THE LINK BETWEEN DIFFERENTIATION OF SELF AND SATISFACTION WITH LIFE AND RELATIONSHIP: THE ROLE OF BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS SATISFACTION

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ETHICAL DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have conducted my work in accordance with academic rules and ethical behaviour at every stage from the planning of the thesis to its defence. I confirm that I have cited all ideas, information and findings that are not specific to my study, as required by the code of ethical behaviour, and that all statements not cited are my own.

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ABSTRACT

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NEEDS SATISFACTION

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Master's Program in Clinical Psychology

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Guided by both family systems theory and self-determination theory, this study examined the mediating role of basic psychological needs satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and satisfaction of life as well as relationship. Totally 270 Turkish adults aged between 18 and 45 years (M_{age} = 30.21 years, SD = 7.32) who were currently in a romantic relationship participated in the study. The Demographic Information Form, Differentiation of Self Inventory, Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Subscale of Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction and Frustration Scale, Adult Life Satisfaction Scale, and Relationship Assessment Scale were used to collect data. The results of the mediation analysis indicated the partial mediating role of satisfaction of basic psychological needs in the relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction, and the full mediating role of satisfaction of basic psychological needs in the relationship between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction. In addition, the role of gender and age on study

variables was also determined. Research results, limitations, recommendations for future studies, and clinical implications were discussed in the light of the related literature.

Keywords: Family Systems Theory, Self-Determination Theory, differentiation of self, basic psychological needs satisfaction, life satisfaction, relationship satisfaction.

ÖZET

BENLİK FARKLILAŞMASI İLE YAŞAM VE İLİŞKİ DOYUMU ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ: TEMEL PSİKOLOJİK İHTİYAÇ DOYUMUNUN ROLÜ

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Aile sistemleri kuramı ve kendini belirleme kuramı ışığında gerçekleştirilen bu çalışma, benlik farklılaşması ile yaşam ve ilişki doyumu arasındaki ilişkide temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların doyurulmasının aracı rolünü incelemektedir. Çalışmaya romantik ilişki içinde olan, yaşları 18 ile 45 arasında değişen ($Ort_{yaş}$ = 30.21, S = 7.32) 270 Türk yetişkin katılmıştır. Veri toplamak amacıyla Demografik Bilgi Formu, Benlik Farklılaşması Envanteri, Temel Psikolojik İhtiyaçların Doyurulması ve Engellenmesi Ölçeğinin İhtiyaç Doyumu alt ölçeği, Yetişkin Yaşam Doyum Ölçeği ve İlişki Değerlendirme Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Aracılık analizi sonuçları, aile sistemleri ve kendini belirleme kuramlarının varsayımlarıyla uyumlu olarak, benlik farklılaşması ve yaşam doyumu arasındaki ilişkide temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumunun kısmi aracı rolünü ve benlik farklılaşması ve ilişki doyumu arasındaki ilişkide temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumunun tam aracı rolünü göstermiştir. Ek olarak, cinsiyet ve yaşın çalışma değişkenleri üzerindeki rolü saptanmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları, sınırlılıklar, ileride

yapılacak olan çalışmalar için öneriler ve klinik çıkarımlar ilgili literatür ışığında tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Aile Sistemleri Kuramı, Kendini Belirleme Kuramı, Benlik Farklılaşması, İhtiyaç doyumu, Yaşam doyumu, İlişki doyumu.

Dedicated to my lovely family…

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Differentiation of self which is one of the main concepts of Bowen's family systems framework has taken so much attention in the literature in recent years (e.g., Frederick, Purrington and Dunbar, 2016; Murdock and Gore Jr, 2004; Sloan, Buckham and Lee, 2017). A person can achieve emotional maturity and independence without losing their capacity to connect with others, according to Bowen, even while they are emotionally and physically differentiated from their family of origin and found to be related to several positive outcomes such as psychological well-being (Charles, 2001), healthy emotion regulation (Rodrigues, 2016), life satisfaction (Guo, Huang and Yang, 2022), and couple satisfaction (Ferreira, Narciso and Novo, 2012). In most of this research, it has been stated that greater differentiation of self is related to higher levels of life satisfaction (Manzi et al., 2006) and relationship satisfaction (Skowron, Buckham and Lee, 2017). However, a relatively rare number of studies examined the possible mediators in the stated relations. In the previous studies, although some other possible mediators have been examined such as marital adjustment (Işık et al., 2020), hope and coping strategies (Guo, Huang and Yang, 2022) and emotional distress (Peleg, Boniel-Nissim and Tzischinsky, 2022), none of them identified the possible mediating role of basic psychological needs within this relation. Therefore, in the light of the Bowen's Family Systems Framework and Deci and Ryan's Self Determination Theory, this study aims to investigate the possible intervening role of needs satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and life and relationship satisfaction.

In the following sections, firstly, Bowen's differentiation of self concept will be introduced and then the relationship between differentiation of self and life and relationship satisfaction outcomes will be discussed, and lastly, by taking the guidance from the self-determination theory, the possible mediating role of needs satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and life and relationship satisfaction outcomes will be mentioned.

1.1. Differentiation of Self

Bowen's theory is one of the groundbreaking theories which explains the transgenerational processes and focuses on the importance of reciprocal relationships of family members. Murray Bowen, founder of the theory, worked with patients with

schizophrenia while working with their mothers and families (Haefner, 2014). In these studies, he drew attention to the effects of differentiation and enmeshed relationship with the family on patients (Brown, 1999). From this perspective, Bowen (1976; 1978) considered the main principles of Family Systems Theory as differentiation of self, fusion, the triangulation, the family projection process, the multigenerational transmission process and the emotional cut-off and all these principles served a central function in the field of individual psychotherapy, marital therapy, and family therapy (Jenkins et al., 2005). While all the principles in family systems theory reveal the types of attachment we establish with our family and the characteristics we maintain in the relationships that develop after leaving them, they also define the emotional climate of the family (Yıldırım, 2020).

According to Bowen's Family Systems Theory differentiation of self is the key concept which suggests that individuals can develop different levels of differentiation, which are closely related to their emotional maturity and ability to manage their relationships with others (Bowen, 1978). The ability to differentiate oneself from one's family of origin both emotionally and physically, as well as to develop emotional maturity and independence without losing the ability to emotionally connect with others, are all examples of differentiation of self (Charles, 2001). Individuals with high levels of differentiation are good at maintaining emotional boundaries and have a greater sense of individuality, while individuals with low levels of differentiation might become overly involved in others' emotional experiences and have difficulty in managing their own emotions (Skowron and Friedlander, 1998). Therefore, the self's high capacity for differentiation means that the individuals can reveal their individual differences, goals and choices without breaking away from the social environment in which they want to live in, and they can maintain authentic existence.

Differentiation of self is a multidimensional concept that combines the maturation of the capability to discern between thoughts and feelings with the growth of individualization (Licht and Chabot, 2006). It is divided into four sub-dimensions: I-position, emotional reactivity, fusion with others and emotional cut-off (Skowron and Friedlander, 1998; Skowron and Schmitt, 2003). Firstly, I-position has been outlined as the capability to express one's point of view and values, and to maintain personal

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resilience even under stressful conditions (Bowen, 1978; Kerr and Bowen, 1988). In another definition, I-position is an individual's ability to take responsibility for their own emotions and behaviors without blaming others (Kerr and Bowen, 1988). Individuals with low levels of I-position may tend to blame others for their emotional experiences, while those with high levels of I-position are better at taking responsibility for their own emotions and behaviors.

Secondly, emotional reactivity refers to an individual's level of resilience in the face of emotional situations. Individuals with low differentiation of self are emotionally reactive and spend a lot of energy experiencing and expressing their intense emotion (Bowen, 1976). On the other hand, individuals with high differentiation of self are experience their feelings but does not burn themselves out (Kalkan and Aydoğan, 2019). In addition, fusion with others refers to an individual's tendency to merge their emotions with those of others, often resulting in blurred personal boundaries and emotional enmeshment (Kerr and Bowen, 1988). Individuals with high levels of fusion are emotionally stuck in the places they have in their families (Kerr and Bowen, 1988). At the same time, these people cannot separate themselves from harmful relationships and they may feel the need for approval (Bowen, 1976; 1978). Individuals with low levels of fusion have the freedom to express themselves separately from the feelings, thoughts, and beliefs of the people around them in the context of this level.

Finally, emotional cut-off refers to an individual's tendency to distance themselves from difficult emotions and experiences (Bowen, 1978). Emotional cut-off is a situation that can occur when less individualized people experience intense stress and social interaction (Bowen, 1976). A high level of individualization of the individual's self does not cause emotional disconnection, emotional disconnection is a situation with low level of differentiation of self. Therefore, people with low differentiation of self perceive intimacy as a great threat and they tend to deny the importance of their social environment (Bowen, 1976).

1.2. Differentiation of Self from Psychodynamic and Developmental Perspectives

In addition to Bowen's theory, the process of differentiation and individuation have been interpreted from different perspectives. In classical Freudian theory,

identification and attachment are explained by the Oedipus and Electra complex (Freud, 1897). The sexual and emotional development of children is thought to be significantly influenced by these complexes. According to Freud, the resolution of these complexes is important for the child to reach a healthy adulthood, and if the complexes cannot be resolved or repressed, it may lead to sexual and relational problems in the future (Freud, 2014). Excessive internalization of the parent can result in separation from the parent, similar to Bowen's definition of differentiation. This may be one of the first and also mythological suggestions about self and differentiation.

Classical psychoanalysts (Freud, 1958) and theorists of object relations (Blos, 1979; Mahler et al., 1975) viewed the process of individual differentiation as the development of an independent sense of identity within an intrapsychic structure (Karasick, 2004). From a psychoanalytic perspective, differentiation of self can be understood as an extension of the object relations tradition, which emphasizes the role of internalized representations of self and others in shaping interpersonal relationships and psychological functioning (Kernberg, 2016). Differentiation of self can be understood as reflecting the individual's ability to integrate and regulate their internalized representations of self and others, which are shaped by early experiences in relationships with caregivers and other significant others (Kernberg, 2016; Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1990).

Psychodynamic theories, in general, recognize the importance of developing a coherent and integrated self-concept (Bhar and Kyrios, 2016). The differentiation of the self is consistent with the psychodynamic theory to the process of individuation, where individuals gradually become more aware of and develop a coherent sense of their own identity. Watson (1997) argues that people change through interacting processes rather than a system that stays the same and contains one thing. Therefore, it can be suggest that integrated self-concept and individuation are greatly affected by interaction with the environment.

In studies examining attachment and differentiation of self in adults, significant relationships were found between the two concepts (Skowron and Dendy, 2004).

Attachment, which starts in the first years of life, contributes to the development of differentiation of self and includes the relationships that the newborn establishes with family members in this process (Franz and White, 1985). According to Bowen, differentiation of self develops during childhood, it consolidates, and it stays mostly the same although it may change with life experiences (Dolz-del-Castellar and Oliver, 2021). It can be said that differentiation of self, like attachment style, is shaped according to the characteristics of the family and is based on family roots. Individuals who experienced secure attachment tending to have higher levels of differentiation than those who experienced insecure attachment (Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1990). High differentiation of self is associated with strong sense of self (Kerr, 1988). While secure attachment is highly associated with self-development and differentiation, it is less associated with anxious-avoidant attachment (Thorberg and Lyvers, 2006). Additionally, Xue et al., (2018) suggested that the lack of support in close relationships, experiences of anxiety and stress may cause low levels of differentiation of self in individuals with anxious attachment.

Erikson's (1968) theory of ego development emphasized the need to psychologically distance oneself from one's family during adolescence to ensure identity formation (Karasick, 2004). Moreover, Jenkins et al., (2005) explored the relations between differentiation of self and psychosocial stages of development by Erikson and suggest that the level of differentiation of self significantly predicted psychosocial development in young adults. Later, Mahler (1975) used the term "individuation" for the first time and presented the stages that involve the baby's movement from the common life (symbiosis) with the mother in the developmental separation model.

It is known that differentiation of self, a concept that has been discussed and interpreted in many theorists and schools from the past to the present, is blended with the relationships and intrinsic motivation we develop throughout life. In the next section, this concept will be examined in the context of individual and relational outcomes.

1.3. The Link Between Differentiation of Self and Individual and Relational Outcomes

Differentiation of self posits that individuals vary in their level of emotional maturity and differentiation and that these differences have significant implications for their

overall well-being and interpersonal relationships (Skowron and Friedlander, 1998). In recent studies it can be seen that there are important psychological differences between less differentiated and differentiated people. According to Bowen (1976; 1978), people with low differentiation levels experience higher levels of chronic anxiety, which is one of the most important concepts that Bowen deals with the concept of differentiation of self or can easily become physically and psychologically dysfunctional when under high stress. On the contrary, individuals with a high level of differentiation tend to show lower chronic anxiety (Bowen, 1976; 1978; Kerr and Bowen, 1988) and higher psychological (Bowen, 1976; 1978) and social (Hosseinizadeh, 2014) compatibility. In addition, less differentiation has also been associated with depression (Hooper and DePuy, 2010; Hooper and Doehler, 2011; Norasakkunkit and Kalick, 2002; Simon, DiPlacido, and Conway, 2019), interpersonal stress (Kim-Appel et al., 2007; Skowron, Stanley and Shapiro, 2009; Tuason and Friedlander, 2000), more health problems (Murray, Daniels and Murray, 2006), poor relationships with others (Skowron, 2000; Tuason and Friedlander, 2000), and social anxiety (Peleg-Popko, 2002). Moreover, high differentiation has associated with less physical symptoms (Skowron and Friendlander, 1998), better problem solving skills (Murdock and Gore, 2004), less relational problems (Wei et al., 2005), high psychological maturity (Gavazzi, Anderson and Sabatelli, 1993) and high self-esteem (Sarıkaya et al., 2018).

Highly differentiated individuals are better able to manage their own emotions and maintain healthy boundaries in their relationships. However, lower level of differentiated individuals may struggle with emotional regulation, experience enmeshment or emotional cut-off in their relationships, and have difficulty achieving their personal goals (Kerr and Bowen, 1988). Since more differentiated people are more autonomous in their relationships, they do not experience the fear of abandonment and loneliness caused by emotional fusion, and emotional intimacy for differentiated people does not make them feel as if they are suffocating (Bowen, 1978; Kerr and Bowen, 1988). According to differentiation of self, emotional maturity and differentiation are necessary for individuals to balance their own needs and interests with those of others, and to manage anxiety and other negative emotions in healthy ways (Kerr and Bowen, 1988). In this context, people with high differentiation of self

are not in a completely disconnected from other people, they can adjust intimacy within their own boundaries. More generally, the capacity to balance emotion and thought, sincerity and autonomy in interpersonal relationships is referred to as differentiation of self (Bowen, 1978; Kerr and Bowen, 1988).

Bowen's theory of family systems also provides a comprehensive explanation of relationship and marriage sustainability (Rolland, 1990). It focuses on the balance of togetherness and individuality in relationships (Polat and İlhan, 2018). A high-level differentiation of self ensures that the individual maintains sense of self under uncertain and changing conditions in the relationship, and provides resilience against anxiety developed by others and may be destroyed (Bowen, 1976; Kerr and Bowen 1988; Skowron, 2000). Individuals who are highly differentiated experience low fear of abandonment and oppression, while building a structure in which they can maintain their autonomy and individuality (Bowen, 1978). On the contrary, people with low differentiation levels have low emotional maturity and limited separation-unification capacity, and thus they lose their development opportunities and autonomy to maintain the stability of their relationships (Polat and İlhan, 2018). In studies conducted in Western societies, it was found that differentiation of self is also interrelating with couple adjustment (Bohlander, 1999; Charles, 2001).

In the light of such information, we can see that the high level of differentiation has a significant positive contribution to the people's individual and relational outcomes. In this study, life satisfaction as an individual factor and relationship satisfaction as a relational factor will be considered as outcomes and in the following section each of them will be elaborated in a detailed way.

1.3.1. Differentiation of Self and Life Satisfaction

The concept of life satisfaction, which was first introduced by Neugarten, Havighurst and Tobin (1961), is the result obtained by comparing one's expectations and what they have (Özer and Karabulut, 2003). The expectations that the people create according to the criteria they choose, and how long life meets these expectations, can be a starting point for the individual to evaluate life satisfaction (Shin and Johnson, 1978). Subjective well-being and life satisfaction are often considered together.

Subjective well-being also includes the evaluation of an individuals' life (Rask, Åstedt-Kurki and Laippala, 2002). Life satisfaction is not a momentary state of well-being or pleasure, but a more sustained and life-wide evaluation (Veenhoven, 1996). While life satisfaction, which can be confused with the concept of "happiness" in a way which is defined as personal life satisfaction, happiness may vary based on events and situations (Badri et al., 2022).

Moreover, a growing body of literature has examined the relations between the differentiation of self and life satisfaction. When the literature is examined, it can be said that more differentiated individuals get more satisfaction from their lives (Diener, 2000; Manzi et al., 2006; Oishi, 2006; Ross and Murdock, 2014). In the study conducted by Skowron, Holmes, and Sabatelli (2003) using the life satisfaction index, it was determined that differentiation of self was related with psychological well-being. Additionally, people who are highly differentiated are better able to regulate their emotions (Duch-Ceballos, Oliver Pece and Skowron, 2021) and have a greater sense of self-efficacy, which may contribute to their greater overall satisfaction with life.

Bowen argues that differentiation of self is universal and accordant to all cultures and is essential for individuals to psychological well-being (Bowen, 1978) Previous studies conducted in Western societies showed that individuals with high differentiation of self have found high levels of life satisfaction (Manzi et al., 2006). In one of the few studies handled in non-Western culture, examined the relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction of women residing in Israel (Biadsy-Ashkar and Peleg, 2013), it was found that women with lower "emotional cut- off" and higher 'I-position' scores have higher life satisfaction. In another study conducted with married Turkish individuals, high differentiation of self predicted life satisfaction positively (Işık et al., 2020). Although previous research highlighted a positive relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction mostly with Western samples, there is still a dearth of knowledge related to the possible, relationship between these variables in non-Western society such as Turkey. Furthermore, in this study, addition to the general life satisfaction, satisfaction with friends, family, self and social environment satisfaction subscales were examined together in order to examine life satisfaction

from many aspects and to present a more generalizable result.

1.3.2. Differentiation of Self and Relationship Satisfaction

Relationship satisfaction is a subjective evaluation of the relationship and is expected to indicate a level of satisfaction that spreads throughout the relationship (Collins and Read, 1990). Relationship satisfaction also has a relationship with one's partner and relationship ideals (Acitelli, Kenny and Weiner, 2001). According to these ideals, people begin to compare their relationship with the relationships of others and to evaluate their own relationship (Campbell et al., 2001). In fact, as with life satisfaction, the closer a person's reality is to the ideal model, the greater the satisfaction will receive. According to Etchevery, Le, and Charania (2008), a romantic relationship is among the psycho-social tasks of the individual and has an important role in the development of skills necessary for adult relationships. For this satisfaction to occur, physically attractive partners will increase when they receive 'rewards' from their relationships such as behavioral similarities, harmony and understanding with partners (Rusbult, Johnson and Morrow, 1986).

Although relationship satisfaction includes different forms such as parental or marital, the previous literature mainly highlights the significant relationship between romantic relationship and differentiation of self especially for the adult group. Therefore, in this study, we will focus on the satisfaction in romantic relationship. There are a few studies in the literature on how the differentiation of self examined in this study predicts relationship satisfaction. Literature revealed that higher differentiated self has been found to be related with greater relationship satisfaction (Lampis et al., 2017) and marital satisfaction (Peleg and Yitzhak, 2011). People with high differentiation are more able to manage their emotional reactions and remain calm in the face of conflict, which may lead to more stable and satisfying relationships (Lampis et al., 2019). Furthermore, since a stronger capacity for self-regulation and the integration of autonomy with togetherness appears to relate to relationship satisfaction, there is significant evidence that couple satisfaction depends on the differentiation of self (Ferreira et al., 2014).

Differentiation of the self allows the individual to maintain a solid sense of self in the

relationship (Sims and Meana, 2010). Therefore, differentiation of self is an important construct for romantic relationships as it focuses on maintaining the balance between simplicity and autonomy in close relationships and ensuring the continuity of the relationship (Sommantico, Parrello and De Rosa, 2020). However, despite increasing proven studies, the commonality of psychological and relational mechanisms between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction is still need further attention (Miller, Anderson and Keala, 2004; Timm and Keiley, 2011).

Additionally, even though there are some studies examining the role of differentiation of self on relationship satisfaction, most of them were done in Western cultures (Holman and Busby, 2011; Lal and Bartle-Haring, 2011; Skowron, 2000). Therefore, this study explains what extent differentiation of self in non-Western culture and Turkish family structure plays a role on relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, although the connection between differentiation of self and relational and individual outcomes has been studied before, the potential mediating role of fundamental needs has not been covered. Therefore, in the following section, guided by the *Self-Determination Theory* the possible mediating role of basic psychological needs (especially satisfaction of them) will be elaborated.

1.4. The Self-Determination Theory

The self-determination theory, as an overarching theory of fundamental human motivation (Deci and Ryan 1985; Deci and Ryan, 2000), is emphasizes the importance of internal resources in the self-regulation and personality development of humans as active organisms (Ryan and Deci, 2002). Self-determination theory is based on intrinsic motivation by human nature; it considers all the natural challenges and learning opportunities in life (Deci and Ryan, 1985). According to the theory, people are motivated by psychological development tendencies, striving to overcome existing obstacles and to integrate their lives (Ryan and Deci, 2000). From this point of view, it can be said that growth is the basis of this theory, with the motivation of people and the satisfaction of their innate psychological needs. In addition to these, while maintaining the inner motivation of the person, it also draws attention to the social values and external motivations surrounding the person (Ryan, 2009). Recent studies suggest that the foundations of self-determination are laid in childhood and continue

to develop in the following years with support from others (Brown and Cohen, 1996; Erwin and Brown, 2003). Individuals whose self-determination foundations were laid with adults in their early childhood can develop their self-determination skills and meet their needs independently in the following years.

Within the scope of self-determination theory, which is a general theory of personality and motivation, four mini theories have been developed, namely cognitive assessment, organic integration, causality management, and basic psychological needs. This study focuses on the theory of basic psychological needs. According to empirical studies in the field of self-determination theory, researchers have mentioned three basic psychological needs of people for development and optimal functioning; the needs for autonomy (Deci, 1975), competence (Harter, 1978), and relatedness (Reis, 1994). First, the need for *autonomy* expresses the freedom of choice in the actions of individuals (Andersen, Chen and Carter, 2000; Williams et al.,1996). People have an innate desire to feel that they are the authors of their own lives and that their choices and actions are aligned with their values and interests. When people feel autonomous, they experience a sense of volition and self-determination, which leads to greater engagement, satisfaction, and well-being (Deci, Olafsen and Ryan, 2017). In other words, authenticity in behavior and being able to take responsibility for behavior are essential. In order to meet this need, the freedom of choice must be in one's own hands. The need for *competence*, on the other hand, can be expressed as the need to feel effective and capable in one's endeavors and pursuits. Competence is the whole of the interaction of the individual with the environment, the learning that takes place, and the resulting adaptive capacity (Deci and Ryan, 1985). People have an innate desire to feel that they can master challenges and achieve goals that are important to them. When people feel competent, they experience a sense of efficacy and mastery, which leads to greater motivation, persistence, goal-achievement, and well-being (Ryan and Deci, 2017; Williams et al., 2002). Finally, the need for *relatedness* refers to the individual's need to relate to the people he/she interacts with and in this context, to feel the satisfaction received from the relationship. It is also called the sense of belonging to the environment in which people live (Kowal and Fortier, 1999). According to Andersen, Chen, and Carter (2000), establishing a relationship can be effective in creating a new sense of security and safety, emotional acceptance, and even building

a new sense of competence and meaning.

According to self-determination theory, if the basic psychological needs of a person are satisfied, the development and growth of the person will continue, but if they are not satisfied, it may cause pathology, a lack of motivation for a healthy development, and a negative functioning in the growth pattern of the person (Vansteenkiste and Ryan, 2013). In addition to intrinsic motivation, the fact that the basic needs not met in the first years result in frustration in different social environments such as school, work, and friend environment in the following years can also lead to disappointment and undesirable results in terms of human psychology (Ryan and Deci, 2001). Subjective well-being of the person will increase when the basic need is satisfied internally and externally and does not face frustration (Çankaya, 2009). This subjective well-being also includes life satisfaction and the presence of positive emotions (Diener, Suh and Oishi, 1997; Myers and Diener, 1995; Ryan and Deci, 2001).

1.5. The Foundations of Self-Determination Theory

If we examine the history of formation of basic psychological needs on the basis of psychoanalytic theory, basic psychological needs can be conceptualized as representing aspects of the ego, with autonomy reflecting the ego's ability to regulate and control behavior, competence reflecting the ego's ability to adapt to and master the environment, and relatedness reflecting the ego's ability to establish meaningful connections with others (Kernberg, 2016). Additionally, the concept of self-determination has been linked to ego strength, which is a core construct in ego psychology and is associated with adaptive functioning and resilience in the face of stress (Kernberg, 2016). Self-determination theory provides a framework for understanding the role of ego functioning in promoting optimal psychological development and well-being.

Looking back to examine the foundations of the theory, Maslow (1954) formulated the basis of one of the most famous ideas in psychology, the Maslow pyramid, in his publication in Motivation and Personality. In the bottom two layers of the pyramid, there are basic needs such as nutrition, shelter, safety, and security, and if these needs are met, according to Maslow, a person can reach the next level of the hierarchy,

namely psychological needs of esteem, belongingness, and love (McLeod, 2018). The relatedness need of self-determination theory is similar to the need for love and belonging from Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Both involve being in a deeper and more meaningful relationship and the satisfaction one gets from one's relationships. On the other hand, the esteem needs defined by Maslow include self-confidence, a sense of competence and achievement, and the respect of others when making decisions independently and freely, and in this context, self-determination theory coincides with the need for competence and autonomy.

Moreover, Carl Rogers' (Rogers, 1959) person-centered perspective and self-determination share an organism-based focus that emphasizes the human being (Patterson and Joseph, 2007). In addition, the motivation sources of self-determination, the conditions for growth, and the locus of evaluation are parallel to Rogers' Organismic Valuing Processing (OVP) (DeRobertis and Bland, 2018). OVP, similar to self-determination, refers to individual's motivation to know what is essential to them and the aspects of their lives that will lead them to well-being and a satisfactory life.

In addition to the concepts that seem more related with self-determination, which are examined above, some other psychoanalytic and psychodynamic theorists from past to present also have some concepts that are seems to be related with self-determination theory. Psychodynamic theorists emphasize the importance of early relationships, particularly with caregivers, in shaping one's emotional development and ability to form healthy connections with others. In this context, satisfying basic needs, and their sustainability are also related to the relationship and attachment with the caregiver in the first years of life (Leak, 2001). More specifically, Bowlby (1969) emphasizes the infant's need for attachment in the first years of life in his attachment theory. The theory of self-determination emphasizes the importance of meeting the need for relatedness in the first years of life in connection with this need. There are similarities between these two theories from the point of view of healthy adult relationships in the following years. For this reason, it can be said that the foundation of the need for relatedness and its possible consequences were laid with Bowlby (1969) and it was developed in the following years. Furthermore, Bandura and Walters (1977) defined

self-efficacy as people's belief in their own resources for success. People with high beliefs in self-efficacy are less hesitant to act in line with their goals and believe in their competence compared to people with low beliefs (Bandura and Watts, 1996). Therefore, it seems that the theory of self-determination has been explained and developed with many concepts and theories from past to present.

Research has revealed that satisfaction of needs is associated with a range of positive and beneficial outcomes (Johnston and Finney, 2010), including increased well-being, greater engagement and persistence, and better academic and work performance (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Moreover, according to previous studies, some concepts related to basic needs satisfaction are self-esteem (Thøgersen-Ntoumani and Ntoumanis, 2007), authentic self (Heppner et al., 2008), low anxiety (Deci et al., 2001), low sense of burnout (Bartholomew Ntoumanis and Thøgersen-Ntoumani, 2011), and low depressive symptoms (Wei et al., 2005).

Looking at the sub-dimensions of autonomy, competence, and relatedness of basic needs, for example, when the need for autonomy is satisfied, the insistence to act in a certain way decreases (Stanley, Schutte and Phillips, 2021). This may result in increased satisfaction and feelings of joy from autonomy (Deci and Ryan, 1995; Patall, Cooper and Robinson, 2008). Satisfying the need for competence, which is another need, can help reduce self-efficacy and negative emotional states such as stress, shame, and guilt (Bandura et al., 1999). Finally, when the need for relatedness is satisfy, individuals might experience a decrease in their feelings of relational loneliness and anger, believing that they establish secure interpersonal relationships (Chang, Huang and Lin, 2015; Mikulincer and Shaver, 2007). When examining the relationship between basic needs and positive outcomes, it is necessary to consider some environmental factors. According to Vansteenkiste and Ryan (2013), development can occur in a more natural flow by satisfying needs under a supportive social environment, while attempts to satisfy people's psychological needs can be prevented in rejecting and critical social environments. Satisfying the people's needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness ensures the individual's self-confidence, freedom of choice, determination, and existence without the need for separation from the social environment in which they in relation.

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Lastly, in consideration of the current study, the satisfaction of these basic psychological needs has been also found to be related to life and relationship satisfaction (e.g., Meyer et al., 2007; Reis et al., 2000). The details related to the relationship between differentiation of self and basic psychological needs and basic psychological needs and life as well as relationship satisfaction will be examined in a detailed way in the following section.

1.6. The Relationship between Differentiation of Self, Basic Psychological Needs, and Life and Relationship Satisfaction

The word "need" is a word that we have heard a lot since our existence and has been a part of our daily life. The need can also be defined as achieving a level of well-being, including the improvement of conditions for the continuation of human life and the satisfaction of desires. In life, human needs physical needs, nutrition, and vitamins; While children need parents who can satisfy them, they also need satisfaction of their psychological needs in terms of the healthy functioning of individuals and societies (Chen, 2014). With the connection established with the first caregivers in infancy, psychological needs begin to be satisfied (Leak, 2001). Perceived acceptance and support during this period are almost as important as the satisfaction of physical needs because the urge to meet these needs will continue in the close relationships established throughout one's life.

The basic psychological needs are universally necessary needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence (Deci and Ryan, 2000). If the satisfaction of these needs is frustrated, psychological maladjustment and pathologies may occur (Vansteenkiste and Ryan, 2013). Since self-determination theory deals with intrinsic motivation, it argues that individuals who act with this intrinsic motivation better meet their psychological needs (Ingledew, Markland and Sheppard, 2004). The motivation required to meet the basic needs of the person is also shaped by the person's social environment. When the literature is examined, no study has been found that the relationship between differentiation of self and basic needs satisfaction. In a closely related study examining differentiation of self, partners emotional-interactional need fulfillment, sexual need fulfillment, and married men's well-being, a significant relationship was detected between differentiation of self and sexual and emotional-

interactional need fulfillment, and it was found that they were significant predictors of married men's well-being (Bohlander, 1999). Also, it's possible that differentiation of self and needs satisfaction are related especially when the subdimensions of differentiation of self were considered. More specifically, the fact that I position, one of the sub-dimensions of differentiation of self, is similar to autonomy satisfaction, one of the sub-dimensions of needs satisfaction, again gives an idea of a significant relationship. Moreover, fusion with others, as another sub-dimension of differentiation of self, might be more valued in collectivist societies than in individualistic societies (Lee, 1998; Tuason and Friedlander, 2000). In the light of the information obtained from the literature, it was thought that there may be a relationship between fusion with others and relatedness satisfaction one of the sub-dimension of needs satisfaction, since our study was conducted in a non-Western society. Since the differentiation of self can be expressed as emotional maturity (Charles, 2001), and since "maturity" refers to the growth experience of a living organism and an important stage of life (Alexander, 1967), and life experience is gained through competence developed during this growth process, it can be related to competence satisfaction, one of the basic needs. Additionally, regarding its relationship with life satisfaction, satisfaction of basic psychological needs generally affects subjective well-being. Since subjective well-being is an evaluation of one's life, it is directly or indirectly affected by life satisfaction (for instance; financial difficulties, goals, frustrations, and so on.) (Rask et al., 2002). According to studies, persons who report higher levels of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in their life also have higher degrees of well-being and positive affect and lower degrees of negative affect (Demir and Davidson, 2013; Pope and Hall, 2015). According to Reis et al., (2000) meeting all three basic needs in daily life increases one's well-being, since each identified a different psychological nutrient, deficiency of any would have negative effects on daily well-being. Previous studies have demonstrated that people who scored higher on self-determination assessments, indicating greater satisfaction of their fundamental psychological needs, also report higher levels of life satisfaction. (e.g., Meyer et al., 2007; Sheldon et al., 2004). More specifically, strive for one's own interests and the desire to spend time with activities of his/her choice reveal the need for autonomy (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Satisfying this need is expected to be related to life satisfaction. Moreover, satisfying the need for competence indicates that one can move towards one's goals, that is, the need for

competence has a significant effect on life satisfaction (Deci and Ryan, 1985; Ryan and Deci, 2000). In a study which examines the relations between adolescents' satisfaction of the psychological needs in leisure time activities and life satisfaction, they found satisfaction of needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness were significant mediators in the relationship between doing activities and life satisfaction (Leversen et al., 2012). Similarly, in a study examining the intervening role of basic needs satisfaction on the academic autonomous motivation of adolescents on learning, it was found that needs satisfaction mediated this relationship (Guo, 2018).

Self Determination theory has also been applied to the study of close relationships, with research indicating that when partners support each other's basic psychological needs, they experience greater relationship satisfaction (Reis et al., 2000). Furthermore, given that having free will and the ability to make decisions increases the individual's self-confidence and helps them behave with confidence. Respect among individuals helps to satisfy the need for autonomy and increases trust and commitment in relationships. More specifically autonomy can be fostered in romantic relationships by providing each partner with the freedom to make choices and express themselves without feeling controlled or manipulated by the other (La Guardia et al., 2000). When individuals feel that they have autonomy in their relationships, they are more likely to feel satisfied and committed to their partner (Knee et al., 2005). The need for competence may also be satisfied in romantic relationships, where talents and skills related to romantic relationship were developed and demonstrated without embarrassment (Reis and Patrick, 1996) that then relates to more relationship satisfaction. Moreover, when individuals feel competent in their relationships, they are more likely to feel satisfied and confident in their ability to maintain a healthy and fulfilling relationship (Knee et al., 2005). The need for relatedness may be satisfied when partners show closeness, support, and connection with each other (Reis and Patrick, 1996) and that supports relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, Reis et al., (2000) examined whether the satisfaction of basic needs contributes to emotional well-being. According to the research results, participants who reported need satisfaction for two weeks revealed that the need for relatedness predicted positive affect and vitality more than competence and autonomy need. Ryan et al., (2010) showed that when the need for relatedness is satisfied with the need for autonomy, it elicits high

psychological well-being. In addition, in subsequent studies, it was observed that the satisfaction of need for relatedness also increased the self-worth (Gagné et al., 2003). In addition, it has been determined that people with high relatedness satisfaction attribute more value to possible relationships and are more open to social interactions (Moller et al., 2010). However, it is important to note that not all romantic relationships may not be equally effective in satisfying these needs and that the quality of the relationship and the degree to which each partner's needs are met may vary (La Guardia et al., 2000).

There are many studies in the literature that basic needs satisfaction as a mediator. In the study conducted by Wei et al., (2005), basic needs satisfaction served as mediator in the link between attachment, shame, depression, and loneliness. In this study, the satisfactory partial mediator role of basic needs on study variables was investigated. Another study conducted by Molix and Nichols (2013) identified the mediating role of basic psychological needs between community esteem and wellbeing. Moreover, another study examining the relationship between perfectionism, burnout, and engagement among young people again focused on the significant mediator role of basic psychological need satisfaction (Jowett et al., 2016).

The mediating role of basic needs has also been examined with Turkish samples. In a study conducted by Demir and Özdemir (2010), the mediating role of needs satisfaction in the relationship between friendship and happiness was examined and found to be significant. A study performed by Eryılmaz and Doğan (2013), subjective well-being and romantic relationship quality were examined, and the significant mediating role of needs satisfaction was found. Moreover, in another study conducted by Koçak (2019), she examined the relationship between interparental relationships and adolescent adjustment, the mediating role of basic psychological needs was found. Furthermore, According to Kahya and Korkmaz (2017) investigated the mediator role of basic psychological need satisfaction between authenticity and psychological symptom level and revealed its significant mediator role.

Studies focused on the mediating role of basic needs have been conducted numerous times in the literature. Therefore, in this study, need satisfaction is considered as an

important mediator in the relationship between differentiation of self with life and relationship satisfaction.

1.7. Cultural and Individual Differences in Study Variables

Cultural context is an important factor in determining differentiation of self, needs satisfaction and life and relationship satisfaction as various aspects of culture shape individuals' perceptions and experiences. It has been supported by previous studies that there are significant differences in our study variables between collectivist and individualistic cultures. According to Dwairy (2015), people belong to collectivist societies might direct their energy more on achieving group goals rather than individual ones. It is important to be able to analyze social factors such as norms and values to examine intrapsychic factors such as self, ego, and needs in collectivist societies (Peleg and Grandi, 2018). It may be difficult to differentiate the self in collectivist societies, with the thought that family harmony and social values and togetherness are more important and staying out of this harmony may lead to social exclusion and disapproval. According to some studies (Dwairy and Achoui, 2010), children in collectivist societies are raised to adhere their parents' norms and values. On the other hand, more emphasis is placed on gaining autonomy and independence in child rearing in individualistic societies (Biadsy-Ashkar and Peleg, 2013). Individualist societies need to express and strengthen the 'I' (Peleg and Grandi, 2018). In individualistic societies, the social environment may experience the self as a differentiated entity from other people.

Previous studies have suggested that lower differentiation of self, and higher somatic symptoms in collectivist societies than individualistic societies (Peleg and Rahal, 2012; Tuason and Friedlander, 2000). In contrary, research in Western societies have proven that people with higher levels of differentiation of self have higher mental and physical health (Skowron, 2004; Tuason and Friedlander, 2000) and have higher levels of satisfaction with their lives (Manzi et al., 2006). More specifically, when Manzi et al (2016) examined the relationship between 'fusion with others', a sub-dimension of differentiation of self in British and Italian culture, and well-being, a negative relationship was found for British participants. In addition, in a study examining the link between differentiation of self and well-being among Korean-Americans and

European-Americans, it was highlighted that Korean-Americans had lower levels of differentiation of self than European-Americans, and European-Americans had higher levels of well-being (Chung and Gale, 2006).

Furthermore, in basic psychological needs literature, some studies focused on cultural differences. For example, there are theories pointing the need for autonomy is more prominent in European or American societies where independence and individualism are more important (Iyengar and Devoe, 2003; Uchida and Kitayama, 2009). On the other hand, there are also some studies emphasizing that the need to be related is more important in socialization in more collectivist societies (Iyengar and Lepper, 1999; Uchida, Norasakkunkit and Kitayama, 2004). Additionally, cultural practices and norms can impact the extent to which individuals feel competent in their pursuits (Chen et al., 2015). It was seen that a person living in which culture can achieve higher psychological well-being and life satisfaction with the satisfaction of which psychological need. For example, Oishi et al. (1999) found that satisfaction with one's autonomy is a stronger predictor of life satisfaction in more individual societies, but not a strong predictor in more collectivistic societies. Considering these studies, it should be noted that apart from the individual and developmental differences, the order of importance in the basic needs of the person is also greatly influenced by the culture and values in which they grew up.

In the light of the literature findings, in the current study, the level of differentiation of self, satisfaction of needs, life and relationship satisfaction in Turkish culture, which is a non-Western society and has both characteristics of collectivistic and individualistic culture (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1996), the relationship between the study variables was examined. The concepts of life and relationship satisfaction are also included in many studies that show differences between cultures and are researched in a cultural context. For example, since community harmony and social relationships are prominent in more collectivist cultures, social support and connectedness can be an important predictor of life satisfaction (Hofstede, 2001). On the other hand, individualistic societies emphasize personal achievements and autonomy, and life satisfaction may be associated with individual accomplishments and self-fulfillment (Diener et al., 1995). Similarly, relationship satisfaction also differs in cultural context.

While it is expected to experience high relationship satisfaction due to I position and autonomy in more individualistic cultures, on the contrary, fusion and relatedness may be positively related to relationship satisfaction in more collectivist societies.

Additionally, personality traits and individual variances may also contribute to the satisfying of basic needs. For instance, individuals with a higher need for autonomy may be more motivated to seek out opportunities for self-direction and independence, while those with a higher need for relatedness may be more motivated to seek out social connection and emotional intimacy (Ryan and Deci, 2017). Self-determination theory recognizes that there is a marked difference in the strength of basic needs, as in people's basic physical needs (Deci and Ryan, 2000). These interpersonal differences in need power can change the relationship between need satisfaction and well-being resulting from satisfaction (Chen, 2014).

1.8. Age as an Important Covariate

In the literature, there are studies showing that the age variable has a significant influence on life and relationship satisfaction. The reason why the age range of 18-45 was chosen as the age range included in current study is because these early adulthood ages are psychologically accepted as high-energy ages that support family and love life, sexuality, professional life, creativity, and life satisfaction (Aktu, 2016). On the other hand, these are the ages when conflicts, stresses, disappointments, and individual desires are hit the most in human life (Arnett, 2000; Levinson, 1986; Shanahan et al., 2005). In a study by Rodríguez-González et al. (2015), they found statistically significant difference according to age in emotional cut-off subscale of differentiation of self. Moreover, as the age progresses, major events in people's lives are expected to have a decisive effect on life satisfaction (Chen, 2001). According to research, life satisfaction tends to vary across the lifetime in a U-shape, increasing in early and late adulthood and declining in middle adulthood (Blanchflower and Oswald, 2008). Similarly, while high relationship satisfaction is experienced with passion, excitement, and novelty in early adulthood, it may change with parenting stress and financial pressures in later ages (Kamp Dush et al., 2018). Therefore, the age variable was included in the study by foreseeing the significant covariance role of it on the outcome variables.

1.9. Gender as an Important Covariate

Studies show that the gender variable included in this study has been examined in the differentiation of self literature (Peleg, 2008; Sadeghi, Barahmand and Roshannia, 2020). More specifically, in previous studies, I-position subdimension of differentiation of self (Sadeghi, Barahmand and Roshannia, 2020), emotional cut-off (Skowron, 2000), and emotional reactivity (Duch-Ceballos et al., 2021; Mozas-Alonso, Oliver and Berástegui, 2022) all depending on gender were found significant. In the light of the relevant literature, it was predicted that there might be a gender differences in this study, and it was included in the study considering that it could be an important covariate.

Furthermore, previous studies point out that the universal applicability of Bowen's theory should be investigated in societies where women are raised more relations-oriented, gender roles are more pronounced, and fed by patriarchal influences (Sagedhi, Barahmand and Roshannia, 2020). In addition, since most of the research examining the relationship between gender and differentiation of self are conducted in Western societies with few exceptions and with samples where more individualization is at the forefront, in this study, the relationship between gender variable and study variables in a non-Western sample was wondered. In the light of the relevant literature, it was thought that differentiation of self scores in this study might be higher in male participants than in female participants, based on cultural differences.

In addition, in the light of the studies examining the relationship between life satisfaction and gender, it has been predicted that gender roles may have an impact on the level of life satisfaction of the individual. Women may report lower life satisfaction because of less chance of personal and professional advancement in communities with more traditional gender norms (Inglehart and Norris, 2003). On the contrary, it can be observed that women's life satisfaction increases in egalitarian societies that allow personal and professional development.

1.10. Uniqueness and the Aim of the Study

Both the differentiation of the self and the satisfaction of basic psychological needs are of vital importance for human life. Indirect and direct are two basic concepts that

interact with each other. For example, the ability of people to differentiate their selves helps them understand their subjective needs. Individuals with developed differentiation of self can take more responsibility to meet these needs later in their lives and thus contribute to the development of their authentic selves. In this study, the connection between these two theories was examined and tried to reveal their effects on relationship satisfaction, which is also related to life and personal well-being.

Differentiation of self has been applied in various clinical contexts, including family therapy, individual therapy, and group therapy, and has been found to be effective in improving emotional functioning, reducing anxiety, and enhancing relational satisfaction (Skowron and Friedlander, 1998). Despite the significant relationship between differentiation of self and satisfaction with life (Biadsy-Ashkar and Peleg, 2013; Ross and Murdock, 2014) and romantic relationship (Lal and Bartle-Haring, 2011; Lim and Jennings, 1996; Peleg, 2008) as well as between differentiation of self and satisfaction of basic psychological needs has been previously stated, no study, to our knowledge, examined the possible intervening role of basic psychological needs satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and satisfaction with life and romantic relationship by considering Bowen's Family Systems Theory as well as Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory. By examining the relationship between differentiation of the self and needs satisfaction, this study contributes to the literature by explaining how it alters life and relationship satisfaction, helping to better understand the relationship among these structures and how a person's level of differentiation changes their needs satisfaction. Conducting research on the relationship between differentiation of self and needs satisfaction, as in this study, may improve our understanding of how individuals with different levels of differentiation meet their psychological needs and in turn state whether greater or less life and relationship satisfaction. Therefore, the study findings will shed light on literature about the possible relationships among the study variables.

Moreover, being able to explain the determinants of life and relationship satisfaction, which are two important basic concepts for human life, can help researchers and clinical psychologists develop interventions and strategies for their work in their fields. Furthermore, examining the concept of differentiation of self in a dominantly non-Western society in the context of life and relationship satisfaction will guide future

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studies. Because this study will create a prediction about the outcomes of the experience of differentiation of self, which is a concept based more on individualization in societies where togetherness and relationality are more prominent. On the other hand, this study aims to contribute to the literature by discussing the universality of Bowen's sub-theory of differentiation of self with life and relationship satisfaction related to general well-being and happiness in a non-Western society. In addition, understanding what age and gender variables mean in terms of study variables in Turkish society, can also contribute to the literature. Because the age range included in this study is universally accepted as the most productive and busy age range of human life, which can be considered young adulthood. These ages have also been the age in which more differentiation with the transition to adulthood and the satisfaction of psychological needs are questioned and experienced. This study will explain the extent to which differentiation of self and satisfaction of basic needs of young adults in Turkey predict life and relationship satisfaction and to fill this gap in the literature. Knowing possible predictors of life and relationship satisfaction will inform the professionals about the significant role of differentiation of self from Bowen's Family Systems Framework and basic psychological needs satisfaction from Self-Determination Theory while planning prevention and intervention programs aiming to enhance life and relationship satisfaction of individuals.

Finally, it will inform the professionals working with couples, families about possible factors (i.e., differentiation of self, need satisfaction) that may have role on life and relationship satisfaction. Understanding how these factors are interrelated can inform therapeutic interventions, educational programs, and organizational practices aimed at promoting effective interpersonal functioning. For all the reasons listed above, purpose of the current study is to examine the possible mediating role of basic psychological needs satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and life and relationship satisfaction.

1.11. Hypotheses

H1: Differentiation of self will positively predict basic psychological needs satisfaction.

H2: Basic psychological needs satisfaction will positively predict life satisfaction.

H3: Basic psychological needs satisfaction will positively predict relationship satisfaction.

H4: Basic psychological needs satisfaction will mediate the relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction.

H5: Basic psychological needs satisfaction will mediate the relationship between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction.

CHAPTER 2: METHOD

2.1. Participants

A total of 270 participants aged between 18 and 45 years (M_{age} = 30.21 years, *SD* = 7.32) participated in the study. All the participants were currently in an ongoing relationship. Among the participants 169 (62.4%) of them were female, 99 (36.5%) of them were male, and 2 (0.7%) of them selected the other option. In terms their education level, 1 of them had primary school degree, 2 (0.7%) of them had middle school degree, 48 (17.7%) of them had a high school degree, 171 (63.1%) of them had bachelor's degree, 48 (17.7%) of them had master's degree and 4 (1.5%) of them had PhD. Moreover, 150 (55.4%) of the participants were single, 107 (39.5%) of them were married, and 13 (4.8%) of them were divorced. Furthermore, 146 (53.9%) of the participants were living with at least one of the family members at the time of data collection, 60 (22.1%) were living with their romantic partner, 38 (14%) of them were live alone, 21 (7.7%) of them were live with a friend and 5 (1.8%) of them selected the other option. 180 (66.4%) of the participants were employed, 19 (7%) of them were part-time employees, and 71 (26.2%) of them were unemployed. With respect to perceived income level, majority of the participants (121) reported their income level as middle, 60 (22.1%) of them reported between the middle-low income level, 67 (24.7%) of them reported between middle-high income level, 18 (6.6%) of them reported their income level as low and 4 (1.5%) of them reported as high income level. The sociodemographic characteristics of the participants were presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The Sociodemographic Information of the Participants.

Variables	Categories	*N*	*%*
Gender			
	Female	169	62.4
	Male	99	36.5
	Other	2	0.7
Education Level			
	Primary School	1	0.4
	Middle School	2	0.7
	High School	48	17.7
	Bachelor's Degree	171	63.1
	Master's Degree	44	16.2
	PhD	4	1.5
Marital Status			
	Married	107	39.5
	Single	150	55.4
	Divorced	13	4.8
	Widow	0	0.0
Who live with			
	Romantic partner	60	22.1
	Family members	146	53.9
	Friends	21	7.7
	Alone	38	14.0
	Other	5	1.8
Working Status			
	Employed	180	66.4
	Part-time employment	19	7.0
	Unemployed	71	26.2
Income			
	Low	18	6.6
	Middle-Low	60	22.1
	Middle	121	44.6

Table 1. (continued) Sociodemographic Information of the Participants.

	Middle-High	67	24.7
	High	4	1.5
Education level of mothers			
	Elementary School	103	38.0
	Middle School	39	14.4
	High School Degree	79	29.2
	Bachelor's Degree	47	17.3
	Master's Degree	1	0.4
	PhD	1	0.4
Education level of fathers			
	Elementary School	71	26.2
		53	19.6
	Middle School		
	High School Degree	75	27.7
	Bachelor's Degree	64	23.6
	Master's Degree	4	1.5
	PhD	3	1.1

2.2. Measures

Differentiation of Self Inventory, Needs Satisfaction Subscale of Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction and Frustration Scale, Adult Life Satisfaction Scale, and Relationship Assessment Scale were used in this study as measures. Differentiation of self was the predictor variable, basic psychological needs satisfaction was the mediator, and life satisfaction and relationship satisfaction were the outcome variables of this study. In the data collection of this study, Demographic Information Form (Appendix C), Differentiation of Self Inventory (Appendix D), Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction Scale (Appendix E), Adult Life Satisfaction Scale (Appendix F), and Relationship Assessment Scale (Appendix G) were used as measures. They will be explained in detail in the following section.

2.2.1. Demographic Information Form: This form included questions about gender,

age, educational level, marital status, whom they live with, relationship status, duration of the relationship, parents' educational level, the participant's perception of socioeconomic level, and their employment status.

2.2.2. Differentiation of Self Inventory (DoSI): The scale developed by Skowron and Friedlander (1998) was used to measure the differentiation of self levels of the participants based on Bowen's family systems theory. It consists of 46 items with four subscales namely emotional reactivity (ER), "I" position (IP), emotional cut-off (EC), and fusion with others (FO). The 11-item emotional reactivity subscale measures a person's level of emotional lability and sensitivity while reacting to environmental stimuli (e.g., ''Being criticized makes me very uncomfortable''). The 11-item "I" position subscale evaluates a person's sense of self and the ability to consciously maintain one's principles despite pressure to change them (e.g., ''Worrying about things I cannot change is pointless''). The 12-item emotional cutoff subscale measures the threateningness of intimacy in relationships with others, fears of being engulfed, and certain behavioral defenses such as over-functioning, alienation, or denial (e.g., ''I feel restricted when I am with my family''). The fusion with others subscale contains 12 items and assesses emotional over identification with others and excessive involvement of others in decision-making (e.g., ''I feel the need to seek approval from almost everyone''). the items are evaluated over a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 Not at all Appropriate and 6 Very Appropriate). The four subscales' Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients ranged from .81 to .89, and the total scale's Cronbach Alpha coefficient was .92 (Skowron and Schmitt, 2003). This scale was adapted to Turkish and shortened by Işık and Bulduk (2015). Turkish version includes 20 items and 4 subscales including 5 items in each subscale. Higher scores reflect greater differentiation of self and the higher the scores obtained from the sub-dimension, the higher differentiation of self in the relevant dimension (Işık and Bulduk, 2015). Cronbach's alpha of Turkish version of the scale was found as .81. Moreover, it was .78 for the emotional reactivity, .75 for the ''I'' position, .77 for the emotional cut-off, and lastly .74 for the fusion with others (Işık and Bulduk, 2015). The Differentiation of Self Inventory's internal consistency for the current study was satisfactory, with a Cronbach's alpha of .82.

2.2.3. Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction and Frustration Scale: Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction and Frustration Scale was developed by Chen et al. (2015) and adapted into Turkish by Mouratidis et al. (2018) to measure the satisfaction and frustration levels of needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence. The basic psychological needs satisfaction subscale was only used in the current study. The needs satisfaction subscale consists of 12 items including Autonomy Satisfaction (4-item; e.g., ''I feel like I'm doing things that interest me''), Relatedness Satisfaction (4-item; e.g., ''I believe that those who care about me care about me as well''), and Competence Satisfaction (4-item; e.g., ''I feel competent in what I do''). Respondents answer each item using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 for Strongly Disagree and 5 for Strongly Agree).

In the Belgian sample Cronbach's Alpha's for autonomy, relatedness, and competence satisfaction were .69, .77, and .81, respectively. The Cronbach Alpha was found as .72, .79, and .47 for relatedness, competence, and autonomy, respectively, in the Chinese sample (Chen et al., 2015). In the Portuguese sample, internal consistency ranged between .70 and .87 (Cordeiro et al., 2016). In the Turkish adaptation of the scale, Cronbach Alpha was calculated as .82 for the total needs satisfaction subscale. Moreover, internal consistency was found as .76 for autonomy satisfaction, .84 for competence satisfaction, and .64 for relatedness satisfaction. In the present study, the Autonomy Satisfaction scale showed satisfactory internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha of .85. Also, Competence Satisfaction Scale presented satisfactory Cronbach's Alpha of .88. In addition, Autonomy Satisfaction Scale showed valid internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha of .85.

2.2.4. Adult Life Satisfaction Scale (ALSS): This scale was developed by Kaba et al. (2018) to measure the life satisfaction of adult individuals. The scale consists of 21 items rated by 5-point Likert-type scale (1 for Not Appropriate at all and 5 for Completely Appropriate). The scale includes five subscales: General life satisfaction (6 items; e.g., ''I got the important things from life so far''), relationship satisfaction (5 items; e.g., ''I have enough friends''), self-satisfaction (4 items; e.g., ''I am a good person''), social environment satisfaction (3 items; e.g., 'There are lots of fun activities to do where I live''), and job satisfaction (3 items; e.g., ''I can't wait to go to work'').

Greater life satisfaction was indicated by higher scores. The Cronbach Alpha of the scale was .89 and, in more detail, for the subscale of general life satisfaction is .85, for family and friendship is .85, for self-satisfaction is .77, for satisfaction with close environment is .74, and lastly for job and profession satisfaction is .87. In the current study, only general life satisfaction, family and friendship satisfaction, self-satisfaction, and social environment satisfaction were used. In the current study, The Life Satisfaction Scale showed satisfactory internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .90.

2.2.5. *Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS):* The RAS was developed by Hendrick (1988) and adapted into Turkish by Curun (2001). The scale was used to assess the relationship satisfaction of the participants. It consists of 7 items and answers has been taken over a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 for Disagree to 7 for Strongly Agree). Greater relationship satisfaction was indicated by higher scores. In the original study, Cronbach's Alpha was found as .86 (Hendrick, 1988). In the adapted version of the scale, the Cronbach's Alpha was found as .86. In the current study Relationship Assessment Scale indicated satisfactory internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .92.

2.3. Procedure

First, an ethical permission from the ethics committee of Izmir University of Economics was obtained (Appendix A). After getting the approval of the ethics committee, online questionnaires were created through an online survey site (ieuedu.qualtrics.com) and distributed through communication channels such as social media and WhatsApp. The data of the participants who met the inclusion criteria (being 18-45 years old and being in an ongoing romantic relationship) were collected by convenience sampling method. The informed consent form included the purpose of the study, confidentiality, duration of the study, voluntary participation, and the rights of the participants to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants who accepted voluntary participation answered the demographic questions. Then, the participants answered the questions of the Differentiation of Self Inventory, Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction and Frustration Scale, Adult Life Satisfaction Scale, and Relationship Assessment Scale, respectively. Responses of participants who did not

meet the inclusion criteria which mentioned before were not included in the study. All the scales were presented in Turkish.

2.4. Statistical Analysis

Firstly, a careful data cleaning procedure was applied. In total, the data was obtained from 320 participants. However, 10 of them was excluded because of the age criteria, as being older than 45 years old. Moreover, 2 of them was excluded due to relationship status, as lack of an ongoing romantic relationship. In addition, 36 participants who participated in the study only filled the demographic information form and the first inventory, the Differentiation of Self Inventory, but did not fill the other inventories. Before proceeding the main analysis, the skewness and kurtosis values of the data were examined to check the normality of the data. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) argues that skewness and kurtosis values should be within the range of +/- 1.50 to evaluate them as normally distributed. In our study, it was found that all values were within the suggested range (see Table 1). When examining whether the data was normally distributed, outlier values were found in the Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction and Frustration scale (160th and 164th participants) and these participants were not included in the study. As a result, analyzes were carried out with a total of 270 participants who participated in the entire study and met all the criteria.

After the normality test, mean, standard deviation, frequencies and percentages were calculated. As a preliminary analysis first an independent samples t-test was used to check gender differences in study variables. Second, a Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship among all variables in this study. As a main analysis, a mediation analysis was performed to determine the mediating role of satisfaction of basic psychological needs in the relationship between differentiation of self with life and relationship satisfaction, using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 for Windows model 4 of PROCESS v3.5 (Hayes, 2013). The significance of the models was evaluated at the 95% confidence interval, and it was considered statistically insignificant if it contained zero (Preacher and Hayes, 2008).

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

This chapter provides descriptive statistics for the study variables, group differences, correlations among the study variables, and main mediation analyses.

3.1. Preliminary Analysis

3.1.1. Descriptive statistics

In Table 2, the skewness and kurtosis value of the age, differentiation of self, basic needs satisfaction, life satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction were presented. As can be seen from the table, mean score of age was $M = 30.21$ ($SD = 7.32$), differentiation of self was $M = 82.54$ ($SD = 13.92$), needs satisfaction was $M = 47.32$ (SD = 7.69), life satisfaction $M = 68.07$ ($SD = 12.24$), and relationship satisfaction was $M = 37.92$ ($SD = 9.19$).

Table 2. Mean, Standard Deviation, Minimum and Maximum Values, and Skewness and Kurtosis Values of Age and All Scales

Variables	*M*	*SD*	Min.	Max.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Age	30.21	7.32	18	45	.504	-.892
Differentiation of Self	82.54	13.922	37	114	-.412	.114
Basic Needs Satisfaction	47.32	7.686	53	102	-.826	1.162
Life Satisfaction	68.07	12.243	21	90	-.701	.845
Relationship Satisfaction	37.92	9.192	11	49	-.865	-.024

Note. M: Mean, *SD*: Standard deviation

3.1.2. Gender Differences by Study Variables

An independent samples t-test was performed to examine whether differentiation of self, basic psychological needs satisfaction, life satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction levels were significantly different in males and females. Analysis revealed that there was a significant gender difference in terms of differentiation of self, $t(266)$ = 7.30, $p < .001$. Males' differentiation of self levels (M = 87.12, SE = 1.11) were higher than females (M = 79.84, SE = 1.13).

Furthermore, there was a significant difference between males and females according to relationship satisfaction levels, $t(266)$ = 6.75, $p < .05$ (see Table 4). Specifically, Females (M = 38.98, SE = .65) stated more relationship satisfaction than males (M = 36.22, SE = 1.12). On the other hand, there were no significant difference between males and females according to needs satisfaction, and life satisfaction (all $p's$ were bigger than .05).

Table 3. Independent Samples t-Test Results of Study Variables by Gender

	Gender	N	M	SD	t	p	d
Differentiation of Self	Female	169	79.84	14.73	7.304	<.001***	.56
	Male	99	87.12	11.07			
Basic Needs Satisfaction	Female	169	47.51	7.55	.072	.612	.06
	Male	99	47.02	7.92			
Life Satisfaction	Female	169	69.02	11.84	.311	.082	.22
	Male	99	66.32	12.79			
Relationship Satisfaction	Female	169	38.98	8.47	6.751	.018*	.30
	Male	99	36.22	10.14			

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

3.1.3. Correlations among Study Variables

The Pearson Correlation Analysis was performed to investigate the relationship between study variables (i.e., differentiation of self, basic needs satisfaction, life satisfaction, relationship satisfaction) and the age of the participants.

The findings of the analysis revealed that differentiation of self positively correlated with basic needs satisfaction ($r = .47$, $p < .001$), life satisfaction ($r =$ $p < .001$), relationship satisfaction ($r = .19$, $p = .001$), and the age ($r = .15$, $p = .015$). Furthermore, needs satisfaction was positively correlated with relationship satisfaction ($r = .32$, $p < .001$), life satisfaction ($r = .61$, $p < .001$) and age ($r = .15$, $p = .013$). Relationship satisfaction was positively correlated with life satisfaction ($r = .45$, $p < .001$) and negatively correlated with age ($r = -.14$, $p = .020$). Lastly, life satisfaction was positively correlated with age ($r = .20$, $p = .001$).

Table 4. Correlations among Study Variables.

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Differentiation of Self	-			
2. Basic Needs Satisfaction	.47***	-		
3. Life Satisfaction	.49***	.61***	-	
4. Relationship Satisfaction	.19**	.32***	.45***	-
5. Age	.15*	.15*	.20**	-.14*

Note. $* p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$

3.2. Main Mediation Analysis

Mediation analysis was performed to investigate whether basic psychological needs satisfaction mediate the relationship between differentiation of self and life, and relationship satisfaction. The predictor variable was differentiation of self; life satisfaction and relationship satisfaction were outcome variables, and basic psychological needs satisfaction was mediator in the current analysis. For conducting the mediation analysis, PROCESS Macro for SPSS with Model 4 (Hayes, 2013) was used. Two main models were tested. Firstly, the mediating role of basic needs satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction was tested. In the second model, while the mediator remained the same, this time we examined the relationship between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction. According to the preliminary analysis results, age and gender variables, which were seen as significant demographic variables, were added to both mediation models. The models' significance was assessed over a 95% confidence interval, and it was determined that the confidence interval including 0 was statistically nonsignificant (Hayes, 2013; Preacher and Hayes, 2008).

3.2.1. Model 1: The Mediating Roles of Needs Satisfaction in the Relationship Between Differentiation of Self and Life Satisfaction

First mediational analysis was examined the mediating role of needs satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction. The model significantly predicted and explained 35.8% of the variance in life satisfaction. According to results, differentiation of self positively predicted needs satisfaction (B = .27, SE = .03, t = 8.96, 95% CI [0.213, 0.333], $p < .001$). Furthermore, needs satisfaction positively predicted life satisfaction (B = .72, SE = .08, t = 8.64 95% CI [0.553, 0.880], $p < .001$). Both direct effect of differentiation of self on life satisfaction B = .27, SE = .04, t = 5.71, 95% CI [0.176, 0.361], $p < .001$ and total effect of differentiation of self on life satisfaction B = .46, SE = .05, t = 9.96, 95% CI [0.373, 0.556], $p < .001$ were significant. The indirect effect of differentiation of self on life satisfaction through needs satisfaction was also significant B = .20, SE = .04, 95% CI [0.118, 0.281].

These results supported the first mediation hypothesis. This means that greater

differentiation of self relates to more satisfaction of basic needs which in turn relates to higher life satisfaction (see Figure 1).

Lastly, age significantly predicted life satisfaction B = .24, SE = .09, t = 2.75, 95% CI [0.067, 0.407], p = .006. That is as the age increased, the life satisfaction of the participants increased significantly. On the other hand, gender did not significantly predict life satisfaction in this model.

Total Effect: *B* = .464, *SE* = .047, *t* = 9.958, 95% CI [0.373, 0.556], *p* < .001

Direct Effect: *B* = .269, *SE* = .047, *t* = 5.705, 95% CI [0.176 0.361], *p* < .001

Indirect Effect: *B* = .198, *SE* = .042, 95% CI [0.118, 0.281]

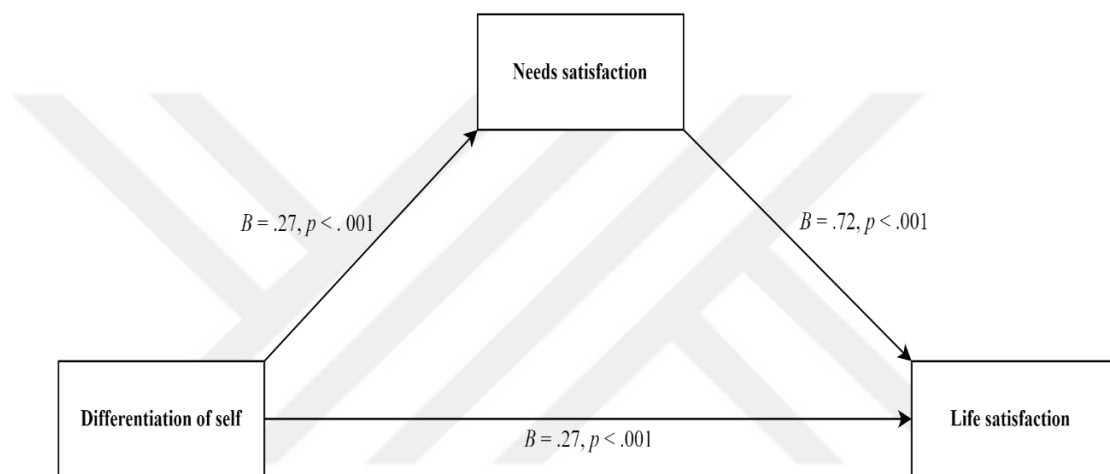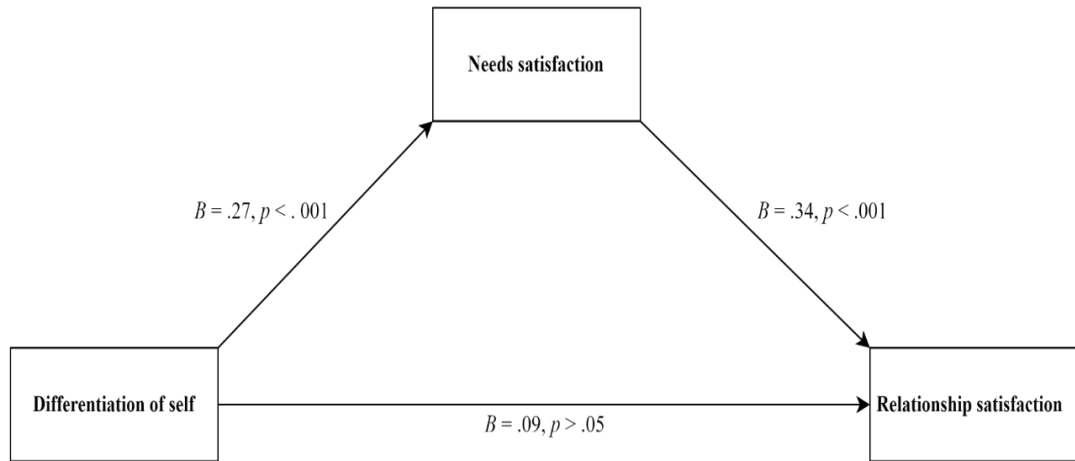Figure 1. The mediating role of basic needs satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction

Note. The model includes the unstandardized beta values. Gender and age were included in the model but were not shown for the sake of clarity.

3.2.2. Model 2: The Mediating Role of Needs Satisfaction in the Relationship between Differentiation of Self and Relationship Satisfaction

Second mediation analysis was performed to test the mediating role of needs satisfaction in the relation between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction. The model significantly predicted and explained 50.2% of the variance of relationship satisfaction. Results showed that differentiation of self positively predicted needs satisfaction $B = .27$, $SE = .03$, $t = 8.96$, 95% CI [0.213, 0.333], $p < .001$. Moreover, needs satisfaction positively predicted relationship satisfaction $B = .34$, $SE = .08$, $t = 4.31$, 95% CI[0.182, 0.487], $p < .001$. Direct effect of differentiation of self on relationship satisfaction was not significant $B = .09$, $SE = .04$, $t = 1.94$, 95% CI[-0.001, 0.172], $p > .05$. However, the total effect of differentiation of self on relationship satisfaction was significant $B = .18$, $SE = .04$, $t = 4.44$, 95% CI[0.098, 0.255], $p < .001$. The indirect effect of differentiation of self on relationship satisfaction through needs satisfaction was significant $B = .09$, $SE = .03$, 96% CI[0.046, 0.144]. That means, greater differentiation of self relates to more satisfaction of basic needs which in turn relates to higher relationship satisfaction. These results showed that needs satisfaction played a significant mediating role in the relation between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction (see Figure 2).

Additionally, for gender and age variables, it was found that gender significantly predicted relationship satisfaction $B = -3.93$, $SE = 1.11$, $t = -3.54$, 95% CI [-6.115, -1.747], $p = .001$, and female participants reported more relationship satisfaction than male participants. Moreover, age also significantly predicted relationship satisfaction $B = -.21$, $SE = .07$, $t = -2.80$, 95% CI[-0.352, -0.062]. That is as the age increases, the relationship satisfaction of the participants decreases significantly.

Total Effect: *B* = .177, *SE* = .040, *t* = 4.437, 95% CI[0.098, 0.255], *p* < .001

Direct Effect: *B* = .085, *SE* = .044, *t* = 1.940, 95% CI[-0.001, 0.172], *p* > .05

Indirect Effect: *B* = .091, *SE* = .025, 96% CI[0.046, 0.144]

Figure 2. The mediating role of basic needs satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction

Note. The model includes the unstandardized beta values. Gender and age were included in the model but were not shown for the sake of clarity.

3.3. Supplementary Analysis

The basic needs satisfaction measure has been used in the literature by considering both the total scores of the subscales and each subscale separately to test the unique roles of each need (e.g., Bell, 2010; Deci and Ryan, 2012). Therefore, the two main mediating models were also tested by considering the mediating roles of autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs in the relationship between differentiation of self and life and relationship satisfaction.

According to results of the first supplementary mediation analysis, it was found that differentiation of self significantly and positively predicted autonomy satisfaction (B = .12, SE = .01, t = 9.58, 95% CI [0.099, 0.150], $p < .001$), competence satisfaction (B = .11, SE = .01, t = 7.80, 95% CI [0.080, 0.133], $p < .001$), and relatedness satisfaction (B = .03, SE = .01, t = 2.11, 95% CI [0.002, 0.052], $p < .05$). Both direct effect of differentiation of self on life satisfaction (B = .25, SE = .05, t = 5.21, 95% CI [0.157, 0.349], $p < .001$) and total effect of differentiation of self on life satisfaction were significant (B = .43, SE = .05, t = 9.27, 95% CI [0.341, 0.525], $p < .001$). Lastly, the indirect effect of differentiation of self on life satisfaction through the mediating role of autonomy satisfaction (B = .08, SE = .03, 95% CI [0.024, 0.152]) competence satisfaction (B = .07, SE = .03, 95% CI [0.021, 0.124]) and relatedness satisfaction (B = .03, SE = .02, 95% CI [0.001, 0.066]) were also significant. The results showed that autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs satisfaction played significant intervening roles in relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction.
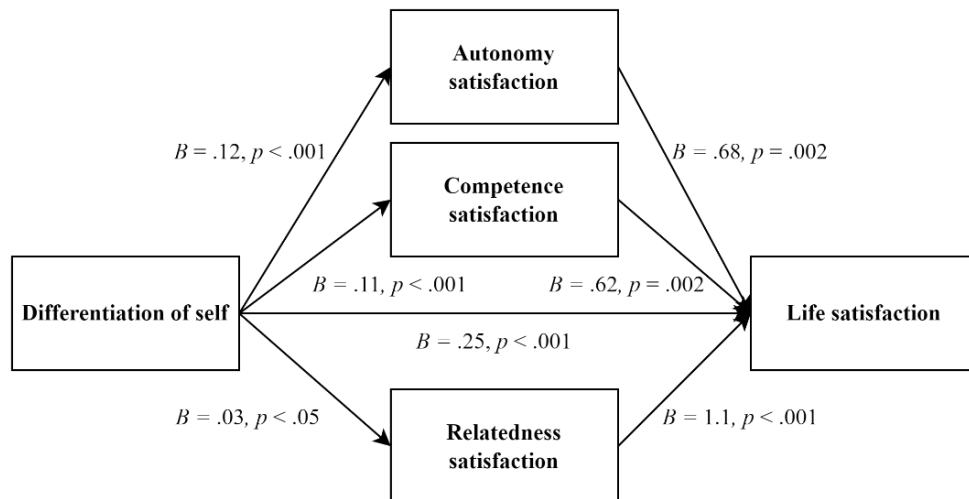
Total Effect: $B = .43$, $SE = .05$, $t = 9.27$, 95% CI [0.341, 0.525], $p < .001$

Direct Effect: $B = .25$, $SE = .05$, $t = 5.21$, 95% CI [0.157, 0.349], $p < .001$

Indirect Effect: $B = .18$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI [0.096, 0.271]

Figure 3. The mediating role of autonomy satisfaction, competence satisfaction and relatedness satisfaction in relation between differentiation of self and life satisfaction

In the second supplementary mediation analysis, differentiation of self significantly and positively predicted autonomy satisfaction ($B = .12$, $SE = .01$, $t = 9.58$, 95% CI [0.099, 0.150], $p < .001$), competence satisfaction ($B = .11$, $SE = .01$, $t = 7.80$, 95% CI [0.080, 0.133], $p < .001$), and relatedness satisfaction ($B = .03$, $SE = .01$, $t = 2.11$, 95% CI [0.002, 0.052], $p < .05$). Moreover, relatedness satisfaction positively predicted relationship satisfaction ($B = 1.00$, $SE = .20$, $t = 5.13$, 95% CI [0.620, 1.391], $p < .001$). However, autonomy satisfaction ($B = .19$, $SE = .20$, $t = .94$, 95% CI [-0.207, 0.583], $p > .05$) and competence satisfaction ($B = -.09$, $SE = .18$, $t = -.47$, 95% CI [-0.450, 0.276], $p > .05$) did not significantly predict relatedness satisfaction. Direct effect of differentiation of self on relationship satisfaction ($B = .09$, $SE = .04$, $t = 1.91$, 95% CI [-0.003, 0.174], $p > .05$) was not significant. However, total effect of differentiation of self on relationship satisfaction was significant ($B = .13$, $SE = .04$, $t = 3.21$, 95% CI [0.049, 0.205], $p = .002$). Lastly the indirect effect of differentiation of self on relationship satisfaction through the mediating role of relatedness satisfaction was significant ($B = .03$, $SE = .01$, 95% CI [0.001, 0.058]). The findings showed that

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relatedness satisfaction has significant intervening role in the relation between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction.
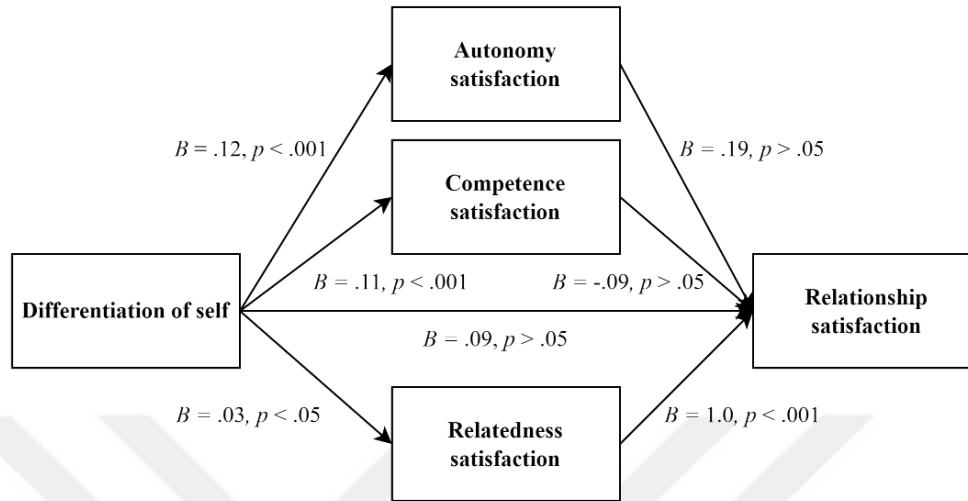
Total Effect: *B* = .13, *SE* = .04, *t* = 3.21, 95% CI [0.049, 0.205], *p* = .002

Direct Effect: *B* = .09, *SE* = .04, *t* = 1.91, 95% CI [-0.003, 0.174], *p* > .05

Indirect Effect: *B* = .04, *SE* = .03, 95% CI [-0.016, 0.102]

Figure 4. The mediating role of autonomy satisfaction, competence satisfaction, and relatedness satisfaction in relation between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

The main aim of the current study was to investigate the possible intervening role of basic psychological needs satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and life and relationship satisfaction in adults. In the following section, the direct relations between study variables will be discussed. After that the mediating role of needs satisfaction between differentiation of self and life satisfaction and relationship satisfaction will be presented. Then, supplementary analyzes will be discussed. Finally, covariate roles of age and gender will be mentioned.

4.1. The Evaluation of the Findings Related to the Relationship between Differentiation of Self and Basic Needs Satisfaction

Firstly, it was hypothesized that differentiation of self will positively predict basic needs satisfaction. Consistent with the Hypothesis 1, differentiation of self significantly and positively predicted basic needs satisfaction. It means that the more satisfaction of the basic psychological needs, the higher experience of differentiation of self. This finding was in line with the previous literature and the assumptions of the both the self-determination theory and the family systems theory. According to self-determination theory, growth is the basic motivation of the human being (Deci and Ryan, 1985) so healthy differentiation of the individuals can be count as a sign of growth.

As mentioned before, although there is no study examining this direct relationship between differentiation of self and basic needs in the literature, some research findings related to the autonomy support which in turn has been thought to be related to differentiation of self may support our claims. Specifically, in a study conducted in Turkey, it was determined that autonomy support was effective on satisfaction of basic psychological needs (Çankaya, 2009). This finding is also consistent with studies conducted in other cultures (Deci et al., 2001). As individuals feel free about their behaviors and ideas which can be seen as a sign of differentiation, they may eventually satisfy their basic psychological needs.

On the other hand, according to the family systems theory, individuals with a high level of differentiation will create less pathology since differentiation of self supports

the formation of healthy self. In addition, differentiation of self within the framework of family systems theory emphasize the freedom of choice in the self-development of individuals (Bowen, 1978), which yields similar results with the intrinsic motivation claim in self-determination theory. Although there are no empirical studies on the relationship between differentiation of self and basic needs satisfaction in the literature, it has created a base that there may be a significant relationship between them, considering that high differentiation of self and needs satisfaction support healthy self-formation.

4.2. The Evaluation of the Findings Related to the Relationship between Basic Needs Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction

In Hypothesis 2, it was hypothesized that needs satisfaction would positively predict life satisfaction. The findings of the current study revealed that basic needs satisfaction significantly and positively predicted life satisfaction. As a support to our findings, previous studies also showed that basic needs satisfaction significantly predicts life satisfaction (Guo, 2018; Sheldon et al., 2004). Such findings were in line with the claims of the self-determination theory and highlighting the important role of the satisfaction of three basic needs on individual's' well-being which was measured over life satisfaction (as well as the relationship satisfaction). (Deci and Ryan, 2014; Deci and Ryan, 2000). According to Ryan (2009), when basic psychological needs are satisfied, people feel happy, and their well-being tends to increase. Given that life satisfaction has been considered as a part of overall happiness assessment and subjective well-being, our findings were in line with the previous findings as well as the theory.

It has been emphasized in previous studies that personality variables are important in the assessment of life satisfaction (e.g., Diener, 1996). The self-determination theory also emphasized general personality traits and motivation. In line with literature, there is a positive relationship between life satisfaction and human motivation (Luhmann and Hennecke, 2017). Therefore, the high correlation between the components of life satisfaction and the components that create the self-determination theory supports the findings of current study.

Life satisfaction is a multidimensional and broad concept in the literature. We can say that it is highly related to many concepts. For instance, in a study, the satisfaction of basic psychological needs positively predicted self-esteem, which is one of the indicators of well-being and life satisfaction (Çankaya, 2009). On the other hand, anxiety, which is negatively related to life satisfaction, decreases with the satisfaction of basic psychological needs (Kasser and Ryan, 1993). Therefore, not only the findings of the studies measuring directly the life satisfaction but also other concepts which are highly correlated with life satisfaction support our claims and confirm our findings.

From the cultural perspective, given that Turkey is showing both collectivist and individualistic tendencies (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1996; Göregenli, 1997), we expected to find some strong or weak relations in other words significant and nonsignificant relations between total needs satisfaction as well as each three need and their antecedents and outcomes. our results confirmed the universality claim of the self-determination theory by showing significant relations among the study variables in a relatively collectivist culture which is Turkey. In the theory of self-determination, it is emphasized that satisfaction of basic psychological needs supports motivation and well-being in all cultures (Deci et al., 2001). However, in a study examining life satisfaction in a cross-cultural context, the contribution of needs satisfaction was examined and it was found that satisfaction of the need for esteem and competence was a important predictor in individualist countries, while satisfaction of the need for security and relatedness was an important predictor in more collectivist countries (Oishi et al., 1999). In the light of such cross-cultural exceptional findings, it was predicted that relatedness satisfaction may be the most important psychological need compared to the autonomy and competence needs in Turkish culture in predicting the life satisfaction. The findings supporting this relationship will be discussed again in discussion part of the supplementary analysis.

4.3. The Evaluation of the Findings Related to the Relationship between Basic Needs Satisfaction and Relationship Satisfaction

Consistent with the Hypothesis 3, needs satisfaction positively predicted relationship satisfaction. Since Deci and Ryan (2014) suggest that to find higher quality close relationship balance, all three of these basic psychological needs must be satisfied.

Therefore, it can be said that our finding was in line with the assumptions of self-determination theory. Moreover, another self-determination based study by Knee et al., (2005) evaluated the satisfaction of the basic psychological needs of participants in close relationships, they found that needs satisfaction contributed to managing the relationship quality and conflict within the relationship. Moreover, it is well-known in the self-determination literature that, individuals who satisfy their basic psychological needs may develop an understanding of satisfying their own and their partner's needs in their romantic relationship (La Guardia et al., 2000). Such consideration may be directly related to relationship satisfaction.

This situation, which is thought to directly affect relationship satisfaction, does not mean that people do not ignore their own needs to satisfy the needs of another, but on the contrary, they participate in the needs of another by knowing and prioritizing their own needs. Consistent with the theory's inference about relatedness, the findings of this study revealed that relationship satisfaction develops positively when individuals who know and meet their own needs also understand their partners' needs.

Factors affecting relationship satisfaction may differ from culture to culture. As evidenced by Hofstede (1991), individuals in individualistic societies are more emotionally independent from the social relations in the society, while in collectivist societies they are more emotionally attached to social relations. The fact that the concepts of autonomy, competence and relatedness are associated with relationship satisfaction in this study can be supported by Kağıtçıbaşı's (2007) concept of 'autonomous-relational self' in the literature. This concept is about the formation and maintenance of the balance between independence, commitment, autonomy and relationality. Again, according to this concept, there is both autonomy and parental control when a child is growing up. These features are found in urban and sociocultural environments with relational lifestyle (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2010). In Turkey, interpersonal ties with family, relatives and neighbors, where the relational self develops, are traditionally supported (Imamoğlu, 1998). In particular, as the child's financial dependence decreases, their autonomy is supported more, so that the child does not perceive it as a threat (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2010).

According to the concept, increasing urbanization in cultures such as Turkey, where emotional ties with the social environment are important, does not diminish the importance of these ties. Although it does not mean fully individualization like in Western societies, it focuses on the combination between task related independence and relatedness from childhood (Imamoğlu, 1987). From this point of view, with the support of current study's findings, the importance of relationality and satisfying basic needs on the relationship evaluation of people living in Turkey and even life and well-being evaluations can be mentioned. However, this area should be supported by more cross-cultural studies.

4.4. The Evaluation of the Findings Related to Mediating Role of Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction in the Relationship Between Differentiation of Self and Life Satisfaction

In the first mediation model, it was hypothesized that basic needs satisfaction would significantly mediate the relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction. Consistent with our hypotheses, findings revealed that both direct and indirect effects were significant. When the effects are examined, the strongest effect was found as the indirect effect of differentiation of self on life satisfaction through the mediation of needs satisfaction. The concept of differentiation of self has resulted in various ways in culturally based research, this is about how much differentiation is valued in which culture. While in countries where individuality is more valued, the value of differentiation of self is taught and demonstrated to the child throughout his or her life, children born in societies that attach more importance to relationality may even develop a perception that separation from the family is bad or dangerous. For instance, Manzi, Vignoles and Scabini (2006) conducted research to examine the relationship between differentiation of self, identity and psychological well-being in two different countries with different family cultures (U.K. and Italy). They have found that while low differentiation of self was associated with low psychological well-being in U.K., this relationship was not observed in Italy. This finding draws attention to cultural differences and that differentiation of self in individuals brought up in different family structures may not always be associated with outcomes such as well-being and life satisfaction. On the other hand, in a sample of Chinese young adults, Guo, Huang, and Yang (2022) discovered a significant relationship between differentiation of self

and life satisfaction. Contrary to the above-mentioned study, this study supports our findings, since it is a study conducted in a collectivist society and reveals the effect of differentiation of self on life satisfaction in a such society.

Moreover, in a study examining the relationship between family functioning differentiation of self focused on how much differentiation of self is valued between two different cultures (Chung and Gale, 2009). According to the results, it was emphasized that healthy family functioning is important in the ability of differentiation of self, and the contribution of relatedness, which is one of the sub-dimensions of basic psychological needs, to healthy family functioning in a continuity with differentiation. In line with previous cultural research and relevant literature, the findings of this study show that in a study conducted in a country like Turkey where relationality is important, the level of differentiation of self would significantly predict life satisfaction, but considering the role of the satisfaction of basic psychological needs would further explain the underlying mechanism in relationship. Findings can be informative in terms of healthy family functioning especially for the non-Western families. Because this study strengthens our understanding of Turkish family structure and our predictions about culture on a sociological basis.

The role of needs satisfaction on life satisfaction also consistent with the relevant literature and self-determination theory. Since current study was conducted in a collectivist Turkish society, we assumed that (even though it is not hypothesized) the direct effect of differentiation of self level on life satisfaction will be weaker when the indirect effect of needs satisfaction was not observed. As assumed, the direct effect was found to be lower than the indirect effect. In other words, the needs satisfaction played a significant mediating role in the relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction in a Turkish sample. This suggestion is supported by relevant literature about participants from individualistic societies having higher life satisfaction scores than participants from collectivistic societies (Lee and Wu, 2008). Accordingly, in more differentiated individual societies, it can be mentioned differentiation of self has a direct effect on life satisfaction, while in more collectivist societies, internal and external factors and the satisfaction of needs have a significant impact on life satisfaction. Therefore, more studies are needed to examine the

relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction in a cross-cultural context to make more comprehensive inferences.

4.5. The Evaluation of the Findings Related to Mediating Role of Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction in Relation Between Differentiation of Self and Relationship Satisfaction

In the second mediation model, it was hypothesized that basic needs satisfaction would significantly mediate the relationship between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction. Findings indicated that the even though direct effect of differentiation of self on relationship satisfaction was not significant, the indirect relationship between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction by means of needs satisfaction was significant.

The significant direct relation was found in previous studies. For instance, Lampis (2016), Rodríguez-González et al., (2020), and Skowron, Stanley and Shapiro (2009) suggest that adults with low differentiation of self may have difficulty maintaining relationship satisfaction. Additionally, in previous studies, researchers have found higher differentiation of self associated with greater relationship satisfaction (Lampis et al., 2017). Ulu Yalçınkaya (2019) suggests that marriage quality and relationship satisfaction may increase, as people with high differentiation of self can express themselves more clearly and satisfactorily in relationships, express themselves and discuss issues comfortably. In addition, these open communication and dialogues indirectly affect the sexual lives of the couples, and high satisfaction is achieved (Timm and Keiley, 2011). Therefore, it can be said that growing up in an environment that supports differentiation of self from childhood also positively affects friendship and romantic relationships developed in later ages. People who cannot experience their own differentiation of self may experience less satisfaction in their relationships with others. Given that we could not find a direct relation between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction, we did find an indirect relationship with the aid of need satisfaction, further research is needed to talk about the unique associations among the variables of interest.

On the other hand, relevant literature suggests that being autonomous would only

beneficial or highly valued for individualistic societies (Iyengar and Devoe, 2003; Uchida and Kitayama, 2009). Contrary to this, more collectivist societies may place greater value on harmonious interpersonal relationships (Iyengar and Lepper, 1999; Uchida, Norasakkunkit and Kitayama, 2004). In the light of these suggestions, the weakening direct effect of differentiation of self is supported. In countries like Turkey where relationality is more important than individuality (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2012), close supportive social relations, and emotional bonds can be expected to positively affect satisfaction. Therefore, the study findings also show that differentiation of self alone could not predict relationship satisfaction. A contribution has been made to the literature by determining the important role of experiencing autonomy, relatedness, and competence satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction.

The indirect effect of differentiation of self on relationship satisfaction through needs satisfaction was significant. Therefore, our mediation hypothesis was supported. There was indirect-only, full mediation in this model. This consequence represents the best-case scenario because it shows that our mediator fully corresponds to the hypothesized theoretical framework (Hair et al., 2021). Therefore, we can conclude that differentiation of self in mediation analysis is not sufficient to get satisfaction from romantic relationships without basic needs satisfaction. The ideals of intimacy and belonging may be more significant in non-Western countries, according to Chung and Gale's (2006) argument, while the differentiation of self is prioritized in individualistic societies. As a country that has both non-Western and Western cultural characteristics in Turkey, it can be said that the results of the study are compatible with the findings of studies conducted in collectivist cultures.

From this point of view, it is necessary that the basic psychological needs of individuals with differentiation of self, which develop through the relationships we establish, have been met. However, more studies are needed in this area to make it more valid and supported by literature propositions. Expanding the sample of this study and conducting more culturally related studies may shed light on this area.

4.6. The Evaluation of the Findings Related to Covariate Roles of Gender and Age

In the literature, there were studies that include gender and age variables in their studies and examine the role of them on study variables, and we did found significant relations between gender and age and our study variables findings so we have added gender and age variables to our mediation models as covariates. Given that we decided to do so as a result of our preliminary analysis, we did not state any hypothesis related to them.

As a result of the *t*-test analysis, gender significantly predicted differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction. It means that males experienced differentiation of self more than females. The study findings are consistent with the relevant literature. For instance, Ziebarth (2016) has reported lower levels of differentiation of self in women. Moreover, Alaedein (2008) conducted a study investigating the universality of Bowen's theory and the differences between men and women, men's differentiation of self was found to be higher. In another study investigating the role of resilience on differentiation of self and hope, male participants scored higher on the I-position which is one of the sub-dimensions of differentiation of self (Sadeghi, Barahmand and Roshannia, 2020). According to related literature, Schwartz, Thigpen and Montgomery, (2006) conducted research which examines parenting styles, emotions, and differentiation of self, they noted that female participants indicated high fusion with others. All these literature findings and current study findings on differentiation of self and gender and the findings of this study indicated that the experience of differentiation of self is more common in men. These gender-related differences can be explained by the identity development in the society's gender roles, goals, values, and belief systems (Ziebarth, 2016). According to Bowens' theory differentiation of self is believed to be universal (Kerr and Bowen, 1988). However, in the literature, there are not enough studies examining the differentiation of self by gender when cultural factors are considered. Moreover, study findings extend empirical support Bowen's universality statement in Turkish culture.

Additionally in the current study, females experienced more relationship satisfaction than males. There was an alternative suggestion to that, Sprecher (2002) argued that women are more relationship-oriented than men, and therefore they are sensitive to the effect of relationship dynamics. Women's scores on relationship satisfaction may be

more observable. The fact that women's relatedness and relationship satisfaction scores are higher than men's, while the differentiation of self score is lower in consistent with some literature findings. Ferreira et al. (2014) mentioned about according to cultural and developmental context, lower differentiation of self and higher relatedness in women might be a result of encouraging a high focus on relatedness. The low differentiation of self with women's encouragement of a high focus on relationality in a developmental and cultural context might be relevant. In addition, in a study conducted in collectivist societies, as differentiation of self of women increases, their life satisfaction increases at the same direction (Biadsy-Ashkar and Peleg, 2013). Therefore, in the literature on differentiation of self, it can be seen that women get lower scores than men, but higher scores in environments that support differentiation of self. While it may be difficult to mention about gender-related differences when some social factors are excluded considering the universality of the theory. It can be thought that it offers a new perspective on the universality of Bowen's theory since the meanings and roles attributed to culturally-related genders are a part of society.

Related to our main mediation models, we did found gender and age were found significant predictors. As the age of the study participants increased, there was an increase in the differentiation of self scores. However, this finding seems to be incongruent with related literature. In a study by Işık and Bulduk (2015), they found no significant correlation between differentiation of self and age in Turkish. The reason for this discrepancy may be that the study was conducted with participants aged 42-65. In the current study, it can be commented that the differentiation of self of young adults in Turkey changes in the context of age, since it was conducted with young adult individuals aged 18-45. It was anticipated that using different samples would help to explain the findings' discrepancy.

Moreover, as the age of the participants increased, their needs satisfaction scores increased. It suggests that the importance of basic psychological needs remains relatively stable across different age groups (Ryan and La Guardia, 2000), but the specific relationship between age and need satisfaction is complex and multifaceted. According to literature, life events such as having a job, high income, being in a relationship may occur with increasing age, and this may be associated with higher

competence and autonomy satisfaction in later life (Lataster, 2022). Also, competence satisfaction can even be described as the 'midlife peak' (Tóth-Király et al., 2018). These literature findings explain the increasing need satisfaction scores with age found in current study.

Furthermore, as the age of the participants increased, their life satisfaction increased. The ages included in the study are the ages when major events in people's lives are experienced as the first adulthood period (Chen, 2001). Many responsibilities such as work, marriage, and parenthood are experienced at this age. Blanchflower and Oswald (2008) conducted a study on whether life satisfaction increases with age, according to data collected from 72 different countries, including Turkey. The study findings support our findings and while life satisfaction is lower in middle adulthood, late adulthood was found to be the years with the highest life satisfaction.

Additionally, as the age of the participants increased, their relationship satisfaction decreased. This finding is in line with the previous literature. In one study, it has been suggested that from young adulthood, the passion between couples may be diminished by family financial difficulties or parental responsibilities (Kamp Dush et al., 2018). Although life and relationship satisfaction can be explained by cultural differences, more studies may be needed in the literature in this area as it is also very related to interpersonal differences and personal experience.

4.7. The Evaluation of the Supplementary Analyzes

In current study, we also have done supplementary analyzes to explore the mediating role of autonomy, competence, and relatedness satisfaction between differentiation of self with life and relationship satisfaction. According to findings, differentiation of self was significantly and positively predicted the autonomy, competence and relatedness satisfaction. It can be corroborated this finding with a study in the literature examining the effects of parental differentiation of self on their children's needs for autonomy and competence. This study argues that individuals with high differentiation of self are more able to stay connected with their children and support their autonomy (Skowron, 2005). It argues that positive self-perception is formed with parental connection and autonomy. In addition, the same study states that since individuals with high

differentiation of self can modulate emotional arousal and stressful situations more easily, their children's ability to regulate themselves will develop and show more competence. As we mentioned that existence of relatedness and individuality in harmony in family systems theory supports healthy family functioning. In addition, the additional analysis findings in this study seem to be compatible with the theoretical recommendations.

While autonomy, competence and relatedness satisfaction were significant predictors of the relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction in the first model, respectively, competence and autonomy satisfaction were not found to be significant predictors in the relationship between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction in the second model. In this supplementary model, only relatedness significantly predicted relationship satisfaction and it had a mediating role in the relationship between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction. It reveals that individuals who satisfied their relatedness need, experienced more differentiation of self and they showed high relationship satisfaction. This relationship can be explained with the concept of compassion. In countries like Turkey, where relatedness and togetherness are at the forefront, compassion satisfaction can be an important factor in relationship satisfaction. In a study based on the theory of self-determination, it has been proven that the realization of relatedness fosters compassionate goals, which in turn increases relationship satisfaction (Hadden, Smith and Knee, 2013). The concept of relatedness in the theory of self-determination also means vitality and self-esteem from a sociometric point of view, unlike other more general relationship concepts (Patrick et al., 2007). Therefore, it is possible to assume that the relationality in self-determination theory is more inclusive and a strong predictor on basic concepts such as life satisfaction, relationship satisfaction or well-being.

On the other hand, self-determination theory argues that relatedness is not synonymous with relationship satisfaction (Hadden, Smith and Knee, 2013). Accordingly, the argument is supported that the relationship between the study variables, relatedness and relationship satisfaction, is not due to the fact that they contain exactly the same elements. Indeed, Patrick et al., (2007) found that relatedness is the most important predictor of satisfaction. On the other hand, it should not be overlooked that

competence and autonomy needs satisfaction are important predictors of relationship satisfaction in Western studies (e.g., Blais et al., 1990). However, in our study, it is thought that the effect of autonomy and competence satisfaction sub-dimensions decreased with the effect of cultural factors. In the light of the study findings, it was found that the concept of differentiation of self predicted relatedness satisfaction positively. This finding proves that the two concepts are not contradictory. On the contrary, according to family systems theory, differentiation of self is considered essential for long-term intimacy in relationships (Bowen, 1978). The study findings also show this important positive relationship between differentiation of self and relatedness.

4.8. Limitations of the Present Study and Suggestions for Future Studies

Study findings should be evaluated with several limitations. Firstly, we gathered self-report questionnaire data from adults, and we relied on participants' reports to fill in the data according to the most appropriate option for them. Assuming participants' answers to be correct and consistent may be a potential limitation for this study, and additional self-report questionnaire options may be considered in future studies. Secondly, because the study data was collected from online channels, participants who did not have access to social media or online groups may have been excluded from the study. Some disadvantages of using online surveys were encountered in this study. For instance, participants were distracted and left the study unfinished, which could be due to the length of the study questions. Therefore, future studies may also consider shortening their online questionnaires just not to lose any participants. Thirdly, because of the cross-sectional design, it is not possible to fully understand the stability and permanence of the participants' life and relationship satisfaction. Many people interacted with, various life events and the difficulties experienced in that period of the romantic relationship can directly affect the person's life and relationship satisfaction, so it may be difficult to generalize. Another issue that is thought to have a negative impact is that the data collection process was carried out during and after the 6 February earthquake. Therefore, it was thought that the participants might have experienced difficulty to answer the questions. To overcome these limitations, future longitudinal studies or daily diary studies examining the fluctuations for study variables should be conducted.

Furthermore, the gender difference raises doubts as the number of male and female participants in the study was not equal. Having equal male and female participants in future studies will allow for more generalizable interpretation and clearer gender comparisons with more participants. In addition, an evaluation was not made considering the duration of the relationship of the participants in the study. Sternberg (1998) suggests different configurations of passion aspects in short-term and long-term relationships. Future studies can include this information in the analysis by considering the duration of the relationship.

Lastly, it can be said that cultural differences and interpretations are important for such studies. All the study variables vary according to cultural factors and there are many studies in the literature in this context. This study did not provide the opportunity to interpret the cultural differences in other individualistic or collectivistic societies, as the current study data was mostly carried out with the data collected from the Aegean and Mediterranean regions in Turkey. For example, differentiation of self may differ in different societies, or relationship standards or expectations may be interpreted differently in different societies. In addition, life satisfaction may vary within the possibilities and standards of the place where you live. Future studies that include different societies will help to make generalizations in this field easier. In addition, conducting more cross-cultural studies can contribute to this gap in the literature by providing easier comparison and generalization opportunities for collectivist and individualist societies.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to examine the possible mediator role of needs satisfaction in the relationship between differentiation of self and life and relationship satisfaction. To understand the relationships between study variables, two mediation models one with the intervening role of needs satisfaction in relation between differentiation of self and life satisfaction and the other with the intervening role of needs satisfaction in relation between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction were examined. In these models, gender and age were also considered covariates.

First hypothesis was that differentiation of self will positively predict basic psychological needs satisfaction. The second hypothesis was that basic psychological needs satisfaction will positively predict life satisfaction and the third hypothesis was that basic psychological needs satisfaction will positively predict relationship satisfaction. All of these hypotheses were confirmed. The fourth hypothesis was that basic psychological needs satisfaction will mediate the relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction. The findings showed that needs satisfaction had a partial mediator role in the relationship between differentiation of self and life satisfaction. Last hypothesis was that basic psychological needs satisfaction will mediate the relationship between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction. The results confirmed that needs satisfaction had a full mediator role in the relationship between differentiation of self and relationship satisfaction. Therefore, in the current study, all study hypotheses were supported and these findings would make quite unique contributions to the literature.

5.1. Clinical Implications

This study may guide future studies about possible antecedents of life and relationship satisfaction. For clinical psychologists who carry out academic studies, understanding the dynamics of life and relationship satisfaction and examining it in the context of self-formation and differentiation, as well as need satisfaction, can form the basis of many new studies.

Considering the role of differentiation of self and satisfying basic psychological needs in satisfaction of life and relationship, the findings may guide clinical psychologists

working with clients who are dealing with lower levels of life or relationship satisfaction while planning their sessions and intervening on the clients' self-related factors such as differentiation of self and basic psychological needs satisfaction. In addition, the findings of the study offer important suggestions for both therapists working in Turkish culture and also therapists who works cross-cultural.

Moreover, to analyze how much individuals take I position in their relationships, are emotionally reactive, prone to emotional cut-off or fusion with others, and even analyze the level of autonomy, competence, and relatedness satisfaction found in this study in therapeutic interventions for couples' therapy. It can help increase satisfaction. In addition, this study presents the relationships between the sub-dimensions of differentiation of self, which have significant differences, and gender, which can be used by contemporary feminist therapists and researchers. Furthermore, examining the concept of differentiation of self in a dominantly collectivist society in the context of life and relationship satisfaction will guide future studies.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A - Ethics Committee Approval

Appendix B - Informed Consent Form

Değerli katılımcı,

Bu çalışma, İzmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi bünyesinde, Klinik Psikoloji Yüksek Lisans programı kapsamında, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Aylin Koçak danışmanlığında Dilan Cücel tarafından yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi çalışma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın amacı nedir?

Bu çalışmanın amacı, 18-40 yaş arası romantik ilişki içerisinde olan bireylerin benlik farklılaşmaları ile yaşam ve ilişki doyumları arasındaki ilişkide temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların aracı rolünü incelemektir. Bu doğrultuda size kendiniz ve romantik partnerinizle olan ilişkinizle ilgili sorular yöneltilmiştir.

Bize nasıl yardımcı olursunuz?

Araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ederseniz, bu aşamada sizden yaklaşık 10-15 dakikanızı alacak anketimizi doldurmanız istenecektir. Soruların doğru ya da yanlış cevapları yoktur. Bundan dolayı soruları kendiniz yanıtlamanız ve size en doğru gelen yanıtları tercih etmeniz araştırmanın doğruluğu ve güvenilirliği açısından önemlidir.

Sizden topladığımız bilgileri nasıl kullanacağız?

Araştırmada kimse sizden kimlik bilgilerinizi ortaya çıkaracak bilgiler istemeyecektir. Verdiğiniz yanıtlar gizli tutulacak, bu bilgilere sadece araştırmacılar ulaşabilecektir. Katılımcılardan elde edilecek bilgiler toplu halde değerlendirilecek, bilimsel yayınlar ve akademik amaçlar için kullanılacaktır. Katılımınız ile ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler: Araştırmaya katılım tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Çalışma, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz çalışmaya katılmayı reddedebilir veya cevaplama işini yarıda bırakıp çıkabilirsiniz.

Çalışmaya katılımınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz İzmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi Klinik Psikoloji Tezli Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Dilan Cücel   ile iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılmayı ve verdiğiniz bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul etmiyorsanız sayfayı kapatabilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılmayı kabul ediyor ve istediğim zaman yarıda kesip çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.

EVET   HAYIR

Appendix C - Demographic Information Form

1. Cinsiyetiniz:
*   Kadın ☐
*   Erkek ☐
*   Diğer _____
2. Yaşınız: (Örn: 25) _____
3. En son mezun olduğunuz okul:
*   İlkokul ☐
*   Orta okul ☐
*   Lise ☐
*   Lisans ☐
*   Yüksek lisans ☐
*   Doktora ☐
4. Medeni durumunuz:
*   Evli ☐
*   Bekar ☐
*   Boşanmış ☐
*   Dul ☐
5. İlişki durumunuz:
*   Var ☐
*   Yok ☐
6. İlişki süreniz: (İlişkinizin başlangıç tarihini giriniz.) _____
7. Herhangi bir işte çalışıyor musunuz?
*   Tam zamanlı çalışıyorum. ☐
*   Yarı zamanlı çalışıyorum. ☐
*   Çalışmıyorum. ☐
8. Kiminle yaşıyorsunuz?
*   Romantik Partner ☐
*   Aile üyeleri ☐
*   Arkadaşlar ☐
*   Yalnız ☐
*   Diğer _____

9. Kendinizi hangi gelir grubuna ait görüyorsunuz?

- Alt ☐

- Orta-Alt ☐

- Orta ☐

- Orta-Üst ☐

- Üst ☐

10. Annenizin eğitim düzeyi:

- Okur yazar değil ☐

- Okur yazar ☐

- İlkokul Mezunu ☐

- Ortaokul Mezunu ☐

- Lise Mezunu ☐

- Yüksek okul Mezunu (2 yıllık) ☐

- Üniversite Mezunu ☐

- Yüksek Lisans Mezunu ☐

- Doktora Mezunu ☐

11. Babanızın eğitim düzeyi:

- Okur yazar değil ☐

- Okur yazar ☐

- ilkokul Mezunu ☐

- Ortaokul Mezunu ☐

- Lise Mezunu ☐

- Yüksek okul Mezunu (2 yıllık) ☐

- Üniversite Mezunu ☐

- Yüksek Lisans Mezunu ☐

- Doktora Mezunu ☐

Appendix D - Differentiation of Self Inventory

	1 Hiç uygun değil					6 Tamamen uygun
1. Ailemin yanındayken genellikle kendimi kısıtlanmış hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Önemli bir işe ya da göreve başlarken genellikle başkalarının cesaretlendirmesine ihtiyaç duyarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. İnsanlar benimle yakınlık kurmaya çalıştıklarında, kendimi onlardan uzak tutarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. İnsanlar benimle yakınlık kurmaya çalıştıklarında, bundan genellikle rahatsızlık duyarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Hemen hemen hayatımdaki herkesten onay alma ihtiyacı hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Değiştiremeyeceğim şeyler için üzülmenin bir anlamı yok.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Yakın ilişkilerimde kısıtlanma kaygısı yaşarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6

8. Eleştirilmek beni oldukça rahatsız eder.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Anne/babamın beklentilerine göre yaşamaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Kendimi olduğum gibi kabul ederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Eşimle/partnerimle bir tartışma yaşarsam, tüm gün bu tartışma üzerine düşünürüm.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Başkaları tarafından baskı altında olduğumu hissettiğim zamanlarda bile onlara "hayır" diyebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Yaptığım şeyin doğru olduğunu düşünüyorsam başkalarının ne dediğini pek de umursamam.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Bir karar alırken danışacağım birileri yoksa kolay kolay karar veremem.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Başkaları tarafından incitilmek beni aşırı derecede rahatsız eder.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Eşimin/partnerimin yoğun ilgisi beni bunaltır.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. İnsanlar üzerindeki izlenimimi merak ederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6

18. Duygularımı genellikle çevremdekilerden daha yoğun yaşarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. Hayatımda ne olursa olsun, kendimle ilgili düşüncelerimden asla taviz vermem.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. Anne/babamın fikrini almadan karar veremem.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Appendix E - Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction Scale

	1 Kesinlikle katılmıyorum				5 Tamamen katılıyorum
1. Üstlendiğim şeyleri özgürce seçebildiğimi hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Kararlarımın gerçekten ne istediğimi yansıttığını hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Tercih ettiğim şeyler gerçekten kim olduğumu gösterir.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Gerçekten ilgimi çeken şeyleri yaptığımı hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Önemsediğim insanların da beni önemsediğini hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Önemsediğim ve beni önemseyen insanlara bağlı olduğumu hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Benim için önemli olan diğer insanlara yakın ve bağlı hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5

		85			
8. Birlikte zaman geçirdiğim insanlarla samimi duygular içindeyim.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Bir şeyleri iyi yapabileceğim konusunda kendime güvenirim.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Yaptığım şeylerde kendimi yeterli hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Hedeflerime ulaşmak için yeterli olduğumu hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Zor görevleri başarıyla tamamlayabileceğimi hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix F - Adult Life Satisfaction Scale

	1 Hiç uygun değil				5 Tamamen uygun
1. Hayatımdan memnunum.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Hayat şartlarım mükemmel.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Hayatım, çoğu arkadaşımın hayatından daha iyidir.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Hayattan şimdiye kadar önemli şeyleri elde ettim.	1	2	3	4	5
5. İyi bir hayatım var.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Hayatımda "keşke"lerim çoktur.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Ailemle vakit geçirmeyi severim.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Yeterince arkadaşım var.	1	2	3	4	5
9. İhtiyacım olduğunda arkadaşlarım bana yardımcı olurlar.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Arkadaşlarım bana iyi davranır.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Arkadaşlarımdan memnunum.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Eğlenceli birisiyim.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Kendimi seviyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
14. İyi bir insanım.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Kendimi başarılı bulurum.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Mahallemden memnunum.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Komşularımdan memnunum.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Yaşadığım yerde yapılabilecek eğlenceli birçok aktivite var.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix G - Relationship Assessment Scale

1) Sevgiliniz ihtiyaçlarınızı ne kadar iyi karşılıyor?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Hiç   Çok iyi karşılıyor

Karşılamıyor

2) Genel olarak ilişkinizden ne kadar memnunsunuz?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Hiç   Çok iyi

memnunum

Memnun değilim

3) Diğerleri ile karşılaştırıldığında ilişkiniz ne kadar iyi?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Çok daha   Çok daha iyi

Kötü

4) Ne sıklıkla ilişkinize hiç başlamamış olmayı istiyorsunuz?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Hiçbir   Her zaman

5) İlişkiniz ne dereceye kadar sizin başlangıçtaki beklentilerinizi karşılıyor?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Hiç   Tamamen karşılıyor

Karşılamıyor

6) Sevgilinizi ne kadar seviyorsunuz?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Hiç   Çok seviyorum

Sevmiyorum

7) İlişkinizde ne kadar problem var?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Hiç yok   Çok fazla problem var