Özaydın (2016), the researcher examined the factors that predict an existential void. The research investigation centred on the assessment of relationship satisfaction, as well as the significance and value received from everyday activities, health, and socioeconomic variables. The examination discover consisted of a sample size of 198 university students, with 77 of them being female and 121 being male. Based on the obtained data, there was not a statistically noteworthy distinction noticed between the age variable and the scores of students' existing meaning, as well

as the scores of sought-after meaning. There was no difference in significance observed in the mean total scores for meaning in life among different age groups.

The current study by Taş (2011) sought to ascertain the relationship between teachers' internal-external locus of control, life satisfaction, and sense of meaning in life. Another objective of the research was to examine potential disparities in these four constructs concerning characteristics such as gender, age, professional experience, educational attainment, and marital status. The research encompassed a cohort of 363 educators, comprising 144 individuals of the male gender and 219 individuals of the female gender. Based on the study's outcomes, when analyzed by age, no statistically significant disparities were observed among teachers regarding their sense of purpose in life, specifically concerning the dimensions of current meaning and sought-after meaning. The research investigated by Demirtaş (2010), Arda (2011), Erpay (2017) and Frankl (2018: 20) on the notion of the meaning of life among adult individuals revealed that there were no statistically significant variations in the average total scores of the perception of life's meaning when analyzed with age variables.

3.1.2. Gender

Upon examination of the literature, it becomes evident that varying research findings have been obtained regarding the link between life's significance and gender. Some research focused on the prospective interaction of gender and life meaning, yielding contradictory results. While specific studies have reported a significant relationship between these two factors, other investigations have failed to establish any such association. The following section provides the details of the studies.

The study by Demirbaş Çelik (2016) investigated the correlation among a sense of significance in life and life goals within 268 university students aged 18–29 in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The study's sample consisted of 156 (58%)

female participants and 112 (42%) male participants. The study's results revealed a noteworthy association between the level of existential meaning seen by college students and the purpose they attribute to their lives. Moreover, a negative correlation was observed between the degree of existential seeking and search for life purposes. Additionally, it was observed that female students scored above that of male students on both life meaning and life objectives (Demirbaş Çelik, 2016). Several studies carried out by Arısoy (2021), Karataş (2022), and Sakmak (2023) have shown evidence of a noteworthy variation between the feeling of meaning in life and the variable of gender.

However, the literature about gender differences in meaning in life are contradicting. As an illustration, the study conducted by Çelik (2016) examined the impact of gender on the feeling of meaning in life, pursuit for meaning, and life purpose among university students. The study included 268 participants aged 18–29 years. The results of the study demonstrated that there were disparities among the levels of meaning in life and life purpose between males and females. However, it is pertinent to note that there were no statistically significant gender differences specifically related to life purpose. In addition, it was observed that female participants had a heightened awareness of the significance of life and its purposes compared to their male counterparts. Similarly, the study of Demirbaş (2010) suggest no statistically significant variation in the level of existential significance across different age groups and genders. Demirbaş (2010) investigated the correlation between resilience and the level of meaning that college students place in their lives. The research encompassed a comprehensive sample of 565 individuals from various academic institutions in Ankara and Istanbul. In accordance with the findings of Demirbaş (2010), Tufan (2021) similarly observed a lack of statistically significant disparities in the levels of which means in life and the pursuit of meaning in life between genders in his or her study.

This investigation examined the link between cognitive emotion control mechanisms, mindfulness levels, and the perception of life's purpose among a cohort of university students. The findings of Yıldırım Usta (2021), Demirtaş (2010), Arda (2011), Çamur (2014), Taş (2011), Erpay (2017), and Özaydın (2016) align with the results mentioned previously, suggesting that there is no statistically crucial difference regarding life's significance and gender.

3.1.3. Marital Status

When conducting a comprehensive assessment of the existing literature, it has been observed that several research have reported conflicting findings on the association between the feeling of purpose in life and marital status. Some studies have identified a statistically significant difference, while others have failed to find any meaningful association between these two variables. Studies are grouped below and explained.

A study conducted by Çamur (2014) examined the concept of meaning in life and its connection with marital status among young individuals. The findings of the study pointed out that there was no statistically noteworthy variation in the existence of meaning in life and seeking of meaning sub-dimensions when considering married status. Similarly, Yıldırım Usta (2021) investigated the association between individuals' perceptions of meaning in life and their level of psychological resilience. This study involved a sample of 348 teachers who served as participants. The findings from a study conducted with a sample size of 348 teachers revealed that there were no statistically notable variations in the levels of meaning and purpose in life among high school educators when taking into account their marital status.

Previous research has identified notable disparities between individuals' sense of significance in life and their marital status. For example, in a study by Karataş (2022),

differences in attributions of meaning to life were observed based on marital status, with married individuals exhibiting higher scores than their unmarried counterparts. Additionally, Kleftaras and Psarra (2012) investigated the correlation between meaning in life, psychological well-being, and depressive symptoms in a cohort of 401 recently employed young males. The outcomes of this research pointed to marriage, romantic relationships, and participation in social activities were recognised as essential contributors to the overall sense of meaning in individuals' lives. In Göcen (2013) and Aydın's (2015) study on meaning in life among adults, it was concluded that married individuals found more meaning in their lives compared to singles and were better protected against feelings of meaninglessness.

3.1.4. Socioeconomic Status

The existing body of literature has also been subject to examination with regards to the correlation between the concept of life's meaning and variables related to socioeconomic status. The ensuing papers pertaining to this topic are enumerated as follows.

In a study led by Kıracı (2007), the aim was to examine the association between religious propensity, existential anxiety, and psychological well-being. The findings revealed that those with a significantly high economic standing exhibited lower scores in the domain of life's meaning compared to all other income level groups. On the other hand, students with moderate and low economic status had the highest scores in the meaning of life compared to the other groups.

Karataş (2022) conducted a study examining the association between ascribing meaning and purpose to life and psychological symptoms among adults. The findings revealed a correlation between perceived income level and variations in life purpose ascriptions. Specifically, individuals with higher perceived income levels demonstrated

higher scores in this regard. In contrast, individuals who reported lower levels of perceived income had lower scores.

The target of Arsoy's (2021) study was to examine how connections exist between the existential meaning of life, psychological resilience, and humour styles among a sample of university students. The research findings indicated significant variations in the levels of existential meaning, pursuit of meaning, general psychological resilience, and scores on various dimensions of psychological resilience and humour styles among student participants, contingent upon their gender, educational attainment, perceived socioeconomic status, and perceived parental perspectives. Based on the findings of the examination, it can be observed that students belonging to the medium and high-income groups exhibit an increased tendency to perceive their lives as meaningful and demonstrate a higher tendency towards the pursuit of meaning, in contrast to their counterparts from the lower-income group. Hence, it is worth mentioning that students who saw themselves as belonging to the lower-income group had less perception of what life means and a reduced inclination towards seeking meaning, in comparison to their counterparts.

In their research, Yıkılmaz and Demir GÜDÜL (2015) investigated potential discrepancies in the levels of life contentment, sense of life's significance, and mindfulness among college students, with a specific emphasis on their perceived socioeconomic statuses. This study was conducted using a sample of 509 undergraduate students. The study's findings demonstrated variations in the levels of life satisfaction and the existence of meaning in life among students, which can be attributed to their perceived socioeconomic status. The study findings indicate that the perceived socioeconomic level of students had a discernible impact on their degrees of life satisfaction and the presence of meaning in life. People who perceived themselves as

having a lower socioeconomic status exhibited notably lower scores in the domain of meaning, in contrast to those who considered themselves to have a moderate socioeconomic status. Duff & Ivlevs (2011) and Aksoy's (2019) studies also support these findings.

Research indicates that there is no substantial correlation between socioeconomic status and the sense of life's significance. The studies conducted by Çamur (2014) and Parlak (2014) yielded results indicating the absence of a statistically significant disparity in the dimensions of significance in life and quest for purpose among young individuals, as influenced by their socioeconomic situation. Aydın (2015) and Yüksel (2013) observed no significant difference in Meaning and Purpose in Life Scale scores or sub-dimension scores depending on income groups (High, Upper-Middle, Middle, Lower-Middle, Low) among people. Akgül's (2014) study on mental health workers and students' purpose in life found no significant variation in average responses to the purpose in Life Scale by socioeconomic status. According to Özaydın's (2016) study, there was no notable link between students' average scores of life meaning and monthly total income. In other words, these findings imply that socioeconomic status does not seem to affect life meaning.

3.1.5. Education

Within the existing body of research, investigations pertaining to the association between educational attainment and the perception of life's meaning have yielded divergent findings. Some studies have posited a notable disparity between these two factors, while others have presented a contrasting perspective.

Arisoy (2021) researched university students, investigating the presence of meaning in life and the level of search for meaning concerning their educational levels. Upon examination of the results, a major distinction was discovered between the

presence of meaning in life [$F(3,407)= 5435$; $p<0.01$] and the students' educational levels. A Post Hoc Scheffe Test was applied to explore the significant difference further. According to the test results, students pursuing doctoral degrees ($X=29.08$) had a higher presence of meaning in their lives compared to university students studying at the associate's ($X=22.97$) and bachelor's ($X=23.09$) degree levels.

Few studies have examined how education level affects meaning. According to Pinquart (2002), older persons with higher education have a larger purpose in life. Grouden and Jose (2014) examined many ways to find purpose in life.

Their research assessed the impact of age, gender, and education on core aspects of significance and examined whether these factors anticipated well-being in distinct ways. A cohort of 247 participants residing in a community in New Zealand, ranging in age from 30 to 69, were selected to participate in a study. These individuals were asked to offer subjective statements about the significance they attribute to their life. Furthermore, they were requested to assess this significance across various specific areas and complete 11 different assessments related to their overall well-being. Different age, gender, and education levels were found. For instance, education level was linked to community difficulties. Individuals who have obtained a higher education are more inclined to perceive community issues as pertinent compared to those who have not pursued a university degree. The test results revealed an implicit correlation between educational attainment and the perception of life's significance.

However, the literature about education level differences in meaning in life are contradicting. An illustrative instance may be found in Taş's (2011) investigation, where the author explored the correlation between individuals' feeling of meaning in life, life contentment, comparisons with others, and their internal-external locus of control, specifically focusing on teachers. When investigating the life meanings of

teachers based on socio-demographic variables, it was determined that there was no significant differentiation in education level for the sub-dimensions of current meaning and sought-after meaning. Similar findings were observed when reviewing the conducted studies. According to the study conducted by Taş (2011), there was not a substantial disparity observed in the total scores of the sense of value in life, as well as the scores of the current meaning and the sought-after meaning segments among teachers, based on their education level. In a study with managers, Bektaş (2012) discovered that the current meaning of life scores were not substantially different based on education level. Similarly, İnan (2019), Arısoy (2021), Kaya (2021) and Karataş (2022) found that the meaning of life did not differ significantly according to educational status.

3.1.6. Number of Children

The extant literature has extensively looked into the relationship between the variable of number of children and individuals' subjective perception of life's importance. The subsequent investigations were enumerated and elucidated.

Adults' sense of meaning in life was explored by Kaya (2021) together with their satisfaction in romantic relationships, compassionate love, and other variables. The study involved a cohort of 436 adult participants. This study revealed a substantial distinction in the overall scores of the feeling of meaning in life based on the presence or absence of children. The study's findings indicate that persons who do not have children had lower levels of scores in terms of their perceived sense of significance in life in comparison to individuals who have children. The sub-dimension scores

pertaining to the present meaning, specifically in relation to the significance of meaning, exhibited notable variations depending on the presence or absence of offspring. Individuals who do not have children exhibited lower scores in terms of contemporary meaning when compared to individuals who have children. The sub-dimension scores pertaining to the pursuit of meaning, specifically in relation to the concept of meaning, exhibited a notable variation depending on the presence or absence of offspring. Individuals who have children exhibited lower scores in sought-after meaning as compared to individuals who do not have children. Additionally, a notable disparity was observed in the overall scores of the Meaning in Life Scale when considering the number of children ($F(3, 435)=4.676; p<0.01$). Individuals without offspring exhibited diminished levels of perceived importance in comparison to individuals with three or more offspring. There was the strong connection between the number of kids and contemporary meaning sub-dimension scores. Individuals who do not have children exhibited lower scores in terms of contemporary meaning when compared to individuals who have one, two, three, or more children. There was a substantial disparity in the sub-factor scores of sought-after meaning based on the number of children. The study found that individuals who had three or more children exhibited lower scores in sought-after meaning when compared to individuals who did not have any children.

Usta (2018) looked researched the connection amongst teachers working in public high schools' perceptions of life's purpose and their level of psychological toughness. The outcomes of the test revealed that there was no substantial disparity in the perspective of life's purpose between instructors who took part in the study and were also parents, and teachers who were not parents. The study's findings indicate that the

perspective of the meaning of life towards the instructors who participated in the research was not influenced by whether or not they had children.

3.1.7. Employment Status

Several studies have been conducted to examine how it relates between employment status and the variable of life significance. For example, Kaya (2021) found that the total scores of the sense of meaning in life and the scores of the current meaning and the sought-after meaning sub-dimensions did not significantly differ based on employment status. Similarly, it can be observed that research by Soylu (2016) and İnan (2019) also found that participants' employment status did not significantly impact their scores in the sense of meaning in life.

3.2. Studies Related to Meaning in Life and Psychological Resilience

According to a growing corpus of research, psychological resilience is associated with life meaning. These studies are described below in order.

Demirbaş (2010) examined the link between the levels of meaning in life and resilience among university students. This study involved a sample of 565 students from various universities in Ankara and Istanbul. The results of the study indicated that there was not a statistically important distinction in the amount of existential meaning among individuals of different age groups and genders. Demirbaş (2010) found a positive association between the subdimensions of meaning in life, specifically, the search for meaning and the presence of meaning, and the subdimensions of psychological resilience.

The relationship between psychological resiliency and life meaning among female university students getting housing help from Higher Education Credit and Dormitories Institutions was examined by Parlak (2014). This study included a cohort

of 455 individuals enrolled as students in a university setting. Examination of the gathered data highlighted a noteworthy and affirmative correlation between the construct of meaning in life and the construct of psychological resilience. The findings of the study also demonstrated that there was not a statistically significant variation in the perception of life's meaning when considering parental status (whether the parents were alive or deceased) or the type of parental connection (biological or stepparent). This further emphasises the importance of this particular component.

Aydin (2019) conducted a study examining the connection between psychological resilience, self-perception, and meaning in life among parents of special needs children. The research comprised a sample of 406 carers of children with special needs who were enrolled in rehabilitation centres located in Istanbul. The findings of the study demonstrated an association that is statistically elevated between the existence of a sense of meaning in life, seeking meaning, specific aspects of self-perception associated with the role of being a parent, and one's psychological resilience.

Mohseni-Iranpour and Khazaie (2020) conducted a study focusing on older persons, wherein they observed a positive correlation between a heightened sense of life's meaning and increased resilience in the face of stress and adversity. Individuals exhibited enhanced resilience in managing challenging circumstances, resulting in a decreased propensity to encounter adverse psychological manifestations, such as anxiety and sadness.

The study by Kul et al. (2020) aimed to investigate the factors contributing to psychological resilience during the Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, the researchers focused on the variables of purpose in life and state anxiety as potential predictors. The research encompassed a cohort of 598 individuals who were of adult age. The study's

results indicate notable differences in participants' state anxiety and psychological resilience, which were influenced by gender and characteristics associated with monitoring the growth of Covid-19. Nevertheless, no substantial variation was observed in the existence and pursuit of meaning when considering gender or the impact of Covid-19-related events. The elements related to healthy eating, participation in athletics, allocating space for interests, and how often one uses technology use were found to have a significant influence on state anxiety, the presence of meaning, and psychological resilience. Nevertheless, the study did not find any substantial disparities in the pursuit of meaning. There were notable differences observed in state anxiety, having meaning, seek for meaning, and psychological resilience with respect to age, sleep duration, and employment position. The study revealed negative associations between psychological resilience and state anxiety, while favourable associations were detected between psychological resilience and the presence of meaning. An unfavourably link has been observed between levels of state anxiety and the presence of meaning. Nevertheless, the results did not indicate a strong connection involving psychological resilience, anxiety levels, an awareness of meaning, and the look for meaning. The co-occurrence of state anxiety and the presence of meaning exhibited a significant correlation with psychological resilience, explaining 34 percent of the variability in scores measuring psychological resiliency..

Lee (2020) investigated the mediating effect of self-esteem on the relationship between the meaning of life and resilience in middle-aged adults. This study included 148 middle-aged adults aged 45-64. The findings of the research revealed a statistically significant and favourable association between the concept of existential purpose, one's self-perception of worth, and the ability to adapt and recover from adversity. It was also

observed that self-esteem mediated the relation between the existential concept of the purpose of life and the psychological trait of resilience. (Lee, 2020).

Another investigation, conducted by Bayraktar (2021), examined the relationship between parental absence at the ages of 0-12 and its impact on depression and hopelessness among 135 adult participants aged 18 to 65. The study revealed that a sense of meaning in life was shown to have a noteworthy influence on levels of depression and despair. Additionally, the investigation unveiled that the concurrent existence of psychological resilience and a sense of meaning in life enhanced the scale of the impact on those variables.

The study conducted by Lasota and Mróz (2021), titled "Positive Psychology in Times of Pandemic—Time Perspective as a Moderator of the Relationship between Resilience and Meaning in Life," highlights the observation that individuals within the age range of 18 to 70 exhibit resilience capacities that enhance their perception of life's meaningfulness. The findings of Lasota and Mróz (2021) indicate an upward association between elevated levels of resilience and a heightened inclination to perceive one's life as important.

Aras et al. (2023) conducted a study with 266 adult participants who resided in various cities throughout Turkey to investigate the predictive effects of gender, childhood traumas, life purpose, and self-compassion on psychological resilience in adulthood. This study revealed a notable positive correlation between the construct of purpose in life and the psychological resilience of adult persons.

3.3. . Studies Related to Meaning in Life and Childhood Traumas

Upon reviewing the existing body of literature pertaining to the concept of life's meaning, it becomes apparent that there exists a very little quantity of research

specifically investigating the link between the meaning of life and childhood traumas. However, it is worth noting that the scholarly interest in this area is steadily growing in intensity over time.

Researchers have stated that negative differences in meaning-seeking individuals are associated with negative forward mental processing and that meaning-seeking individuals live their lives with the effects of a difficult anticipatory universe in which they are involved (Joseph et al., 2005). Individuals of this nature are more prone to expressing support for unfavourable posttraumatic disparities such as not seeing the future with great curiosity, not struggling with things, and fearing death. When meanings are identified in life, people resolve these existential problems and move towards schematic differences such as trying to care more, to be more experienced in life, to see each day as precious. It is known to have no intrinsic negative value, as it represents coping with existential problems following traumatic situations. Research findings indicate that individuals who have experienced trauma tend to exhibit reduced depressive symptoms when they perceive a sense of meaning in their lives. Conversely, persons who actively engage in the quest of significance in life usually to exhibit heightened depressed symptoms (Steger et al., 2006; Steger et al., 2008).

Weibel et al. (2017) examined how child maltreatment (CM) affects life meaning and how chronic persistent psychiatric problems moderate this link. This study included 166 patients with bipolar, psychotic, anorexia, or borderline personality disorders. Participants were assessed for life meaning, childhood trauma and internalized and externalized psychopathologies. The study found that child abuse was linked to a lower LRI-R score, which reflects meaning of life. Using structural equation modeling, the study found that internalized psychopathology—depression, hopelessness, and low self-esteem—mediated the association between child

maltreatment and meaning in life. Childhood maltreatment had no statistically significant effect on meaning of life. This study found that people with persistent psychiatric problems and childhood neglect or abuse had a reduced sense of meaning in life. According to the researchers, addressing depressive symptoms and enhancing self-esteem could potentially facilitate the discovery of life's purpose among those who suffer from serious mental health issues and a background of childhood maltreatment.

Lamis et al. (2019) found that bipolar disorder (BD) patients are more inclined to consider suicide, attempt suicides, and die. In bipolar disorder (BD) patients, childhood sexual abuse (CSA) was strongly linked to suicidal thoughts. Their research suggests that existential well-being (EWB) may prevent suicide. This study included 112 adult bipolar disorder participants. These participants were asked about their childhood sexual abuse (CSA), religious well-being (RWB), and existential well-being (EWB), which is their sense of purpose and meaning in life. Participants were also asked about suicidal thoughts and tendencies. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 65. African American women made up a large majority of the participants. The study found a negative link between childhood sexual abuse (CSA) and emotional well-being (EWB) but not interpersonal well-being. EWB also correlated CSA with suicidal ideation, while RWB did not. The notion of significance or objective in life appears to help protect bipolar illness patients who have endured childhood sexual abuse from suicide ideation. In contrast, believing in God does not seem to protect this setting.

The primary objective of the study conducted by Dartar (2020) was to investigate the association between childhood trauma, purpose in life, and self-compassion among individuals aged 25 to 40. The research cohort comprised 320 individuals, with 209 (65.3%) being female, 110 (34.4%) being male, and 1 (0.3%) identifying as a different gender. The results of the study suggest that within the

demographic of adults between the ages of 25 and 40, there is no discernible disparity between genders in terms of their experiences with emotional abuse and sexual abuse as part of their childhood trauma. Nevertheless, there exists a disparity between genders in terms of their exposure to physical abuse, physical neglect, and emotional neglect. In particular, it has been observed that males exhibit comparatively elevated rates of physical abuse, physical neglect, and emotional neglect in comparison to females. This study observed a distinction between individuals who have encountered childhood trauma and those who have not, based on the subscores of the Self-Compassion Scale and Meaning in Life Scale (having value in life and seek for meaning in life). Childhood trauma reduces self-compassion and the meaning of life. Nevertheless, outcomes of the inquiry revealed that there was no difference in significance in the subscores related to life goals between persons who had encountered childhood trauma and those who had not.

In a study authored by Yancı (2020), the researcher assessed the potential mediating effects of interpersonal regulation of emotional strategies and a general sense of belonging on the association between childhood emotional abuse and the presence of meaning in life. The research was conducted using a sample of 307 individuals ranging in age from 18 to 65 years ($M = 31.38$; $SD = 11.06$). The study's findings indicate that the presence of life's purpose is influenced by intermediate factors such as the development of perspective and a sense of belonging within the framework of emotional adversity experienced throughout childhood. When analyzed through the lens of the quest for significance, the research discovered that the augmentation of positive feelings and a pervasive feeling of inclusion act as intermediaries in the relation between childhood emotional adverse events and search for meaning.

Kim and Lee (2022) suggest that the idea of life's significance plays a pivotal role as an intermediary factor in the connection between self-reflection and post-traumatic growth. The researchers performed a nationwide online poll that specifically targeted a sample of 300 individuals who had encountered traumatic situations. A correlation analysis was conducted to explore the linkage among the variables. Subsequently, a structural equation model analysis was conducted to confirm the mediating role of meaning in life in the association between self-examination and posttraumatic growth (PTG). The results of this study indicate a statistically significant beneficial relationship between self-examination and both meaning in life ($r=.60$) and post-traumatic growth ($r=.57$). Additionally, a strong positive link was observed between meaning in life and post-traumatic growth ($r=.72$). Moreover, in the context of the correlation between self-reflection and post-traumatic growth, it has been discovered that the existence of purpose in life serves as a full mediator. In conclusion, the process of self-reflection and the subsequent development of personal growth following a traumatic experience can be enhanced through a heightened sense of purpose and significance in one's life.

Rose et al. (2023) conducted a trilogy of studies on challenging childhood events and life meaning, including coherence, importance, and purpose. In Study 1, a sample of 1804 college students was surveyed to assess their perceptions of bad childhood experiences, life meaning, and numerous dimensions. In Study 2, 822 non-college students were assessed for childhood trauma, meaning in life, attachment style, mood, and neuroticism. In the third study, 380 college students were invited to write about both happy and sad childhood experiences. After each writing task, participants were asked to rate the meanings of their experiences. The research found a negative correlation between difficult childhood experiences and coherence, importance, and

purpose of adult meaning. This link was observed in Study 1 and Study 2, zero-order correlations. Unpleasant childhood experiences continued to correlate negatively with coherence and importance across many domains of meaning. No statistically significant purpose connections were found. Subsequent investigations conducted in Study 2 provided further evidence for the enduring adverse associations between distressing childhood experiences and coherence/significance, even when accounting for variables.. The third study made a significant discovery. Unfavorable childhood memories were connected to decreasing importance, coherence, and increased purpose. This suggests that meaning motivates childhood trauma survivors. In summary, Rose et al. (2023) found that negative childhood experiences regularly lower life's meaning, coherence, and relevance. After examining these links, we found that unpleasant childhood events did not significantly affect the purpose. This finding suggests that early stress may affect life goals.

3.4. Studies Related to Childhood Traumas and Psychological Resilience

An examination of the extant literature demonstrates that several studies have explored the correlation between childhood trauma and psychological resilience. Research has indicated a noteworthy association between childhood trauma and psychological resilience. The findings of these research are clarified in the following section.

Research has indicated that childhood trauma, encompassing instances of abuse and other distressing encounters, exerts substantial adverse effects on mental well-being, specifically manifesting as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Wingo et al., 2010; Oh et al., 2016). Nevertheless, previous studies have indicated that psychological resilience serves as a moderating factor in alleviating the adverse

consequences of childhood trauma (Wingo et al., 2010; Bethell et al., 2014; Munoz et al., 2020).

The study presented by Topitzes et al. (2013) investigated the association between childhood traumas and psychological resilience in a cohort of young people who had been longitudinally followed since their birth. The outcome of the research indicate that childhood traumas have a detrimental effect on the formation of psychological resilience in individuals during their early adulthood. Furthermore, the research findings indicated that a range of elements pertaining to adolescence served as mediators in the association between childhood traumas and psychological resilience in early adulthood. The characteristics encompassed in this study consisted of several elements such as alterations in living or educational settings during the adolescent years, scholastic accomplishments, interpersonal abilities in peer associations, childhood delinquency, involvement in school activities, and aspirations for higher education (Topitzes et al., 2013).

Several studies have found that resilience is associated with lower levels of depressive symptom severity in individuals with a history of childhood abuse or trauma (Wingo et al., 2010; Wingo et al., 2014). For example, Wingo et al. (2010) conducted a study that showed resilience as a significant factor in moderating the severity of depressive symptoms in individuals exposed to childhood abuse or other traumas (Wingo et al., 2010). In a similar vein, the study conducted by Oh et al. (2016) revealed that the cultivation of resilience among individuals aged 6-17 can mitigate the detrimental effects of unpleasant childhood events, hence resulting in increased levels of school involvement (Bethell et al., 2014). Childhood trauma has been found to have significant implications for various aspects of individuals' lives, including psychopathology, coping strategies, growth, sleep quality, self-injury, and

psychological resilience. Several studies have explored the association between childhood trauma and its outcomes.

Furthermore, resilience mediates the relationship between childhood abuse and suicidal ideation. Yang et al. (2023) found that psychological resilience partially mediates the effect of childhood maltreatment on suicidal ideation among Chinese adolescents (Yang et al., 2023). This suggests that resilience can protect against adverse psychological outcomes associated with childhood trauma.

In addition to its moderating and mediating effects, resilience has also been linked to greater well-being and psychological flourishing among childhood trauma survivors (Munoz et al., 2020). According to the study conducted by Munoz et al. (2020), there was a significant correlation between higher levels of internal psychological resilience and a reduced occurrence of challenges in providing care for children following a hospital discharge among those who had experienced childhood trauma. Other studies have linked resilience to external protective factors, such as social support and access to trusted adults, which are associated with well-being after experiencing childhood trauma (Munoz et al., 2020).

It is imperative to underscore the intricate nature of what connects childhood trauma and psychological resilience, which can be shaped by a multitude of factors such as the nature and intensity of the trauma, the individual's age, and the contextual backdrop against which the trauma unfolds (Ozaslan et al., 2022). Moreover, the lack of positive childhood experiences can have a more detrimental impact on one's life over time than traumatic events (Almeida et al., 2021). Therefore, it is crucial to focus on protective factors, such as resilience, to support individuals who have experienced childhood trauma and promote their psychological well-being.

Ozaslan et al. (2022) sought out the association between childhood trauma and psychological resilience in a sample of kindergarten educators. This study found a negative correlation between childhood trauma and psychological resilience, indicating that higher levels of childhood trauma were associated with lower levels of resilience.

Doğruer et al. (2022) conducted a study to examine the association between traumatic childhood experiences, different dimensions of forgiveness, and psychological resilience. Furthermore, the research investigated the relationship between childhood traumatic events and various forms of forgiveness (self-forgiveness, situational forgiveness, and forgiveness of others) in relation to the prediction of psychological resilience. The study sample comprised 366 participants residing in Istanbul, of which 236 (64.5%) were female and 130 (35.5%) were male. The research findings demonstrated an inverse correlation between childhood traumatic events and psychological resilience, while also revealing a positive association between self-forgiveness and psychological resilience. The outputs of a multiple linear regression analysis demonstrated there were significant predictors of psychological resilience, including traumatic childhood events, self-forgiveness, and situational forgiveness. However, the variable of others' forgiveness did not demonstrate a significant predictive influence on psychological resilience. The findings of the study indicate that there is a negative relationship between traumatic childhood events and resiliency in mental health, whereas forgiveness for oneself and situation-forgiving variables were beneficially associated with psychological resilience. The results underscore the need to address childhood traumatic experiences with a specific focus on cultivating self-forgiveness within therapies rooted in psychological trauma and psychotherapy modalities.

Aydın's (2018) study looked into how traumatic events as a youngster affected psychological resiliency and depressive symptoms. The study sample comprised 205 adult participants, with 130 (63.4%) identifying as female and 75 (36.6%) identifying as male. All participants were aged 18 years and older. Conclusions from the research reveal substantial adverse associations between psychological resilience in adulthood and several kinds of childhood traumatic experiences, such as emotional abuse, emotional neglect, physical abuse, physical neglect, and sexual abuse. Additionally, noteworthy associations were found between the extent of depression symptoms in adults and the different subcategories of early-life traumatic events, such as emotional abuse, emotional neglect, physical abuse, physical neglect, and sexual abuse.

The present investigation, carried out by Turan (2021), aimed to explore the correlation between traumatic childhood events, psychological resilience, and coping mechanisms among university students. The results indicate a statistically significant inverse association between traumatic childhood experiences, particularly sexual abuse, physical abuse, and psychological resilience. The present study examines the inverse relationship between psychological resilience and many sub-dimensions of childhood traumatic events, including sexual abuse and physical abuse. Furthermore, the study revealed a correlation between traumatic childhood experiences and psychological resilience. According to Balcı (2018), the implementation of trauma-focused education, with the goal of mitigating early traumatic experiences, has a beneficial impact on the psychological well-being of university students.

In the study they conducted, Howell and Miller-Graff (2014) examined the relationship between social support, spirituality, emotional intelligence, and resilience during the stage of emerging adulthood. The research encompassed a sample of 321 young adult American college students, ranging in age from 18 to 24, who had

encountered various forms of childhood violence. These included instances of community violence, interpersonal aggression, child abuse, victimisation by peers or siblings, and sexual assault. The findings of the study indicated a notable incidence of victimisation among this particular demographic, as evidenced by an average of 9 instances of violent encounters recorded during their formative years. The findings of the analysis revealed a positive association between elevated levels of resilience in emerging adulthood and increased spirituality, enhanced emotional intelligence, and support from peers, whereas no significant correlation was observed with familial support. Howell and Miller-Graff (2014) found that the outcomes suggested that the impact of protective factors was more significant than that of adversity and psychopathology when it came to forecasting resilient functioning.

The objective of the study conducted by Beutel et al. (2017) was to examine the correlation between resilient coping and distress among individuals who have experienced childhood adversity and those who have not. This study involved the participation of a representative sample of the German population, consisting of 2508 individuals aged between 14 and 92 years. The sample included 1334 women and 1174 males. The presence of childhood adversity has been found to be linked to diminished levels of adjustment, social support, and resilience. Moreover, a notable association was found between this phenomena and increased degrees of discomfort and somatoform complaints. The findings of the study indicate that resilient coping not only exhibited a negative correlation with distress levels, but also served as a protective factor against the impact of early adversity on distress. The researchers discovered that individuals with high levels of trait resilience exhibit lower levels of distress and somatoform symptoms, even when they had experienced childhood traumas. This is in contrast to individuals with low levels of resilient coping capacities.

The extant evidence suggests that childhood trauma exerts an enormous effect on multiple facets of the lives of people, including psychopathology, coping strategies, personal development, sleep patterns, self-harm inclinations, and psychological resilience. The aforementioned findings underscore the significance of addressing childhood trauma and offering suitable assistance and intervention to alleviate the adverse consequences it may entail. The empirical evidence suggests that psychological resilience, as a broad construct, plays a significant role in mitigating the adverse effects of childhood trauma on mental health outcomes. The cultivation of resilience has the potential to enable individuals to effectively navigate and respond to challenging circumstances and traumatic experiences, so fostering enhanced mental health and psychological well-being.

3.5. Studies Related to Meaning in Life, Childhood Traumas and Psychological Resilience

It is clear from research on the topic of meaning in life that there is a connection between meaning and a number of different aspects, including quality of life, personal problems, and mental health. Within the field of psychology in the 20th century, two prominent and influential traditions emerged: psychoanalysis and behaviorism. Despite the utilization of positive reinforcement or extinction techniques in behavioral interventions, both approaches prioritize the promotion of positive affect as the fundamental determinant of human behavior. Academic investigations pertaining to the concepts of meaning and purpose have examined the intrinsic quality of existence, which remains constant for all individuals, drawing upon fundamental tenets of philosophy. Inherent in human nature is the inclination for recognition, existence, attention, and the establishment of relationships. As previously indicated, when considering existential significance, attributes associated with this notion often possess

an abstract nature. Therefore, it is crucial to underscore the significance of rendering them tangible and quantifiable (Peterson & Park, 2014).

An investigation conducted by Aiene et al. (2016) offers insight into the potential correlation among purpose throughout life, early trauma, and psychological resilience. In their study, Aeina et al. (2016) conducted an assessment of trauma-related stress symptoms, perceived life purpose, and resilience in communities along the Mississippi coast that were directly affected by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. This study was undertaken as part of a larger inquiry into the impact of the spill on the psychological well-being of those seeking therapeutic interventions. Multiple regression analyses were performed to evaluate whether resilience and perceived meaning predicted posttraumatic stress scores. After adjusting for spills, resilience and meaning predicted lower posttraumatic stress symptoms. Meaning appeared to be a crucial part of resilience, which predicted lower posttraumatic stress scores.

The primary objective of another study conducted by Aliche et al. (2019) was to investigate the correlation between social support, meaningful life, posttraumatic growth (PTG), and resilience in a population of young adult survivors who had experienced a terror attack. The primary objective of this research was to analyse a specific community located in Southeastern Nigeria. A random sample of 392 young adults who had experienced a Fulani herdsmen attack three years prior was selected for the study. The study's subjects demonstrated heightened degrees of post-traumatic recovery and resilience. The findings of this study indicate that there is a noteworthy beneficial association between social support and both post-traumatic growth (PTG) and resilience. However, it is important to note that this association is entirely mediated by the presence of meaningful existence. The findings highlight the significance for recognising possible ways for fostering development and resiliency in individuals who

have endured herder attacks. Additionally, they emphasize the crucial roles that social support and a sense of meaning in life play in fostering posttraumatic growth (PTG) and resilience.

The study by Aras et al. (2023) investigated the predictive significance of gender, childhood traumas, meaning in life, and self-compassion in relation to psychological well-being. The sample population for the study comprised 266 adult participants ranging in age from 18 to 60 years. The empirical results of the study suggest that there is no substantial relationship between gender, childhood traumas, and psychological well-being among adult persons. In contrast, it was shown that both the presence of meaning in life and the practise of self-compassion were strongly associated with higher levels of psychological well-being in adult persons. Additionally, the study of relative relevance indicated that self-compassion emerged as the primary predictor of psychological well-being among adult persons. The one variable in issue accounted for roughly 88 percent of the difference that the regression model explained. The researchers proposed that mental health professionals should prioritise the cultivation of self-compassion and the pursuit of meaning in life as key components of their mental health interventions for adult individuals, based on the findings of the study. This approach is believed to have the potential to enhance psychological well-being.

As a result, when the national and international studies that have been conducted are taken into consideration, there is no study in which the variables of meaning of life, psychological resilience and childhood traumas are addressed together in adults. With this research, the relationship between these three variables will be discussed. In this way, it is aimed both to address childhood traumas and psychological resilience, which may be related to the meaning of life in adulthood, and to guide meaning-based preventive and intervention research and to help make

developmental plans. In addition, it is anticipated that the research will provide important support to the psychological counseling and guidance department in a comprehensive framework to guide those who research the subject in their future research, politicians in determining policies related to education, and experts in the trainings given to psychological counselors.



CHAPTER IV

METHOD

This chapter provides details about the research, participant information, procedures, data collection techniques, and evaluation.

4.1. Research Model

This study is a correlational research model that aims to examine the relationship between meaning of life, childhood traumas and psychological resilience in adults. Correlational research is a research model that provides clues about the relationship between multiple variables. According to Gürbüz and ahin (2018), correlational research elucidates the degree and direction of relationships between variables and can be classified as exploratory correlational research or predictive correlational research. Exploratory correlational research, which is one of the types of correlational research, serves to make sense of whether there is a relationship between variables. On the other hand, in the context of predictive correlational research, as laid out by Büyüköztürk et al. (2019), the objective is to examine the association between measures by seeking to understand the unobserved importance of one variable based on the value that was measured of another variable. This research is predictive correlational research as it aims to understand whether there is a relationship between meaning of life, childhood traumas, and psychological resilience in adults.

4.2. Participants

This research's sample comprised adult people residing in Turkey. Data were collected from adult individuals who voluntarily participated in the study through an online form in February 2020. The sample for this investigation was determined using convenient/measure sampling procedures. Convenience sampling is a method of

collecting data from a sample that the researcher can reach more easily, aiming to prevent loss of time and labor (Balcı, 2018). Criterion sampling is a data collection method that is applied on people with certain characteristics for the subject to be investigated (Büyüköztürk et al., 2019). The sampling criterion employed in this study stipulates that participants must be adults, specifically individuals aged 18 years or older. The study comprised a total of 400 participants. Prior conducting the data analysis, it was established that there were no instances of missing data or outliers present.

4.3. Measurement Instruments

This research employed many data collection instruments, namely the Personal Information Form, Childhood Traumas Scale, Psychological Resilience Scale for Adults and Children, and Meaning in Life Scale.

4.3.1. Personal Information Form

The Personal Information Form (Appendix A), which was created by the researcher, was used to define the demographic structure of the research sample and includes questions about demographic variables such as gender, age, marital status, number of children, educational status, perceived socioeconomic status and employment status.

4.3.2. Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ -33)

The CTQ-33, developed by Bernstein (1994), adapted into Turkish by Şar (2019) and revised in 2020, was used to measure individuals' childhood traumas. The coefficient of internal consistency, namely Cronbach's alpha, was used to assess the reliability of the scale. The value of 87 was determined through calculation. The 5-point Likert-type scale, which was adapted into Turkish to measure childhood mental traumas

of individuals, consists of 33 questions. There is no reverse scored questions in the scale. There are a total of six distinct categories inside the framework, and an aggregate score can be derived from the scale. There are six sub-factors in the scale. These are emotional neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, over-controlling/protective, physical abuse, and physical neglect (Şar et al., 2020). Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the sub-factors of the scale are emotional neglect. 89, emotional abuse. 88, sexual abuse. 90, over controlling/protective. 84, physical abuse. 81, physical neglect. 77. The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale is 25 and the highest score is 150. Cronbach alpha value for the total score was found as 0.93. (The form was included in the Appendix B).

4.3.3. Meaning in Life Scale

This scale developed by Steger, Frazier, Oishi, and Kaler (2006) was adapted into Turkish by Demirbaş (2010). The scale, originally designed by Steger et al., (2006), underwent adaptation into Turkish by Demirbaş (2010). The meaning in life scale consists of 2 sub-dimensions: having meaning in life and seeking meaning in life. Consisting of 10 items, the scale is 7-point Likert type (1= Absolutely not true, 7= Absolutely true). The 9th item of the scale is a reverse item. There is no total score in the scale; each subscale is evaluated within itself. The internal consistency reliability coefficient for the whole scale was found to be .86. The internal consistency of the existence of meaning in life subscale was .87 and the internal consistency of the search for meaning in life subscale was .88. In a similar scale validity study, the correlations between the MAI and the Authenticity Scale were calculated and it was found that meaning in life was positively correlated with authenticity. These correlations are important evidence for the convergent validity of the scale (Akın & Taş, 2015). In this

study, Cronbach alpha value for the total score was found as 0.64. (The scale was included in the Appendix C).

4.3.4. Psychological Resilience Scale for Adults

The Psychological Resilience Scale for Adults (PBS) was first established by Friborg et al. (2003). The scale was subjected to a study on Turkish adaption, validity, and reliability, which was carried out by Basım and Çetin (2011). As a result of confirmatory factor analysis, a structure consisting of 6 factors and 33 items emerged. The dimensions and the items measured are as follows: Perception of Self (1,7,13,19,28,31), Perception of Future (2,8,14,20), Structural Style (3,9,15,21), Social Competence (4,10,16,22,25,29), Family Adjustment (5,11,17,23,26,32), Social Resources (6,12,18,24,27,30,33). The reliability of the scale was assessed by an internal consistency study, which yielded a Cronbach Alpha score of .86. As a result of the test-retest application, the subscale values were found as Self-Perception .72, Future Perception .75, Structural Style .68, Social Competence .78, Family cohesion .81, Social Resources .77. The scale is a 5-point Likert scale to enhance resistance as the scores rise, it is recommended to assess the response boxes in a sequential manner from left to right, assigning values of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Considering this view, questions 1, 3, 4, 8, 11, 12, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 24, 25, 27, 31, 33 in the scale are reverse scored. If it is desired that resilience decreases as the score increases, the answer boxes are evaluated as 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and the remaining items in this case are reverse scored (Basım & Çetin, 2011). In this study, Cronbach alpha value for the total score was found as 0.89. (The form was included in the Appendix D).

4.4. Data Analysis

The data acquired in the current research were assessed utilising the SPSS 21.0 software. The demographic characteristics of the participants are shown in the frequency and percentage tables. The descriptive statistics table presents the scale and subscale scores, accompanied by their corresponding mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis values. The evaluation of the normality of the scale scores involved careful consideration of the skewness and kurtosis coefficients. If the coefficients are within the range of ± 1 , it can be deduced that the scores do not demonstrate a significant deviation from a normal distribution. Parametric tests can be used by making appropriate transformations (square root, logarithmic, inverse transformation) of the scores that do not show normal distribution. Non-parametric tests can be used for scores that do not show normal distribution despite transformations (Büyüköztürk, 2011). The subscale scores within the childhood traumas scale had substantial kurtosis values, indicating a departure from normal distribution. Despite applying several transformations such as square root, logarithmic, and inverse, the scores remained non-normally distributed. When the distribution of childhood traumas scores was analyzed, it was found that the "never" option was in the majority. Total and subscale scores of other scales were found to be normally distributed. The study employed an independent two-sample t-test to compare the scores on the meaning in life scale based on the variables of gender, marital status and age groups. Additionally, an ANOVA test was utilised to compare the scale scores across number of children, educational status, employment status, and socioeconomic level variables. When a significant difference was found in the ANOVA test, the LSD post hoc test was used to determine which groups the difference was between. Spearman's Rho correlation test was used in the relationship between scale and subscale scores. To investigate the prognostic efficacy of psychological resilience and childhood traumas on the meaning

of life, hierarchical regression analysis was used using the normally distributed childhood traumas scale score and the normally distributed psychological resilience subscale scores. The statistical significance level was deemed acceptable at a significance level of 0.05 ($p < 0.05$).



CHAPTER V

RESULTS

5.1. Descriptive Statistics

The demographic information of the participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 . Participants' characteristics

Demographic variables	Groups	n	%
Gender	Female	295	73,8
	Male	105	26,3
Marital Status	Married	190	47,5
	Single	210	52,5
Age	18-40	283	70,8
	41-60	117	29,3
Number of children	None	235	58,8
	1 child	99	24,8
	2+ children	66	16,5
Education	1-12 grade	24	6,0
	University	220	55,0
	Graduate school	156	39,0
Employment	Public sector	65	16,3
	Private sector	233	58,3
	Student	53	13,3
	Unemployed	49	12,3
SES	Low	40	10,0
	Middle	193	48,3
	Upper-middle	148	37,0
	High	19	4,8

Among 400 adults who participated in the study, 73.8% were female and 26.3% were male. 47.5% of the participants were married and 52.5% were single. 70.8% of the participants were 18-40 years old and 29.3% were 41-60 years old. 58.8% of the participants do not have children, 24.8% have 1 child, 16.5% have 2 or more children. 6% of the participants were 1-12 graders, 55% had university education, and 39% had postgraduate education. 16.3% of the participants were employed in the public sector, 58.3% in the private sector, 13.3% were university students and 12.3% were not employed. 10% of the participants defined their economic status as low income, 48.3% as middle income, 37% as upper middle income, and 4.8% as upper income.

Descriptive statistics of the scale scores are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 . Descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables

Total Scale and Subscales	Min		$\bar{X}$	Sd	Skewness	Kurtosis
	.	Max.				s
Existence of meaning	1,00	7,00	5,32	1,23	-0,78	0,06
Finding meaning	1,00	7,00	4,21	1,56	-0,22	-0,87
MEANING IN LIFE	1,50	7,00	4,55	1,14	0,12	-0,47
Emotional abuse	1,00	4,80	1,61	0,75	1,70	2,67
Physical abuse	1,00	5,00	1,18	0,51	4,50	24,36
Physical neglect	1,00	4,40	1,42	0,55	1,69	3,45
Emotional neglect	1,00	5,00	2,14	0,91	0,86	-0,01
Sexual abuse	1,00	5,00	1,27	0,73	3,54	12,97
Overprotection/Control	1,00	5,00	2,15	0,84	0,91	0,48
CHILDHOOD TRAUMAS	1,00	3,53	1,63	0,49	1,28	1,30
Self-perception	1,17	5,00	3,73	0,74	-0,44	0,07
Future perception	1,00	5,00	3,79	0,86	-0,86	0,60
Structural style	1,25	5,00	3,66	0,84	-0,30	-0,39
Social competence	1,00	5,00	3,82	0,79	-0,68	0,20

Family cohesion	1,00	5,00	3,55	0,84	-0,47	-0,23
Social resources	1,29	5,00	4,05	0,66	-0,80	0,52
PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE	1,44	5,00	3,77	0,55	-0,41	0,36

n=400

According to Table 2, the meaning in life scale score was found to be 4.55 ± 1.14 , and considering the lowest (1) and highest (7) scores that can be obtained from the scale, it can be said that the perception of meaning in life of the adults participating in the study is in the range of "neither true-neither false / partially true".

According to Table 2, the childhood traumas scale score was found to be 1.63 ± 0.49 , and considering the lowest (1) and highest (5) scores that can be obtained from the scale, it was determined that the childhood traumas of the adults participating in the study were in the "never" range. It was determined that the most common childhood traumas were overprotection-control (2.15 ± 0.84) and emotional neglect (2.14 ± 0.91) and both trauma experiences were in the "rarely" range.

According to Table 2, the psychological resilience scale score was found to be 3.77 ± 0.55 , and considering the lowest (1) and highest (5) scores that can be obtained from the scale, it was determined that the psychological resilience of the adults participating in the study was at a high level. The psychological resilience sub-dimensions with the highest scores were social resources (4.05 ± 0.66) and social competence (3.82 ± 0.79), respectively.

5.2. Comparison of Meaning in Life Scores According to Demographic Variables

The results of the independent two-sample t-test for the comparison of meaning in life scores according to gender are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3 . Comparison of meaning in life scores according to gender

Total Scale and Subscales	Gender	n	$\bar{x}$	Sd	t	p
Existence of meaning	Female	295	5,31	1,26	-0,14	0,892
	Male	105	5,33	1,15		
Finding meaning	Female	295	4,25	1,60	0,99	0,325
	Male	105	4,08	1,44		
MEANING IN LIFE	Female	295	4,53	1,17	-0,75	0,454
	Male	105	4,62	1,03		

n=400

p<0.05

It was determined that the meaning in life scores did not differ significantly according to gender ($p>0.05$).

The results of the independent two-sample t-test for the comparison of meaning in life scores according to marital status are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 . Comparison of meaning in life scores according to marital status

Total Scale and Subscales	Marital Status	n	$\bar{x}$	Sd	t	p
Existence of meaning	Married	190	5,59	1,11	4,40	0,000**
	Single	210	5,06	1,28		
Finding meaning	Married	190	3,95	1,60	-3,21	0,001**
	Single	210	4,44	1,49		
MEANING IN LIFE	Married	190	4,82	1,16	4,62	0,000**
	Single	210	4,31	1,06		

n=400

$p<0.001$

The findings indicate notable variations in scores pertaining to the existence of meaning ($t=4.40$; $p<0.05$), the quest of meaning ($t=-3.21$; $p<0.05$), and the significance of life ($t=4.62$; $p<0.05$) based on the marital status of the individuals. The presence of meaning and meaning in life scores of married participants were significantly higher than the scores of single participants. Single participants' scores on the search for meaning in life were significantly higher than those of married participants.

The Independent samples t-test results of the comparison of meaning in life scores according to age groups are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 . Comparison of meaning in life scores according to age groups

Total Scale and Subscales	Age groups	n	$\bar{x}$	Ss	t	p
Existence of meaning	18-40	283	5.12	1.26	-5.04	0,000***
	41-60	117	5.78	1.00		
Finding meaning	18-40	283	4.39	1.47	3.80	0,001**
	41-60	117	3.75	1.67		
MEANING IN LIFE	18-40	283	4.36	1.08	5.40	0,000***
	41-60	117	5.01	1.13		

$n=400$

$p<0.001$

The existence of meaning ($t(398)=-5.04$; $p<0.05$), search for meaning ($t(398)=3.80$; $p<0.001$) and meaning in life ($t(398)=5.40$; $p<0.05$) scores showed significant differences according to age groups.

- The scores of participants aged 41 years and above on the existence of meaning and meaning in life are significantly higher than the scores of participants aged between 18 and 40 years and below.

- Participants aged between 18 and 40 had significantly higher scores on the search for meaning in life than participants aged between 41 and 60.

The ANOVA test results of the comparison of meaning in life scores according to the number of children

The results of the ANOVA test for the comparison of meaning in life scores according to number of children are given in Table 6.

Table 6. Comparison of meaning in life scores according to number of children

Total Scale and Subscales	Number of children	n	$\bar{x}$	Sd	F	p	Post hoc
Existence of meaning	None	235	5,04	1,29	15,15	0,000***	B,C>A
	1 child	99	5,75	0,99			
	2 or more	66	5,64	1,09			
Finding meaning	None	235	4,44	1,52	7,70	0,001**	A>B
	1 child	99	3,72	1,54			
	2-3 children	66	4,14	1,58			
MEANING IN LIFE	None	235	4,30	1,11	15,94	0,000***	B,C>A
	1 child	99	5,02	1,05			
	2-3 children	66	4,75	1,11			

$p<0.001$

$n = 400$; A=None, B=1 Child; 2=2 or more

The existence of meaning ($F=15.15$; $p<0.05$), search for meaning ($F=7.70$; $p<0.05$) and meaning in life ($F=15.94$; $p<0.05$) scores showed a significant difference according to the number of children. According to the results of the LSD (Least Significant Difference) post hoc test conducted to determine which groups the difference was between, the existence of meaning and meaning in life scores of the participants with children are significantly higher than the scores of the participants without children.

Additionally, the search for meaning in life scores of the participants who do not have children are significantly higher than the scores of the participants who have 1 child.

The results of the ANOVA test for the comparison of meaning in life scores according to educational status are given in Table 7.

Table 7 . Comparison of meaning in life scores according to education

Total Scale and Subscales	Education	n	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	p	Post Hoc
Existence of meaning	A-1-12 Grade	24	5,68	1,14	2,50	0,084	
	B-University	220	5,20	1,31			
	C-Graduate School	156	5,42	1,11			
Finding meaning	A-1-12 Grade	24	4,36	1,34	0,14	0,867	
	B-University	220	4,18	1,61			
	C-Graduate School	156	4,22	1,53			
MEANING IN LIFE	A-1-12 Grade	24	4,66	1,02	0,38	0,684	
	B-University	220	4,51	1,21			
	C-Graduate School	156	4,60	1,04			

$p < 0.05$

$n = 400$

Based on the findings in Table 7, it was determined that meaning in life scale and subscale scores did not differ significantly ($p > 0.05$) according to educational status.

The ANOVA test results of the comparison of meaning in life scale scores according to employment status are given in Table 8.

Table 8 . Comparison of meaning in life scores according to employment status

Total Scale and Subscales	Employment	n	$\bar{x}$	Sd	F	p	Post hoc
Existence of meaning	A-Public sector	65	5.60	1.09	12.58	0,000***	A,B,D>C
	B-Private sector	233	5.41	1.14			
	C-Student	53	4.40	1.43			
	D-Unemployed	49	5.46	1.16			
Finding meaning	A-Public sector	400	5.31	1.23	1.97	0,209	
	B-Private sector	65	4.35	1.63			
	C-Student	233	4.14	1.53			
	D-Unemployed	53	4.58	1.50			
MEANING IN LIFE	A-Public sector	49	3.91	1.61	7.09	0,000***	A,B,D>C
	B-Private sector	400	4.20	1.56			
	C-Student	65	4.62	1.18			
	D-Unemployed	233	4.63	1.07			

$p<0.001$

$n=400$

It was determined that the existence of meaning ($F=12.58$; $p<0.05$) and meaning in life ($F=7.09$; $p<0.05$) scores differed significantly according to employment status. According to the results of the LSD (Least Significant Difference) post hoc test conducted to determine which groups the difference is between, the scores of the public and private sector employees and unemployed participants on the existence of meaning and meaning in life are significantly higher than the scores of university student participants.

The ANOVA test results of the comparison of meaning in life scores according to economic status are presented in Table 9.

Table 9 . Comparison of meaning in life scores according to income level

Total Scale and Subscales	Income	n	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	p	Post hoc
Existence of meaning	A-Low	40	4,42	1,58	8,57	0,000***	B,C,D>A
	B-Medium	193	5,40	1,17			
	C-Medium and above	148	5,46	1,10			
	D-High	19	5,20	1,30			
Finding meaning	A-Low	40	4,69	1,33	1,63	0,182	
	B-Medium	193	4,19	1,57			
	C-Medium and above	148	4,15	1,57			
	D-High	19	3,88	1,81			
MEANING IN LIFE	A-Low	40	3,87	1,15	5,68	0,001**	B,C,D>A
	B-Medium	193	4,61	1,08			
	C-Medium and above	148	4,66	1,13			
	D-High	19	4,66	1,25			

$p<0.01$, $p<0.05$

It was determined that the search for meaning scores did not differ significantly according to economic status ($p>0.05$). The existence of meaning ($F=8.57$; $p<0.05$) and meaning in life ($F=5.68$; $p<0.05$) scores showed a significant difference according to economic status. According to the results of the LSD (Least Significant Difference) post hoc test conducted to determine which groups the difference was between, the scores of the participants with medium and higher income levels on the presence of meaning and meaning in life were significantly higher than the scores of the participants with low-income levels.

5.3. The Relationship Between Meaning of Life, Childhood Traumas and Psychological Resilience

Table 10 presents Spearman's Rho correlation test results for the relationship among childhood traumas, psychological resilience, and the meaning of life.



Table 10 . The relationship between meaning of life and Childhood Traumas and Psychological resilience

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1-ExM	1	-0,35**	0,77**	-0,28**	-0,03	-0,07	-0,22**	0,01	-0,23**	-0,21**	0,50**	0,52**	0,30**	0,21**	0,20**	0,27**	0,49**
2-FnM		1	-0,85**	0,22**	0,09	0,02	0,13*	0,00	0,09	0,14**	-0,25**	-0,17**	-0,13**	-0,11*	-0,14**	-0,10*	-0,25**
3-MIL			1	-0,29**	-0,07	-0,03	-0,20**	0,01	-0,19**	-0,21**	0,45**	0,41**	0,25**	0,19**	0,19**	0,22**	0,44**
4-EA				1	0,45**	0,39**	0,72**	0,22**	0,52**	0,81**	-0,28**	-0,21**	-0,16**	-0,10*	-0,54**	-0,38**	-0,41**
5-PA					1	0,36**	0,41**	0,27**	0,20**	0,53**	-0,04	-0,07	-0,09	-0,06	-0,31**	-0,13**	-0,18**
6-PN						1	0,52**	0,09	0,33**	0,62**	-0,12*	-0,15**	-0,02	-0,18**	-0,37**	-0,35**	-0,27**
7-EN							1	0,15**	0,49**	0,85**	-0,23**	-0,26**	-0,18**	-0,21**	-0,67**	-0,48**	-0,49**
8-SA								1	0,02	0,36**	0,01	0,02	-0,06	0,03	-0,18**	0,06	-0,04
9-OP/C									1	0,69**	-0,29**	-0,23**	-0,14**	-0,19**	-0,36**	-0,37**	-0,37**
10-CT										1	-0,25**	-0,22**	-0,19**	-0,22**	-0,62**	-0,44**	-0,46**
11-SP											1	0,68**	0,45**	0,46**	0,27**	0,41**	0,77**
12-FP												1	0,49**	0,39**	0,29**	0,45**	0,79**
13-SS													1	0,24**	0,21**	0,24**	0,63**
14-SC														1	0,24**	0,48**	0,65**
15-FC															1	0,52**	0,60**
16-SR																1	0,71**
17-PR																	1

*, p<0,05 **; p<0,01, Note: Exm=Existence in Meaning, FnM=Finding Meaning, MIL=Meaning in Life, EA=Emotional Abuse, PA=Physical Abuse, PN=Physical Neglect, EN=Emotional Neglect, SA=Sexual Abuse, OP/C=Overprotection and Control, CT=Childhood trauma, SP=Self-Perception, FP=Future perception, SS=Structural Style, SC=Social Competence, SR=Social Resources, PR=Psychological Resilience.

According to Table 10, it was found that there was a negative, weak and significant relationship between the presence of meaning scores and emotional abuse ($r=-0.28$; $p<0.05$), emotional neglect ($r=-0.22$; $p<0.05$), overprotection-control ($r=-0.23$; $p<0.05$), childhood traumas ($r=-0.21$; $p<0.05$). The presence of meaning scores were moderately correlated with self-perception ($r=0.50$; $p<0.05$), future perception ($r=0.52$; $p<0.05$), structural style ($r=0.30$; $p<0.05$), social competence ($r=0.21$; $p<0.05$), family cohesion ($r=0.20$; $p<0.05$), social resources ($r=0.27$; $p<0.05$), psychological resilience ($r=0.49$; $p<0.05$).

According to Table 10, there is a positive, weak, and significant relationship between meaning seeking scores and emotional abuse ($r=0.22$; $p<0.05$), emotional neglect ($r=0.13$; $p<0.05$), childhood traumas ($r=0.14$; $p<0.05$). Meaning-seeking scores were weakly correlated with self-perception ($r=-0.25$; $p<0.05$), future perception ($r=-0.17$; $p<0.05$), structural style ($r=-0.13$; $p<0.05$), social competence ($r=-0.11$; $p<0.05$), family cohesion ($r=-0.14$; $p<0.05$), social resources ($r=-0.10$; $p<0.05$), psychological resilience ($r=-0.25$; $p<0.05$).

According to Table 10, there was a negative, weak, and significant relationship between meaning in life scores and emotional abuse ($r=-0.29$; $p<0.05$), emotional neglect ($r=-0.20$; $p<0.05$), overprotection-control ($r=-0.19$; $p<0.05$), childhood traumas ($r=0.21$; $p<0.05$). Meaning in life scores were found as moderately correlated with self-perception ($r=0.45$; $p<0.05$), future perception ($r=0.41$; $p<0.05$), structural style ($r=0.25$; $p<0.05$), social competence ($r=0.19$; $p<0.05$), family cohesion ($r=0.19$; $p<0.05$), social resources ($r=0.22$; $p<0.05$), psychological resilience ($r=0.44$; $p<0.05$).

5.4. Testing Assumptions for Hierarchical Regression Analysis

In a hierarchical regression analysis examining the predictive power of childhood traumas and psychological resilience on meaning in life, there are several assumptions that should be considered. Firstly, the relationship between the predictor variables (childhood traumas and psychological resilience) and the outcome variable (meaning in life) should be linear. This means that the relationship between each predictor and the outcome should be approximately a straight line. The observations should be independent of each other, meaning that the data points are not influenced by each other. This assumption ensures that each data point provides unique information for the regression analysis.

The variance of the residuals (the differences between the observed and predicted values) should be constant across all levels of the predictor variables. In other words, the spread of the residuals should be the same across the range of values for childhood traumas and psychological resilience. The residuals should be normally distributed, meaning that they follow a bell-shaped curve. This assumption is important because many statistical techniques, including regression analysis, assume that the errors or residuals are normally distributed. There should be no strong linear relationships between the predictor variables.

5.5. Regression Analysis Findings

Table 11 shows the hierarchical regression analysis findings of the predictive relationship of the meaning of life with sociodemographic variables, childhood traumas and psychological resilience.

Table 11 . Predictive Power of Sociodemographic Variables, Childhood Traumas and Psychological resilience on meaning of life

Model		B	S.H.	B	T	p
1	(Constant)	4.122	.219		18.865	.000
	Gender	.114	.125	.044	.912	.362
	Age	.176	.047	.211	3.763	.000**
	Number of children	.147	.084	.098	1.741	.083
	Employment	-.051	.044	-.057	-1.176	.240
		R=.28	$\Delta R=.07$		p=.000	
		R ² =.07	$F_{(4,395)} = 8.74$			
2	(Constant)	5.718	.421		13.571	.000
	Gender	.151	.122	.059	1.237	.217
	Age	.176	.046	.212	3.858	.000***
	Number of children	.147	.082	.098	1.785	.075
	Employment	-.055	.043	-.061	-1.282	.200
	Childhood Traumas	-1.295	.295	-.208	-4.393	.000***
		R=.35	$\Delta R=.11$		p=.00	
		R ² =.11	$F_{(5,394)}=19.30$			
3	(Constant)	.853	.722		1.182	.238
	Gender	.051	.114	.020	.447	.655
	Age	.157	.042	.189	3.700	.000***
	Number of children	.155	.076	.103	2.029	.043*
	Employment	.036	.041	.040	.870	.385
	Childhood Traumas	-.059	.314	-.009	-.186	.852
	Psychological Resilience	.859	.107	.416	8.014	.000***
		R=.49	$\Delta R=.23$		p=.00	
		R ² =.23	$F_{(6,393)} = 64.22$			

Dependent variable: Meaning in life.

* $p < 0.05$

** $p < 0.01$

*** $p < 0.001$

In Table 11, the power of the independent variables including sociodemographic variables, childhood traumas and psychological resilience on the dependent variable meaning of life was examined with hierarchical regression. The first model including sociodemographic variables was found as statistically significant ($F(4,395)=8.74$; $p<0.05$). Based on the findings in the first model, age groups significantly predicted meaning in life scores. Being aged between 41 and 60 significantly predicted increase in meaning in life scores. Age groups explain meaning in life approximately 7% ($\Delta R^2=0.07$).

In the second model, childhood trauma was added as a predictor of meaning in life. The second model was found as significant ($F(5,394)=19.30$). Based on the findings, childhood traumas and age explain meaning in life approximately 11% ($\Delta R^2=0.11$).

In the third model, psychological resilience was added as a predictor of meaning in life. The third model was found as significant ($F(6,393)=64.22$). Based on the findings, psychological resilience and age explain meaning in life approximately 23% ($\Delta R^2=0.23$).

Table 12 shows the model summary for the predictive relationship between the meaning of life, sociodemographic variables, childhood traumas and psychological resilience.

Table 12 .Model summary for the predictive relationship of meaning of life with sociodemographic variables, childhood Traumas and Psychological resilience

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SH	Change Statistics					Durbin- Watson
					R ²	F	df1	df2	p	
					Change	Change				
1	.28	.08	.07	1.09	.08	8.74	4	395	.00	
2	.35	.12	.11	1.07	.04	19.30	1	394	.00	
3	.49	.24	.23	.99	.12	64.22	1	393	.00	1.996

Dependent variable: Meaning in life

Based on Durbin Watson value, which is 1.99, there was no autocorrelation between predictor variables (Table 13). Additionally, there was no multicollinearity problem among the independent variables (Tolerance>0.20; VIF<10). Based on the findings, Tolerance and VIF values are acceptable for three-model hierarchical regression analysis (Table 13). Outliers are extreme values that can have a significant impact on the regression model. It is important to check for influential outliers that may unduly influence the results of the analysis. In this study, there were no outliers detected prior to the analyses.

Table 13 shows the collinearity findings of the three-model hierarchical regression analysis for examining the predictive power of sociodemographic variables, childhood traumas, and psychological resilience.

Table 13 . Collinearity findings

Independent Variables	Tolerance	VIF
Gender	.998	1.002
Age	.738	1.355
Number of children	.737	1.356
Employment	.996	1.004
Gender	.993	1.007
Age	.738	1.355
Number of children	.737	1.356
Employment	.995	1.005
Childhood Traumas	.995	1.005
Gender	.981	1.019
Age	.736	1.359
Number of children	.737	1.356
Employment	.920	1.087
Childhood Traumas	.755	1.325
Psychological Resilience	.712	1.404

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

This section aims to present an analysis of the predictive capacity of childhood traumas and psychological resilience in relation to the concept of purpose in life. The collected data for the main and additional purposes are analysed and debated in this section based on previous literature. This study encompassed a sample of 400 adults ranging in age from 18 to 60 years, with the aim of investigating the influence of the meaning of life, childhood traumas, and psychological resilience on adult individuals. A summary of the findings obtained from statistical analyses and comparison with the literature findings are presented in this section.

6.1. Discussion of Findings Related to Meaning in Life and Demographic

Variables

One of the main questions of this study was to investigate whether there were any variations in the meaning of life scores based on demographic factors, such as gender, marital status, age, number of children, education, employment and socioeconomic level.

The results of the independent sample t-test indicate that there is not a statistically noteworthy variance seen between genders. In contrast, the independent sample t-test revealed a significant correlation between marital status and age. In accordance with the outcomes of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) test, a statistically significant disparity was observed in relation to the number of children and employment status. However, no statistically noteworthy difference was detected between educational status, socioeconomic situation variables, and sense of meaning in life. In the literature, numerous studies support these findings.

Based on the findings of an independent sample t-test, there was no significant difference observed in the meaning in life ratings of adults based on gender. The characteristics of meaning in life for adult women and men appear to be similar to each other. The end product of this study aligned with the previously published research on the topic (e.g., Steger et al., 2006; Demirbaş 2010; Taş 2011; Arda 2011; Çamur 2014; Özaydın 2016; Erpay 2017; Yıldırım Usta 2021). However, there are studies that contradict our research findings as well. For example, Demirbaş Çelik's (2016) study investigated the correlation between a sense of meaning in life and life purposes among 268 university students in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, aged 18–29 years. The sample comprised 156 (58%) female and 112 (42%) male participants. Demirbaş Çelik (2016) observed a significant discrepancy in the scores of female and male students when assessing their sense of purpose in life and life ambitions. Specifically, female students had greater scores in both of these domains. In addition, several studies carried out by Arısoy (2021), Karataş (2022), and Sakmak (2023) have shown evidence of a noteworthy variation between the feeling of meaning in life and the variable of gender. This inconsistency could potentially arise from the study participants with different demographic characteristics.

When the independent sample t-test was used in the second stage, it was discovered that there were significant age-related differences in the existence of meaning, search for meaning, and meaning in life scores. The study revealed a significant difference in scores between participants aged 41 years and older, compared to people aged 18 to 40 years and younger, in relation to the presence of meaning and meaning in life. Also, it was seen that participants aged between 18 and 40 had significantly higher scores on the search for meaning in life than participants aged between 41 and 60. After conducting a comprehensive analysis of the existing studies

in the academic literature, we have observed that our research findings align closely with those previously reported. In a sample of adult participants, Kaya (2021) looked into the connections between happiness levels in romantic relationships, the experience of compassionate love, and perceptions of life's purpose. Upon analysis of the research findings, it is evident that there was no significant variation in the overall scores of the sense of purpose in life among adult adults when stratified by age. Nevertheless, there were notable variations in the interpretation and attempts to find meaning in life across different age groups, namely within the dimensions of existing meaning and the search for meaning. More specifically, it was observed that those aged 18–24 exhibited considerably lower scores in the sub-dimension of present meaning compared to individuals aged 25–34 and 35–65. Furthermore, individuals aged 25–34 also showed significantly lower scores in the current meaning sub-dimension than those aged 35–65. Moreover, it was observed that persons aged 35–65 exhibited notably lower scores in the sub-dimension related to the search for meaning compared to individuals aged 18–24. This outcome is in line with literature-based study that discovered a substantial correlation between meaning in life and age (e.g., Reker et al., 1987; Akgül 2014; Aydın 2015; Baikeli et al., 2021; Yıldırım Usta 2021; Karataş 2022). In addition, there are studies in the literature that indicate that the sense of meaning in life does not significantly differ based on age (e.g., Demirtaş 2010; Arda 2011; Taş 2011; Özaydın 2016; Erpay 2017 and Frankl 2018). According to our findings, developmental factors can be used to explain why young adults scored higher on the search for meaning and the existing meaning scales than middle-aged and older adults. Middle-aged and older persons have developed and established their daily routines, attained stability in their professional attempts, and successfully addressed any doubts regarding familial matters. On the contrary, individuals in the young adult stage are characterised by a

lack of complete clarity regarding their professional aspirations, intimate connections, and future objectives. Therefore, the observed disparity in scores between middle-aged and older adults in the present meaning, as well as the lower scores among older adults in the search for meaning, might be attributed to these developmental variations. According to Erikson's (1963) Psychosocial Developmental Theory, the final stage of development is characterised by the ability to accept one's past experiences with a sense of satisfaction. It has been observed that individuals tend to encounter a diminished sense of emptiness and an increased likelihood of experiencing a feeling of meaning in their lives as they advance in age.

The results of the independent two-sample t-test reveal a statistically significant difference in the scores pertaining to the presence of meaning, search for meaning, and meaning in life when considering marital status. There was a substantial difference observed between the scores of married individuals and unmarried participants in terms of their levels of purpose and meaning in life. Single participants' scores on the search for meaning in life were significantly higher than those of married participants. When reviewing the literature, the studies conducted by Kleftras and Psarra (2012), Göcen (2013), Aydın (2015), Kaya (2021), Karataş (2022) and Karataş (2022) support our research findings. On the other hand, existing literature includes studies that propose a lack of substantial correlation between married status and the perception of life's meaning (Çamur, 2014; Yıldırım Usta, 2021). In our study, the higher scores in the sense of life's meaning and the current meaning among married individuals and the higher scores in the search for meaning among unmarried participants can be explained by the possibility that marriage adds a sense of meaning to individuals' lives. Marriage and romantic relationships fulfil individuals' social support and closeness needs, enabling them to lead a life that is not solitary (Fincham et al., 2018, p. 425). Çalışkan

(2020: 49) found a positive relationship between the sense of life's meaning and marital commitment among married individuals. In this regard, the higher scores in life's meaning and the current meaning among married individuals can be attributed to these factors. Kim and Mckenry (2008: 909) explained this by stating that marital relationships bring mutual responsibilities to the parties involved and add meaning and purpose to one's life.

In this study, it was determined that the search for meaning scores did not differ significantly according to socioeconomic status. The existence of meaning and meaning in life scores showed a significant difference according to economic status. According to the results of the LSD (Least Significant Difference) post hoc test conducted to determine which groups the difference was between, the scores of the participants with medium and higher income levels on the presence of meaning and meaning in life were significantly higher than the scores of the participants with low-income levels. Similar to the findings of this study, Karataş (2022) found a correlation between perceived income level and variations in the ascriptions of life purposes, whereby individuals with higher perceived income levels exhibited higher scores. In comparison, those with lower perceived income levels scored lower. In the study conducted by Kaya (2021), it was determined that the scores of the search for meaning subscale of the life meaning did not significantly differ based on socioeconomic status. Upon reviewing the literature, the studies conducted by Kırac (2007), Duff & Ivlevs (2011), Yıkılmaz & Demirgüdül (2015), Aksoy (2019) and Arısoy (2021) also support the findings of this study. According to Frankl (2020: 46), there exists a belief that individuals need to reach a specific socioeconomic status before they may engage in the search for higher-level purposes, such as the search for meaning in life. However, Frankl challenges this

perspective and expresses his disagreement with it. The author posits that searching for meaning cannot be simplified or attributed solely to other fundamental human needs.

The study focused on whether meaning in life scores differed by educational status. Based on the results of the ANOVA test, it was determined that meaning in life scale and subscale scores did not differ significantly according to educational status. Consistent with the findings of this investigation, prior research conducted by Taş (2011), Bektaş (2012), İnan (2019), Arısoy (2021), Kaya (2021), and Karataş (2022) has also been documented in the existing literature. Indeed, conflicting studies contradicting the findings of our research can also be found in the literature. For example, Arısoy (2021) researched university students, investigating the presence of meaning in life and the level of search for meaning concerning their educational levels. When looking at the findings, a significant difference was observed between the presence of meaning in life and the students' educational levels. A Post Hoc Scheffe Test was applied to explore the significant difference further. According to the test results, students pursuing doctoral degrees ($X=29.08$) had a higher presence of meaning in their lives compared to university students studying at the associate's and bachelor's degree levels. Upon reviewing the existing literature, it becomes evident that there exists a body of research that both corroborates and challenges the conclusions under investigation. According to Frankl (2018: 120), the meaning of life varies from person to person, from day to day, and from hour to hour. He emphasizes that each individual has a unique purpose and mission in their life. Based on this perspective, it can be argued that education level might not necessarily be a factor that adds meaning to an individual's life.

The results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicate a statistically significant disparity in the scores pertaining to the presence of meaning, the pursuit of

meaning, and meaning in life, as influenced by the number of children. The findings of this study indicate a statistically significant disparity in scores related to sense of meaning and significance in life between those who have children and participants who do not have children. Specifically, the participants with children reported higher scores in both domains compared to those without children. Moreover, the quest for existential purpose among individuals without children exhibits a notably elevated magnitude compared to individuals with a single child. This result was also found to be compatible with Kaya's (2021) study which is explained in the literature chapter. Unlike this study, Usta (2018) Usta (2018) found no significant difference in the perception of the meaning of life among teachers who participated in the research and were parents compared to teachers who were not. It was concluded that the perception of the meaning of life among the participating teachers was independent of their status of having children. Upon reviewing the existing literature, it is evident that there exists a body of research that both corroborates and challenges the outcomes of our study. This situation is thought to be related to the characteristics of the samples used in the studies (such as age, education level group, socio-economic status, etc.).

Based on the results obtained from the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted in the preceding stage, it was concluded that there were substantial differences in the scores of meaning and significance in life based on individuals' work situation. In light of the results, it is evident that the scores pertaining to the perception of meaning and purpose in life among individuals employed in the public and private sectors, as well as those who are unemployed, are notably higher compared to the scores observed among university students. Literature indicates that there is limited research focused on the relationship between work status and the sense of meaning in life. In contrast to the findings of our study, Soylu (2016), İnan (2019) and Kaya (2021) found

that participants' employment status did not significantly impact their scores in the notion of purpose in life.

The findings obtained from this study demonstrate resemblances to the results documented in the current body of literature. It was determined that the presence of meaning in life is partially valid among adult individuals, and that the perception of meaning in life varies significantly based on factors such as marital status, age cohorts, number of offspring, employment status, and economic standing. Considering the literature findings, it is expected that meaning in life would be at a higher level in adult individuals due to the family environment, preoccupation due to employment status and the contribution to the economic situation with the income it provides at the same time.

6.2. Discussion of Findings on the Relationship between Meaning of Life, Childhood Traumas and Psychological Resilience

Another important research question was associated with examining the relationship between meaning of life, childhood traumas and psychological resilience. The result of the Spearman's Rho correlation analysis was examined with regard to relevant literature.

The study revealed a significant inverse correlation between the existence of life meaning and emotional abuse, emotional neglect, overprotection-control, and childhood traumas. Conversely, a significant positive association was observed between the pursuit of meaning and emotional abuse, emotional neglect, and childhood traumas. According to the studies conducted by Lamis et al. (2019), Dartar (2020), and Yancı (2020), it was shown that childhood traumas exhibited a statistically significant negative association with the presence of meaning in life, while demonstrating a statistically substantial favorable association with the search for meaning in life. The

results of this study align with the existing literature, demonstrating a consistent pattern. Specifically, it is observed that childhood traumas exhibit a negative association with the perception of meaning in life among adult persons, while concurrently displaying a favourable association with the inclination to search for meaning.

There exists a noteworthy and substantial correlation between the presence of meaning and meaning in life, as well as psychological resilience and its various sub-dimensions. Conversely, a notable and significant inverse relationship is observed between the pursuit of meaning and psychological resilience and its sub-dimensions. Furthermore, psychological resilience exhibits a positive and significant impact on the experience of meaning in life. Yıldırım Usta (2018), Harris et al. (2019), Costansa et al., (2019), Kurnaz (2019), Kul, Demir and Katmer (2020), Arısoy (2021), Bayraktar (2021), Karataş (2022) found that there is a positive and significant relationship between the meaning of life and psychological resilience. The findings of this study are similar to the findings of the literature, and as expected, psychological resilience is positively related to adult individuals' perception of meaning in life and negatively related to the search for meaning, and as the psychological resilience of adult individuals increases, their perception of the existence of meaning in life increases.

While not being one of the primary objectives and assumptions of this study, an additional discovery made pertains to the inverse correlation between childhood traumas and psychological resilience. Findings from the literature (Howell & Miller-Graff 2014; Beutel et al. 2017; Watters et al., 2021) show that childhood traumas are negatively related to psychological resilience.

6.3. Discussion of Findings on the Predictive Power of Childhood Traumas and Psychological Resilience on Meaning in Life

The primary objective of the research was to analyze whether sociodemographic variables, childhood traumas and psychological resilience predicted adults' meaning of life. Upon evaluating the findings of hierarchical regression analysis, it was seen that age and psychological resilience emerged as major predictors of meaning in life.

The first model including sociodemographic variables was found as statistically significant ($F(4,395)=8.74$; $p<0.05$). Based on the findings in the first model, age groups significantly predicted meaning in life scores. Being aged between 41 and 60 significantly predicted increase in meaning in life scores. The outcomes of the present research align with the conclusions of previous investigations conducted by Reker et al. (1987), Baikeli et al. (2021), and Aydın (2015). The study findings indicate a positive correlation between advancing age and an increase in the perception of life's purpose. Akgül (2014) discovered that 50-year-olds had the highest Meaning in Life Scale scores in a survey of 83 employees and students regarding meaning in life and mental well-being. This group was followed by the 40-49, 30-39, and 29 and below groups. The participants' Meaning in Life Scale ratings diminished with age. Bahadır (1999) found that the amount of significance increases with age, examining the relationship between psychosocial factors, religion, and the meaning of life. These data imply that as people age, their perceptions of life significance increase.

In the second model, childhood trauma was added as a predictor of meaning in life. The second model was found as significant ($F(5,394)=19.30$). Based on the findings, childhood traumas and age explain meaning in life. In the third model, psychological resilience was added as a predictor of meaning in life. The third model was found as significant. Based on the findings, psychological resilience and age explain meaning in life.

According to research, psychological resilience - the ability to bounce back from adversity - has a strong positive effect on an individual's perceived meaning in life (Smith & Hollinger-Smith, 2015).

Psychological resilience is understood as a person's capacity to adapt to life tasks despite adverse conditions, and it encompasses components such as self-efficacy, optimism, and emotional stability (Rutter, 2012). Previous research has underscored its role in human development and mental health (Southwick et al., 2014). Therefore, it stands to reason that people who demonstrate resilience are likely better equipped to handle life's difficulties and thus more likely to find meaning even in the face of adversity.

Hierarchical regression models allow for the sequential introduction of predictors, thus making it possible to control for the influence of other variables (Cohen et al., 2003). In the present study, after entering psychological resilience to the model, childhood traumas lost its' significance in predicting meaning in life. These findings suggest that while childhood traumas have power in predicting a person's perception of life's meaning, their actual power might negligible when factors such as psychological resilience are accounted for (Masten & Obradović, 2006). The protective function of resilience might mitigate the adverse effects of childhood traumas on meaning in life (Cicchetti, 2013).

It's also possible that the non-significant effect of childhood traumas signals the presence of unaccounted resilience factors (Masten, 2011).

The study also suggests that additional resilience factors, which were not accounted for in the analysis, could have influenced the outcomes (Masten, 2011). This points to the resilience process being multifaceted and composed of numerous elements

that could potentially buffer the effects of early life adversities, thus maintaining or enhancing the perception of life as meaningful (Werner, 1993).

In conclusion, these findings underscore the importance of psychological resilience as a significant predictor of meaning in life (Smith & Hollinger-Smith, 2015). The non-significant predictor effect of childhood traumas might point towards the complexity and potential indirect effects these traumas have on perceived meaning in life, might be mediated by other factors, a hypothesis which warrants further exploration (Kendler et al., 2004). Therefore, future research should continue investigating the interplay of psychological resilience, childhood traumas, and other related factors to better understand their impact on meaning in life.

6.4. Implications, Recommendations, and Limitations

This part gives limits based on study findings as well as consequences and recommendations for practitioners, field researchers, and policy makers.

6.1.1. Implications and Recommendations for Practitioners

One significant finding from this research is the explanatory role of psychological resilience in life's meaning. The variable of psychological resilience also ensured that childhood trauma loses its explanatory power over life's meaning. In line with this, supportive programs for psychological resilience can be prepared from a young age to support individuals in leading a meaningful life in adulthood. Practitioners can organize awareness and skill-based group workshops, emphasizing psychological resilience's importance.

Especially in places like schools and community centres, educational programs and protective services can be provided to protect children from abuse and trauma. These services can be included within the scope of personal counseling in schools.

These programs are recommended to encompass all school stakeholders, including students, teachers, administrative staff, and parents. Effective trainings can raise awareness about child protection, neglect, abuse, adverse life experiences, and the importance of psychological resilience for parents and teachers. Training in effective parenting and teaching can be considered a functional long-term solution for raising awareness within the community.

Efforts may be directed towards the implementation of intervention programmes that specifically target persons who are at a higher risk or have encountered unpleasant life experiences. The objective of these programmes is to assist these individuals in discovering purpose in life and enhancing their psychological resilience capabilities. Practitioners can also create educational programs focused on increasing meaning in life. These programs encourage individuals to explore their values and passions and find deeper meaning in their lives.

Additionally, initiatives to increase access to mental health services can be promoted, along with awareness campaigns. Through this awareness, both awareness of childhood trauma prevention and protection and support for individuals' psychological resilience can be enhanced. Practitioners are encouraged to support awareness campaigns aimed at society.

Social support networks can enhance the meaning of individuals' lives. Practitioners are advised to strengthen these networks and increase supportive resources through community centres and social service organizations. Based on these recommendations, practitioners can take concrete steps to enhance the emotional and psychological well-being of communities.

6.4.2. Implications and Recommendations for Field Researchers

This study includes participants who are 18 to 60 years old. The results might be replicated using a more extensive and heterogeneous sample of individuals spanning various age groups. Exploring the functions of psychological resilience and childhood traumas concerning the sense of meaning in adult life, which has not been previously examined, can enhance our comprehension of these aspects. This could be achieved through qualitative research, so yielding more complete conclusions. The exploration of the intricate relationship between the sense of meaning in life, childhood traumas, and psychological resilience can be enhanced by using more rigorous research approaches.

Furthermore, this study examines the role of childhood traumas on individuals' adult lives. Researchers could conduct additional studies to elucidate these roles further and ascertain their long-term repercussions. The correlation between the discovery of purpose in life and the development of psychological resilience has emerged as a noteworthy discovery. Researchers may engage in further comprehensive inquiries in order to gain a deep understanding of the correlation between a meaningful life and psychological resilience, thus elucidating the complex dynamics between these two dimensions. Furthermore, this research underscores the significance of individual variances, like gender, age, and marital status, with the perception of existential purpose. Researchers may further explore these variations and devise tailored methodologies to conduct a comprehensive examination.

Designing longitudinal studies to comprehend the long-term effects of childhood traumas could provide insights into their impact on the sense of meaning and psychological resilience.

Meaning-Focused Interventions: Researchers can conduct studies to examine the effectiveness of psychological interventions to enhance the sense of meaning. Evaluating how these interventions affect the sense of meaning is crucial.

Utilizing a bio-psycho-social approach that considers biological, psychological, and social factors could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complex effects of childhood traumas on meaning and resilience.

These recommendations can assist researchers in conducting more in-depth and comprehensive studies, enriching our knowledge about the relationship between psychological resilience, childhood traumas, and the sense of meaning in life.

6.4.3. Implications and Recommendations for Policy Makers

Policy makers can initiate early education and awareness campaigns to prevent childhood traumas, provide early intervention, and raise awareness about their effects. Programs that offer knowledge and skills related to the psychological needs of children and families can be developed starting from preschool. Legal regulations that respect children's rights and protect them from physical, emotional, and sexual abuse can be established. Programs aimed at preventing domestic violence and abuse can be created in schools. Early intervention programs for at-risk children can be developed, and support programs for families can focus on promoting healthy child development.

Policy makers can allocate resources to facilitate access to mental health services with the aim of enhancing psychological resilience. Services such as psychotherapy and counseling can be made more widely available and economically accessible. Educational programs aimed at enhancing psychological resilience can be developed in schools and workplaces. Modules that include stress management, emotional awareness, and problem-solving skills can be created. Programs to

strengthen social support networks can also be established, as social interaction, a sense of belonging, and support systems can enhance psychological resilience.

To promote an increased sense of meaning in life, policy makers can design educational programs focused on personal development and finding life purpose. These programs can help individuals establish a deeper connection with their inner values and passions. Social service projects that benefit the community can assist individuals in finding meaning in their lives. Emphasizing volunteering, mutual assistance, and social responsibility can be valuable. The business sector can adopt flexible work models, career development opportunities, and policies that prioritize work-life balance to support employees in finding meaning in their work.

The findings and analyses presented in this study can guide policy makers in implementing these recommendations. Psychological resilience, the impact of early traumas, and the significance of purpose in life are influential factors in promoting a positive social environment. Policy makers' efforts in this field can contribute to strengthening the overall psychological and emotional health of society.

6.5. Limitations

This study has some limitations in terms of the sample and the measurement tools used.

Limitations of the research

1. The research topic is limited to the meaning of life, childhood traumas and psychological resilience in adults.
2. In terms of time and sample, the study is limited to adult individuals who voluntarily participated in the study living in Turkey in 2020-2021.

3. This research is limited to the qualities measured by the measurement tools used in the data collection process; Personal Information Form, Childhood Traumas Scale, Meaning in Life Scale, Psychological Resilience Scale for Adults.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Personal Information Form

Değerli Katılımcı,

Bu araştırma Yeditepe Üniversitesi tarafından desteklenen bir yüksek lisans çalışmasıdır. Aşağıdaki ankette yüksek lisans araştırmasında kullanılmak üzere hazırlanmış sorular bulunmaktadır. Önce kendiniz ile ilgili bilgileri daha sonra ise anket sorularını yanıtlayınız. Hiçbir sorunun boş bırakılmaması araştırma sonuçları açısından çok önemlidir. Cevaplarınız gizli kalacak, araştırmacı dışında kimseyle paylaşılmayacaktır. Bu bir sınav değildir, doğru ya da yanlış cevap yoktur. Verdiğiniz içten, samimi ve gerçekçi cevap yapılan araştırmayı çok daha verimli kılacaktır. Araştırma sonrasında herhangi bir sorunuz olursa aşağıdaki adresten araştırmacı ile irtibata geçebilirsiniz. Yardımlarınız için teşekkür ederim.

Araştırmacı: Ali BAĞÇECİ

Yeditepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü Psikolojik Danışma ve Rehberlik Yüksek Lisans Programı

Mail:

1. Cinsiyetiniz: Kadın () Erkek ()
2. Yaşınız : 18-22 () 23-40 () 41-45 () 45-60 () 61-65 () 65+ ()
3. Medeni Durum : Evli () Bekar ()
4. Çocuk sayısı
Yok () 1 () 2 () 3 ve üzeri ()
5. Eğitim Durumu
İlkokul () Ortaokul () Lise () Üniversite () Yüksek lisans () Doktora ()
6. Çalışma Durumu:
Kamu Çalışanı () Özel Sektör () Ev Hanımı () Üniversite Öğrencisi ()
Çalışmıyor ()
7. Kendinizi hangi ekonomik düzeyde algılıyorsunuz?
Çok düşük düzey gelir grubu ()
Düşük düzey gelir grubu ()
Orta düzey gelir grubu ()
Orta üstü düzey gelir grubu ()
Üst düzey gelir grubu ()
Çok üst düzey gelir grubu ()

Appendix B: Childhood Traumas Scale

Çocukluk Çağı Travmaları Ölçeği (CTQ-33)

Gözden Geçirilmiş ve Genişletilmiş Türkçe Versiyon

© Türkçe CTQ-28 :Vedat Şar, 1996

© Türkçe CTQ-33: Vedat Şar, Işıl Necef, Tuba Mutluer, Parmis Fatih, 2019

Reliability and validity studies

CTQ-28: Şar, V., Öztürk, E. & İkikardeş, E. (2012). Validity and reliability of the Turkish Version of the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ). *Turkiye Klinikleri Tıp Bilimleri Dergisi (Turkiye Klinikleri Journal of Medical Sciences)*, 32(4),1054-1063.

CTQ-33: Şar,V., Necef, I., Mutluer,T., Fatih,P., Türk-Kurtça, T. (2020). A revised and expanded version of the Turkish Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ-33): overprotection-overcontrol as additional factor. *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation*.

Her bir madde için aşağıdaki seçeneklerden birini işaretleyiniz:

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

Çocukluğumda ya da ergenliğimde...

1)Yeterli yemeğim olurdu.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

2) Gündelik bakım ve güvenliğim sağlanıyordu.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

3) Anne ya da babam kendilerine layık olmadığımı ifade ederlerdi.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

4) Fiziksel ihtiyaçlarım tam olarak karşılanırdı.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

5) Ailemde sorunlarımı paylaşabileceğim biri vardı

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

6) Üst baş açısından bakımsızdım.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

7) Sevildiğimi hissediyordum.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

8) Anne ya da babam kendimden utanmama neden olurdu.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

9) Ailemden birisi bana öyle kötü vurmuştu ki doktora ya da hastaneye gitmem gerekmişti.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

10) Ailemde değiştirmek istediğim şeyler vardı.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

11) Ailemdekiler bana o kadar şiddetle vuruyorlardı ki vücudumda morartı ya da sıyrıklar oluyordu.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

12)Kayış, sopa, kordon ya da başka sert bir cisimle vurularak cezalandırılıyordum.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

13) Anne ya da babam fikirlerimi önemserdi.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

14) Ailemdekiler bana kırıcı ya da saldırganca sözler söylerlerdi.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

15) Fiziksel bakımdan hırpalanmış olduğuma inanıyorum.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

16) Çocukluğum mükemmeldi.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

17) Bana o kadar kötü vuruluyordum ki öğretmen, komşu ya da bir doktorun bunu fark ettiği oluyordu.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

18)Ailemde birisi benden nefret ederdi.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

19)Ailemdekiler kendilerini birbirlerine yakın hissederlerdi.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

20) Biri bana cinsel amaçla dokunmaya ya da kendisine dokundurtmaya çalıştı.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

21) Kendisi ile cinsel ilişki kurmadığım takdirde bana zarar vermekle tehdit eden biri vardı.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

22) Benim ailem dünyanın en iyisiydi.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

23) Birisi beni cinsel şeyler yapmaya ya da cinsel şeylere bakmaya zorladı.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

24) Birisi bana cinsel tacizde bulundu.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

25) Ailemdekiler bana karşı suçlayıcıydı.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

26) İhtiyacım olduğunda beni doktora götürecek birisi vardı.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

27) Cinsel istismara uğradığım kanısındayım.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

28) Ailem benim için bir güç ve destek kaynağı idi.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

29) Ailemdekiler yaşlılarımla ve arkadaşlarımla görüşmemi kısıtlardı.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

30) Ailemdekiler her şeye karışırdı.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

31) Anne ve babam bir işi kendi başıma yapmama fırsat verirlerdi.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

32) Ailemdekiler rahat vermeyecek derecede peşimdeydiler.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

33) Anne ya da babam beni kontrol etmek için kişisel eşyalarımı benden habersiz karıştırırdı.

1.Hiç Bir Zaman 2.Nadiren 3.Kimi Zaman 4.Sık Olarak 5.Çok Sık

Appendix C: Meaning in Life Scale

Lütfen sadece bir anlığına yaşamınızı anlamlı kılanın ne olduğunu düşünün ve aşağıdaki ifadelere mümkün olduğunca sizi yansıtan yanıtlar vermeye çalışın.

Unutmayın ki, bu ifadeler kişiye özgüdür ve doğru ya da yanlış yanıtları yoktur. Her bir ifadenin sizin için ne kadar geçerli olduğunu aşağıdaki ölçeği kullanarak numaralandırınız.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Kesinlikle Doğru Değil	Çoğunlukla Doğru Değil	Kısmen Doğru Değil	Ne Doğru ne Yanlış	Kısmen Doğru	Çoğunlukla Doğru	Kesinlikle Doğru

1. Yaşamımın anlamının farkındayım.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
2. Yaşamımın anlamlı olduğunu bana hissettirecek bir şeyler arıyorum.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
3. Daima yaşamımın amacını arıyorum.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
4. Yaşamımın gayet belirgin bir amacı var.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
5. Yaşamımı nelerin anlamlı kıldığını iyi biliyorum.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
6. Tatmin edici bir yaşam amacı keşfetmiş durumdayım.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
7. Daima, yaşamımı değerli hissettirecek bir şeylerin arayışı içindeyim.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
8. Yaşamım için amaç ve hedef arıyorum.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
9. Yaşamımın belirgin bir amacı yok.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
10. Yaşamıma anlam arama çabasındayım.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

Appendix D: Psychological Resilience Scale for Adults

1. Beklenmedik bir olay olduğunda...	Her zaman bir çözüm bulurum		Coğu kez ne yapacağımı kestiremem
2. Gelecek için yaptığım planların...	Basarılması zordur		Basarılması mümkündür
3. En iyi olduğum durumlar su durumlardır...	Ulaşmak istediğim açık bir hedefim olduğunda		Tam bir günlük boş bir vaktim olduğunda
4. ...olmaktan hoşlanıyorum	Diğer kişilerle birlikte		Kendi basıma
5. Ailemin, hayatta neyin önemli olduğu konusundaki anlayışı...	Benimkinden farklıdır		Benimkiyle aynıdır
6. Kişisel konuları ...	Hic kimseyle tartışmam		Arkadaşlarımla/Aile-üvelerivle tartışabilirim
7. Kişisel problemlerimi...	Cözemem		Nasıl çözebileceğimi bilirim
8. Gelecekteki hedeflerimi...	Nasıl başaracağımı bilirim		Nasıl başaracağımdan emin değilim
9. Yeni bir iş/projeve başladığımda ...	İlerive dönük planlama yapmam, derhal işe baslarım		Avrıntılı bir plan yapmayı tercih ederim
10. Benim için sosyal ortamlarda rahat/esnek olmak	Önemli değildir		Cok önemlidir
11. Ailemle birlikteyken kendimi ... hissedirim	Cok mutlu		Cok mutsuz
12. Beni ...	Bazı yakın arkadaşlarım/aile üvelerim cesaretlendirebilir		Hic kimse cesaretlendiremez
13. Yeteneklerim...	Olduğuna çok inanırım		Konusunda emin değilim
14. Geleceğimin ... olduğunu hissediyorum	Ümit verici		Belirsiz
15. Şu konuda iyiyimdir...	Zamanımı planlama		Zamanımı harcama
16. Yeni arkadaşlık konusu ... bir şeydir	Kolavca yapabildiğim		Yapmakta zorlandığım
17. Ailem şöyle tanımlanabilir ...	Birbirinden bağımsız		Birbirine sıkı biçimde kenetlenmiş
18. Arkadaşlarımla arasındaki ilişkiler ...	Zayıftır		Güçlüdür
19. Yargılarıma ve kararlarıma ...	Cok fazla güvenmem		Tamamen güvenirim
20. Geleceğe dönük amaçlarım ...	Belirsizdir		İvi düşünölmüştür
21. Kurallar ve düzenli alışkanlıklar ...	Günlük yaşamımda yoktur		Günlük yaşamımı kolavlastırır
22. Yeni insanlarla tanışmak ...	Benim için zordur		Benim iyi olduğum bir konudur
23. Zor zamanlarda, ailem ...	Geleceğe pozitif bakar		Geleceği umutsuz görür
24. Ailemden birisi acil bir durumla karşılaştığında...	Bana hemen haber verilir		Bana söylenmesi bir havli zaman alır
25. Diğerleriyle beraberken	Kolavca gülerim		Nadiren gülerim
26. Başka kişiler söz konusu olduğunda, ailem şöyle davranır:	Birbirlerini desteklemez biçimde		Birbirlerine bağıli biçimde
27. Destek alırım	Arkadaşlarımdan/aile üvelerinden		Hic kimseden
28. Zor zamanlarda ... eğilimim vardır	Her sevi umutsuzca gören bir		Beni basarıya götürebilecek iyi bir sev bulma
29. Karşılıklı konuşma için güzel konuların düşünölmesi, benim için ...	Zordur		Kolavdır
30. İhtiyacım olduğunda ...	Bana yardım edebilecek kimse yoktur		Her zaman bana yardım edebilen birisi vardır
31. Hayatımdaki kontrol edemediğim olaylar (ile) ...	Basa çıkmaya çalışırım		Sürekli bir endise/kavgı kaynağıdır
32. Ailemde şunu severiz ...	İşleri bağımsız olarak yapmayı		İşleri hep beraber yapmayı
33. Yakın arkadaşlarım/aile üveleri ...	Yeteneklerimi beğenirler		Yeteneklerimi beğenmezler

Appendix E: Permission of Childhood Traumas Scale

Appendix F: Permission of Meaning in Life Scale

Appendix G: Permission of Psychological Resilience Scale for Adults

Appendix H: Permission of Ethics Committee

