



Interparental Conflict and Emerging Adults' Couple Satisfaction: The Mediating Roles of Romantic Relationship Conflict and Marital Attitudes

Ebeveynler Arası Çatışma ve Beliren Yetişkinlerin İlişki Doyumu: Romantik İlişki Çatışması ve Evliliğe Yönelik Tutumların Aracılık Rolü

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Abstract

The aim of the present study is to explore the mediation effects of conflict in romantic relationship and general attitudes toward marriage in accounting for the association between interparental conflict and emerging adults' couple satisfaction. Three hundred and one emerging adults (229 women, 76.1%; 72 men, 23.9%) studying at a university located in the western part of Turkey took part in this study. The age range was between 18 and 25 ($M = 20.24$; $SD = 1.55$). The participants completed a battery of self-report measures assessing interparental conflict, conflict in romantic relationship, general attitudes toward marriage, and couple satisfaction. A structural latent model was used to test direct and indirect effects among research variables. The findings of the study indicated that the conflict in the romantic relationship and the attitudes towards marriage had a full mediating effect on the relationship between the conflict between parents and the relationship satisfaction of the emerging adults. As a result, all these findings offer significant evidence about the mechanisms by which interparental conflict influences emerging adults' couple satisfaction.

Keywords: Interparental conflict, romantic relationship conflict, marital attitudes, couple satisfaction, emerging adulthood.

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, ebeveynler arası çatışma ve beliren yetişkinlerin romantik ilişki doyumu arasındaki ilişkide romantik ilişkide yaşanan çatışmanın ve evliliğe yönelik genel tutumların aracı rolünü incelemektir. Araştırmaya Türkiye'nin batısında yer alan bir üniversitede eğitimlerine devam eden toplam 301 beliren yetişkin (229 kadın, %76.1; 72 erkek, %23.9) katılmıştır. Katılımcıların yaşları 18 ile 25 arasında değişmiştir ($ORT = 20.24$; $SS = 1.55$). Katılımcılar; ebeveynler arası çatışma, romantik ilişkide yaşanan çatışma, evliliğe yönelik genel tutumlar ve ilişki doyumunu ölçmek amacıyla hazırlanmış bir kendini bildirim ölçek bataryasını doldurmuştur. Araştırmanın değişkenleri arasındaki doğrudan ve dolaylı etkileri test etmek için yapısal örtük model kullanılmıştır. Araştırma bulguları, romantik ilişkide yaşanan çatışmanın ve evliliğe yönelik tutumların ebeveynler arası çatışma ve beliren yetişkinlerin ilişki doyumu arasındaki ilişkide tam aracı etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Sonuç olarak, tüm bu bulgular ebeveynler arası çatışmanın beliren yetişkinlerin romantik ilişki doyumunu hangi mekanizmalar üzerinden etkilediğine ilişkin önemli kanıtlar sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ebeveynler arası çatışma, romantik ilişkide yaşanan çatışma, evliliğe yönelik tutumlar, ilişki doyumu, beliren yetişkinlik.

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1. Introduction

Emerging adulthood including the age period from the late teens to twenties especially with a focus on ages between 18 and 25 is proposed as a period of time in the life course (Arnett, 2000, 2015). Emerging adulthood includes identity explorations, instability, feeling in-between, self-focus, and possibilities as distinctive developmental characteristics which are different from both adolescence and adulthood. In this new life stage, one of the most crucial and central task for 18 to 25 years old individuals is to develop and sustain intimate romantic relationships (Fincham & Cui, 2011). Research results indicate that whereas involvement in romantic relationship and increased romantic relationship quality are associated with greater well-being (e.g., Demir, 2008; Eryılmaz & Doğan, 2013; Facio & Resett, 2014; Johnson, Kent, & Yale, 2012; Sağkal & Özdemir, 2018a), romantic dysfunction is positively linked with psychological distress in this life period (Davila, Capaldi, & La Greca, 2016; Kumar & Mattanah, 2016; Marchand-Reilly, 2009). In addition, it is also emphasized that patterns of premarital relationships in emerging adulthood could be predictor of quality of future relationships and/or marriages (Fincham & Cui, 2011). Therefore, it is crucial to understand developmental precursors of the forming, managing, and sustaining healthy romantic relationships in emerging adulthood. Within this context, extensive research has documented considerable evidence on family of origin influences and intergenerational transmission of marital quality (e.g., Amato & Booth, 2001; Conger, Cui, Bryant, & Elder, 2000). The most recent researches also examined the role of family of origin on emerging adults' premarital relationship quality (Braithwaite, Doxey, Dowdle, & Fincham, 2016; Cui & Fincham, 2010; Cui, Fincham, & Pasley, 2008). Results of these studies indicated that parental divorce and interparental conflict have indirect effects on offspring's perceived relationship quality through different mediatory mechanisms. However, the empirical researches in this field are few, mostly conducted with western populations and little is known about the mechanisms that might underlie this association. As a result, the present study aims to explore how conflict in romantic relationship and general attitudes toward marriage can contribute to our understanding of the link between interparental conflict and couple satisfaction of Turkish emerging adults.

2. Potential Mediating Mechanisms

All children are more or less likely to witness their parents' conflicts in the family life. Although marital conflict is a normal and inevitable part of marriage life, frequent, intense, and unresolved conflicts among parents have detrimental effects on children both in the short and long run. While interparental conflict predicts children's internal and external problems in the short run (e.g., Buehler et al., 1997; Kızıldağ & Şendil, 2006; Güven & Erden, 2014; Peksaygılı & Güre, 2008), it may even influence children's own romantic relationships when they become young adults (Braithwaite et al., 2016; Cui & Fincham, 2010; Cui et al., 2008). As it is widely accepted, one of the most strong explanations for this intergenerational transmission of relationship functioning is Social Learning Theory (SLT) (Bandura, 1977). According to SLT, children who observe frequent, intense, and unresolved interparental conflicts in their family are likely to transfer those conflict behaviors to their own romantic relationships in emerging adulthood. Children first observe the marital interactions of their parents and learn about the nature of romantic relationships. They process and store how parents try to resolve their conflicts in the marriage and replicate those conflict resolution strategies in their own prospective romantic relationships. Thereby, conflict behaviors and styles socially learned in the family of origin are transmitted across generations (Amato & Booth, 2001; Braithwaite et al., 2016; Conger et al., 2000; Cui & Fincham, 2010).

In light of SLT, family of origin not only teaches conflict strategies in romantic relationships, but also shapes children's general attitudes toward marriage (Braithwaite et al., 2016; Cui & Fincham, 2010). Children whose parents have frequent, intense, and unresolved destructive conflicts may hold less favorable attitudes toward marriage (Cui, Fincham, & Durtschi, 2011). Observing dysfunctional marital conflicts may discourage children from marriage or cohabitation and adopt even more favorable pro-divorce views. Children who were exposed to destructive interparental conflict evaluate the costs and benefits of marriage, which may shape their attitudes toward marital and family issues (Cui & Fincham, 2010). Destructive interparental conflict may teach children to be suspicious of and hesitant about entering into marriage, cohabitation, and/or intimate relationships (Cui et al., 2011; Cui & Fincham, 2010). Empirical evidences also support the theoretical prediction that parents' marital quality has intergenerational influences on children's attitudes toward marriage/divorce (e.g., Cunningham & Thornton, 2006; Kapinus, 2005).

There are also a number of empirical evidences suggesting the conflict in romantic relationships and attitudes toward marriage/divorce as mediatory mechanisms between interparental conflict and emerging adults' couple satisfaction. Cui et al. (2008), in their short-term longitudinal study including predominantly white 358 undergraduate students from a southern university in USA, found out that perceived interparental conflict is significantly in correlation with emerging adults' conflict in romantic relationship, which in turn is linked to decreased relationship quality. In addition, research results indicated that although divorce and interparental conflict are negatively linked with offspring's relationship

quality, interparental conflict appeared to have stronger association with children's romantic relationships. In another study (Cui & Fincham, 2010), it was also reported that interparental conflict is significantly associated with emerging adults' romantic relationship conflict, which in turn is fundamentally related to decreased relationship quality. In addition, Cui and Fincham (2010) in their study indicated that divorce is related to relationship quality through less positive attitudes toward marriage and weaker commitment to the romantic relationship as sequential mediatory mechanisms.

3. The Present Study

Although the research to date has clearly demonstrated that interparental conflict is linked to emerging adults' romantic relationship quality, little attention has been paid to by which mechanisms these two variables are linked to one another. In addition, existing research has focused on samples composed of mainly white Americans and it is unknown whether previous findings can be replicated by researchers in other cultures. Therefore, further research is needed to understand better the intergenerational transmission of relationship functioning in premarital relationships of emerging adults. While there are a number of research studies reporting the links between interparental conflict and child/adolescent adjustment in Turkish literature (e.g., Güven & Erden, 2014; Kızıldağ & Şendil, 2006; Peksaygılı & Güre, 2008; Sağkal & Türnüklü, 2017; Şirvanlı, 1999), to the best of our knowledge, this is the first study examining the indirect effects of interparental conflict on emerging adults' couple satisfaction. As a result, the present study aims to examine the links between perceived interparental conflict, conflict in romantic relationship, general attitudes toward marriage, and couple satisfaction. Based on previous research (Cui et al., 2008; Cui & Fincham, 2010) and social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), we hypothesized that conflict in romantic relationship and general attitudes toward marriage would mediate the association between interparental conflict and emerging adults' couple satisfaction.

4. Method

4.1. Participants

A total of 301 emerging adults (229 women, 76.1%; 72 men, 23.9%) were conveniently recruited from a university situated in western parts of Turkey. The sample predominantly comprised women (76.1%) and freshman students (53.5%). Participants' ages were in the range of 18 and 25 ($M = 20.24$; $SD = 1.55$). They were currently in a heterosexual romantic relationship, unmarried, and coming from intact families. Romantic relationship duration ranged from less than one month to more than 12 months with a median length of more than 12 months; 68.2% of the participants were currently in a romantic relationship for more than six months. Most of the mothers of the participants graduated from middle school and below (67.6%), most of their fathers graduated from high school and below (80%). Median monthly family income was in the range of 2000TL to 3000TL (approximately \$365 to \$550).

4.2. Measures

Interparental conflict. Conflict properties factor of the Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (CPIC; Grych, Seid, & Fincham, 1992) was used to measure children's perception of interparental conflict. Conflict properties factor of the CPIC include three subscales namely, frequency, intensity, and resolution. Participants respond to the items using a 3-point Likert scale (1 = *true*, 3 = *false*). In this study, Turkish version of the CPIC adapted by Ulu and Fışıloğlu (2004) was used. Turkish version of the scale is composed of 17 items, six of which regards the frequency domain, six of which regards the resolution domain, and five of which regards the intensity domain. The factor structure of the scale was assessed using a second-order confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in the current research sample. The second-order factor model of the scale showed a good fit: $\chi^2(115) = 299.357$, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 2.60$, CFI = .91, and RMSEA = .08 CI [.07, .09]. The Cronbach's alpha values were .81, .86, .70, and .92 for frequency, resolution, intensity, and total scale, respectively. Items were so scored that higher scores on the scales indicate more frequent, intense, and unresolved interparental conflict.

Conflict in romantic relationship. In order to assess perceived conflict in romantic relationship, items were adapted from the Turkish version of the CPIC scale (Ulu & Fışıloğlu, 2004). Items were so reworded that participants responded statements about the frequency, intensity, and resolution of conflicts in their own romantic relationships (e.g., "We get really mad when we argue"). In the present study, a second-order CFA was conducted and the hypothesis model provided good fit to the data: $\chi^2(115) = 288.714$, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 2.51$, CFI = .88, and RMSEA = .07 CI [.06, .08]. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for frequency, resolution, intensity, and total scale were calculated to be .77, .72, .66, and

.87, respectively. Items were so scored that higher scores on the scales indicate more frequent, intense, and unresolved conflict in romantic relationship.

General attitudes toward marriage. General Attitudes toward Marriage Scale (GAMS; Park & Rosen, 2013) was used to assess emerging adults' attitudes toward marriage. GAMS includes 10 items (e.g., "Marriages make people happy") and is responded on a 7-point Likert scale (0 = *Strongly disagree*, 6 = *Strongly agree*). GAMS is composed of three dimensions, namely, positive attitudes, negative attitudes, and fears/doubts. In addition, the GAMS demonstrates good reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$), convergent and divergent validity. In this study, we adapted GAMS into Turkish via forward and back-translation method and tested validity and reliability of the scale in research sample. The second-order CFA results indicated that a three-factor hypothesized model fit the data well: $\chi^2(32) = 92.578$, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 2.89$, CFI = .95, and RMSEA = .08 CI [.06, .10]. The Cronbach's alpha values were .86, .57, .79, and .86 for positive attitudes, negative attitudes, fears/doubts, and total scale, respectively. Items were so coded that higher scores on the scales indicate more positive attitudes, less negative attitudes, and less fears/doubts.

Couple satisfaction. In the research, 4-item Couples Satisfaction Index (CSI; Funk & Rogge, 2007) was used to assess romantic relationship satisfaction. In the scale, three of the items are responded on a 6-point Likert scale (0 = *Not at all true*, 5 = *Completely true*) and one item is responded on a 7-point Likert scale (0 = *Extremely unhappy*, 6 = *Perfect*). An example item is "I have a warm and comfortable relationship with my partner". Previous research has indicated that Turkish version of the CSI provided good validity (structural and criterion-related) and reliability (test-retest and internal consistency coefficients) indices in premarital romantic relationships of emerging adults (Sağkal & Özdemir, 2018b). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha for the 4-item CSI was .94. The higher scores in the scale indicate more relationship satisfaction.

5. Procedures

Data were collected from emerging adults attending a large state university located in western region of Turkey. Researchers informed the college students and invited individuals who are currently in a romantic relationship, unmarried, and coming from intact families to complete a survey that would contribute to a better understanding of dynamics of romantic relationships. The respondents enrolled in introductory education and psychology classes received extra course credit for their participation in the research. Before the administration, researchers read instructions aloud to the participants and explained the issues like confidentiality, honesty, and authenticity. After giving informed consent, eligible participants responded to the battery of research instruments. The research data were collected during spring semester of 2017.

6. Data Analysis

In this study, following preliminary analyses (e.g., missing values, outliers, normality, multi-collinearity, autocorrelation, common method bias, and validity and reliability of the measures), bivariate correlations were computed among perceived interparental conflict, conflict in romantic relationship, general attitudes toward marriage, and couple satisfaction. The researchers then conducted two-step procedure for testing hypothesized model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). First of all, the measurement model was analyzed to assess to which extent each of the four latent variables was measured by its observed variables. Secondly, the structural model was tested via the maximum likelihood estimation in the AMOS 21.0 program. As this study involves particularly two mediators, a single-step multiple mediation model (simultaneous testing of multiple indirect effects) recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008) was implemented. Multiple mediation model enables researchers to assess specific indirect effects on the presence of other mediators in the model, reduces parameter bias, and allows the researchers to contrast relative magnitudes of the mediators (Hayes, Preacher, & Myers, 2011; Preacher & Hayes, 2008). In order to assess the significance of the specific indirect effects, we used 5000 bootstrap samples and 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals via AMOS user-defined estimands (Amos Development Corporation, 2012). Lastly, pairwise contrast test was conducted to determine the relative magnitudes of the specific indirect effects.

7. Results

7.1. Preliminary Analyses

In line with Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), before the analyses, the data were screened and preliminary analyses testing assumptions related to structural equation modeling were employed. Because only a few points were missing at

the data set (less than 5%) and the Little's MCAR test ($\chi^2 = 117.275$, $df = 101$, $p = .128$) indicated that the data were missing completely at random, seven cases with missing values were dropped. In addition, ten cases with standardized scores in excess of 3.29 and four other cases identified as multivariate outliers $p < .001$ were removed from the data set, leaving 280 cases for analysis in total. Absolute values of skewness index were below 3.0, absolute values of kurtosis index were below 10.0, indicating no evidence of serious violation of univariate normal distribution (Kline, 2011). As multivariate kurtosis critical ratio (6,586) was above the threshold of 5.0, data was marginally multivariate non-normal (Byrne, 2010). Because bootstrapping provides robust assessment of confidence limits for specific indirect effects under the condition of multivariate non-normal distribution, we bootstrapped (with 5000 iterations and 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals) the indirect effects of interparental conflict on offspring's couple satisfaction (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Small to moderate correlation coefficients between the variables of the study (range between .11 to .47), tolerance indexes above .20 (range from .89 to .95), variance inflation factor below 5.0 (range between 1.06 to 1.12), and condition index below 30 indicated that multi-collinearity was not an issue in the structural model. Also, Durbin-Watson value of 1.938 being within the acceptable ranges of 1.5-2.5 identified the absence of autocorrelation problem in the data set. Lastly, Harman's single-factor test was employed to assess potential common method variance (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Results of exploratory factor analysis indicated that there were four distinct factors with eigenvalues greater than one explaining 79.27% of total variance (the first factor = 38.47%). Further, a single-factor confirmatory factor analysis model revealed a poor fit to the data: $\chi^2(65) = 1030.326$, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 15.85$, CFI = .59, and RMSEA = .23 CI [.22, .24]. These results suggest that a single-factor model is not accurate and that common method variance is not a major concern in the succeeding analyses.

7.2. Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations

Means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations between interparental conflict, romantic relationship conflict, general attitudes toward marriage, and couple satisfaction are presented in Table 1. As seen in Table 1, interparental conflict was positively correlated with romantic relationship conflict ($r = .17$, $p < .01$) and negatively correlated with general attitudes toward marriage ($r = -.20$, $p < .01$). Romantic relationship conflict was negatively correlated with couple satisfaction ($r = -.47$, $p < .01$) and general attitudes toward marriage was positively correlated with couple satisfaction ($r = .39$, $p < .01$). However, there was no significant relationship between interparental conflict and offspring's couple satisfaction ($r = -.11$, $p > .05$).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (N = 280)

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4
1. Interparental conflict	28.23	6.95	1			
2. Romantic relationship conflict	25.27	5.54	.17**	1		
3. General attitudes toward marriage	42.70	10.76	-.20**	-.29**	1	
4. Couple satisfaction	15.33	4.25	-.11	-.47**	.39**	1

** $p < .01$

7.3. Measurement Model

In the study, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess the overall fit of the measurement model including four latent factors (interparental conflict, romantic relationship conflict, general attitudes toward marriage, and couple satisfaction) and 13 observed variables. Research findings indicated that the four-factor measurement model yielded satisfactory fit indices: $\chi^2(59) = 115.554$, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 1.96$, CFI = .98, and RMSEA = .06 CI [.04, .07]. Factor loadings ranged from .84 to .89 for interparental conflict, .75 to .82 for romantic relationship conflict, .71 to .80 for general attitudes toward marriage, .86 to .97 for couple satisfaction, and they were all significantly different from zero at the $p < .001$ level (see Table 2). The measurement model was also assessed for construct reliability and validity. As seen in Table 2, Cronbach's alpha for all constructs ranged from .86 to .94 and composite reliability coefficients varied from .78 to .95 and all exceeded the benchmark of 0.7, indicating an adequate reliability (Nunnally, 1978). The average variance extracted (AVE) for all measures exceeded the benchmark of 0.5, which supports the convergent validity of each construct (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

Table 2

Measurement Model: Parameter Estimates, Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity Indices

	Standardized parameter estimates	CR	AVE	α
Frequency \leftarrow Interparental conflict	.886***			
Resolution \leftarrow Interparental conflict	.839***	.89	.74	.92
Intensity \leftarrow Interparental conflict	.848***			
Frequency \leftarrow Romantic relationship conflict	.822***			
Resolution \leftarrow Romantic relationship conflict	.749***	.84	.63	.87
Intensity \leftarrow Romantic relationship conflict	.805***			
Positive attitudes \leftarrow General attitudes toward marriage	.795***			
Negative attitudes \leftarrow General attitudes toward marriage	.707***	.78	.55	.86
Fears/Doubts \leftarrow General attitudes toward marriage	.711***			
CSI1 \leftarrow Couple satisfaction	.875***			
CSI2 \leftarrow Couple satisfaction	.856***			
CSI3 \leftarrow Couple satisfaction	.971***	.95	.82	.94
CSI4 \leftarrow Couple satisfaction	.910***			

Notes. CR = Composite reliability; AVE = Average variance extracted; *** $p < .001$

Discriminant validity of the constructs was examined by comparing the square root of AVE for each construct with its shared variance between constructs. As shown in Table 3, the square root of AVE for each construct was greater than its shared variance with any pairs of constructs, confirming discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As a result, the measures in the model ensured adequate reliability, convergent, and discriminant validity.

Table 3

Discriminant Validity Assessment

Constructs	1	2	3	4
1. Interparental conflict	.858			
2. Romantic relationship conflict	.190	.793		
3. General attitudes toward marriage	-.238	-.359	.739	
4. Couple satisfaction	-.128	-.513	.443	.904

Notes. Numbers on the diagonal (in boldface) are the square roots of AVE

7.4. Structural Model

We evaluated the fit of the structural model in which we test the hypothesized links among interparental conflict, conflict in romantic relationship, general attitudes toward marriage, and emerging adults' couple satisfaction. The fully mediated model constraining the path from interparental conflict to emerging adults' couple satisfaction to zero showed a satisfactory fit to the data: $\chi^2 (61, N = 280) = 135.668, p < .001; \chi^2/df = 2.22; GFI = .93; IFI = .97; CFI = .97; RMSEA = .066; AIC = 195.668; BIC = 304.712; ECVI = .701$. Next, we tested a partially mediated model. The partially mediated model fit remained good, $\chi^2 (60, N = 280) = 135.419, p < .001; \chi^2/df = 2.26; GFI = .93; IFI = .97; CFI = .97; RMSEA = .067; AIC = 197.419; BIC = 310.097; ECVI = .708$, but it did not significantly improve model fit, $\Delta\chi^2 (1, N = 280) = 0.25, p > .05$, and had higher AIC, BIC, and ECVI values compared to the fully mediated model. Therefore, the fully mediated model was more parsimonious compared to partially mediated model (Byrne, 2010). In addition, the path from interparental conflict to couple satisfaction was insignificant ($\beta = .03, p > .05$).

The standardized regression weights demonstrated that interparental conflict was positively linked with conflict in romantic relationship ($\beta = .19, p < .01$) and negatively linked with general attitudes toward marriage ($\beta = -.24, p < .001$). Conflict in romantic relationship was negatively associated with emerging adults' couple satisfaction ($\beta = -.43, p < .001$) and general attitudes toward marriage was positively associated with couple satisfaction ($\beta = .32, p < .001$). The explained total variance in emerging adults' couple satisfaction by interparental conflict, conflict in romantic relationship, and general attitudes toward marriage was 30%.

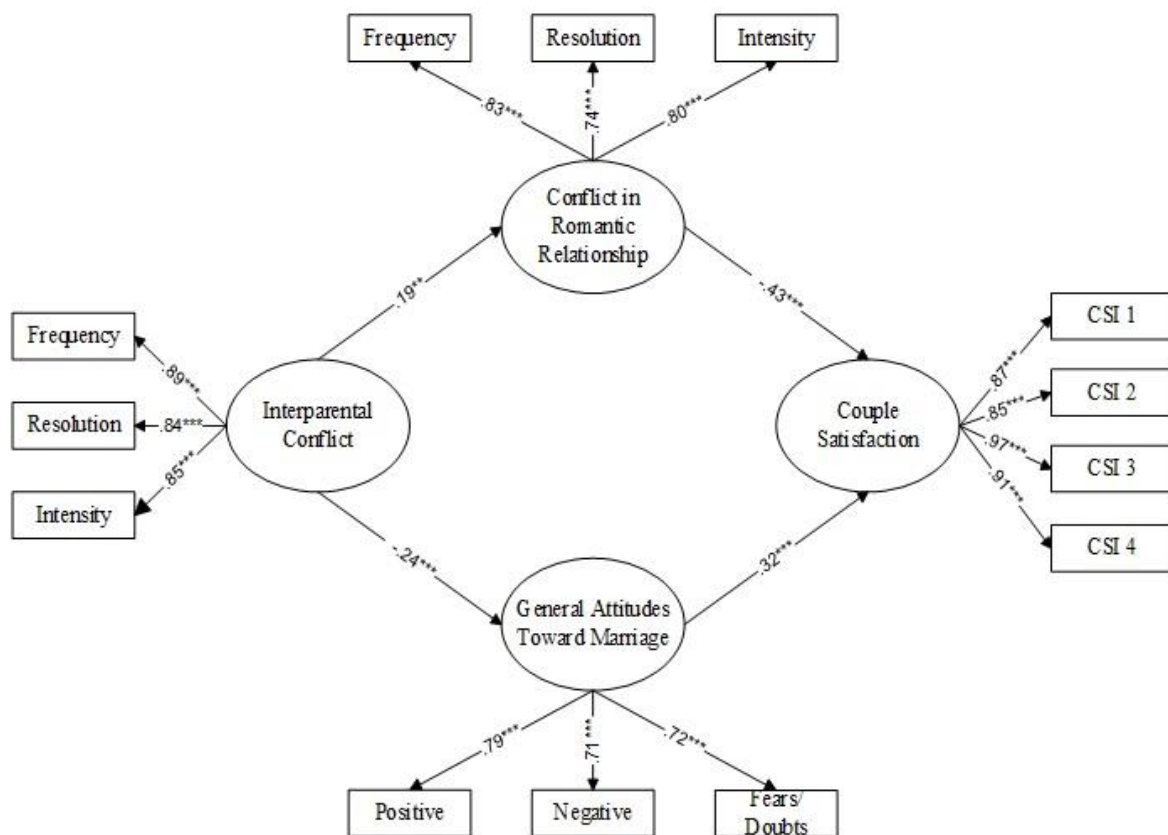


Figure 1. The mediation model

Note. Standardized path coefficients are presented. CSI 1 – CSI 4 = Four items of Couples Satisfaction Index.

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

The bootstrapping method was used to test significance of indirect effects in the structural model (Fig. 1.). The results indicated that the total indirect effect of interparental conflict on emerging adults' couple satisfaction via both mediating mechanisms was significant ($\beta = -.070$, $p < .001$). Further analyses using AMOS user-defined estimands indicated that specific indirect effect of interparental conflict on couple satisfaction via romantic relationship conflict ($\beta = -.036$, $p < .01$) and the specific indirect effect via general attitudes toward marriage ($\beta = -.034$, $p < .01$) were significant (Amos Development Corporation, 2012). The results from pairwise contrast test indicated that magnitude of the specific indirect effects do not differ significantly ($\beta = -.002$, $p > .05$) (See Table 4).

Table 4

Total and Specific Indirect Effects of Interparental Conflict on Emerging Adults' Couple Satisfaction

Model Pathways	Point Estimates	95% CI		<i>p</i>
		Lower	Upper	
Total indirect effect	-.070	-.112	-.033	.000
1. Interparental conflict → Conflict in romantic relationship → Couple satisfaction	-.036	-.066	-.010	.006
2. Interparental conflict → General attitudes toward marriage → Couple satisfaction	-.034	-.064	-.014	.001
Contrast between 1 and 2	-.002	-.036	.032	.915

8. Discussion

Previous research has documented that family of origin influences emerging adults' premarital relationship quality (e.g., Braithwaite et al., 2016; Cui & Fincham, 2010; Cui et al., 2008). Based on theoretical explanations and empirical

evidences, we hypothesized that conflict in romantic relationship and general attitudes toward marriage would mediate the association between interparental conflict and emerging adults' couple satisfaction. Indeed, the research findings confirmed the theoretical and empirical predictions in the present study. As predicted, frequent, intense, and unresolved interparental conflict was related to higher levels of frequent, intense, and unresolved conflict in romantic relationship, which was linked to lower levels of couple satisfaction in emerging adults. Similarly, interparental conflict was related with less favorable attitude toward marriage, which was, in turn linked with lower levels of couple satisfaction in premarital relationships of emerging adults. As a result, the present findings confirmed the hypothesis that interparental conflict was significantly and indirectly related to emerging adults' couple satisfaction through conflict in romantic relationship and general attitudes toward marriage. However, direct effect of interparental conflict on emerging adults' couple satisfaction was not significant.

First of all, the current research replicated and extended previous findings (e.g., Cui & Fincham, 2010; Cui et al., 2008) by supporting specific significant indirect effects of interparental conflict on couple satisfaction via conflict in romantic relationship in a sample of Turkish emerging adults. That is, children with perceptions of higher levels of frequent, intense, and unresolved interparental conflict tend to experience higher levels of frequent, intense, and unresolved conflict in their own romantic relationship during emerging adulthood, which in turn results in a decrease in their relationship satisfaction. This finding is also consistent with the perspective of Social Learning Theory that emphasize the role of parents' destructive marital conflicts in shaping children's interpersonal skills or competencies transferred in premarital romantic relationships (Amato & Booth, 2001). Overall, the present research finding on interparental conflict and emerging adults' couple satisfaction serves to underline the importance of the intergenerational transmission of conflict behaviors in romantic relationships and its' effects on emerging adults' couple satisfaction.

Furthermore, and as predicted, the present study also found evidence for specific significant indirect effect of interparental conflict on couple satisfaction through general attitudes toward marriage. Again, this finding replicates and extends previous research that reported that children exposed to greater levels of interparental conflict are more likely to develop negative attitudes toward marriage (Jennings, Salts, & Smith, 1992). In addition, the finding is also consistent with previous research results indicating that less favorable attitudes toward marriage predict lower levels of couple satisfaction (Riggio & Weiser, 2008). Taken together, this result suggests that individuals with higher levels of perceived interparental conflict tended to have less favorable attitudes toward marriage, which in turn predicted less relationship satisfaction.

Moreover, the result of pairwise contrast test indicated that the relative magnitudes of the specific indirect effects were not significantly different. It means that the specific indirect effect of interparental conflict on couple satisfaction via conflict in romantic relationship was nearly the same as that through general attitudes toward marriage. Thus, conflict in romantic relationship and general attitudes toward marriage are both significant mediatory mechanisms through which interparental conflict influences emerging adults' couple satisfaction.

Overall, all these research results highlight the roles of romantic relationship conflict and marital attitudes when investigating the link between interparental conflict and emerging adult children's couple satisfaction. To our knowledge, this is the first study that examines the potential mediating mechanisms for the relationship between interparental conflict and emerging adults' couple satisfaction in a sample of Turkish culture. Furthermore, this is the first study to date examining the relative magnitudes of conflict in romantic relationship and general attitudes toward marriage in the link between interparental conflict and offspring's couple satisfaction.

There are also several limitations need to be considered when interpreting the research results. First of all, cross-sectional nature of the research does not allow us to infer causal directions. Future studies should employ a longitudinal design to determine how these associations unfold over time. Secondly, only romantic relationship conflict and marital attitudes were examined as potential mechanisms that account for the association between interparental conflict and couple satisfaction. Future studies should investigate additional possible mechanisms (e.g., attachment patterns) by which family of origin influences may affect romantic relationships of emerging adult children. Furthermore, because the sample was recruited conveniently from a public university on the west part of Turkey and was comprised of predominantly female students, the findings may not be generalized to a broader population of emerging adults. Future studies should replicate the hypothesized model in larger samples and extent the present findings. Lastly, as the data were based on self-report measures collected at a single time point, the findings are suggestive rather than strong.

There are also several implications of this study for prevention and intervention efforts. Understanding the role of interparental conflict and the way it affects children's romantic relationship satisfaction is highly crucial for the development of prevention and intervention programs. As family of origin impacts are one of the most crucial developmental precursor of the forming, managing, and sustaining healthy romantic relationship in emerging adulthood, family prevention and intervention programs might be applied to enhance the quality of both husband-wife and parent-child relationships. In addition, in order to improve couple satisfaction of emerging adult children, interventions may also focus on both developing repertoire of constructive conflict resolution skills and transforming unhealthy marital attitudes. Actually, the results from a meta-analytic review confirm that premarital prevention programs are effective at

increasing communication processes, conflict resolution skills, and relationship satisfaction in couples (Carroll, & Doherty, 2003). Specifically, it was reported that the mean effect sizes of the premarital prevention programs were .99 at post-test and .64 at extended follow-up assessments. Based on these findings, it can be suggested that counseling and guidance centers of the Turkish universities may develop psycho-educational intervention programs for relationship enhancement and help emerging adult students to experience well-functioning romantic relationships. Following such a prevention policy would help foster university students successfully accomplish developmental task of romantic relationship, have better psychological and academic adjustment. Indeed, very recent findings obtained from Turkish Longitudinal Romantic Relationship Study (TLRRS; Sağkal & Özdemir, 2019) supported a bidirectional (cross-lag) association between satisfaction in relationship domain and overall life satisfaction in emerging adult university students. Overall, based on all these conclusions and implications, it can be suggested that counselors and clinicians should be more aware of factors and mechanisms contributing to individual and relational functioning for emerging adult university students.

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