HOW CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES RELATE
LIFE SATISFACTION

Ahmet Ragıp Ozpolat[i]
Assoc. Prof. Dr., Erzincan University, Turkey

Abstract:

The objective of hereby study is to develop a scale with the capability of measuring childhood experiences of individuals in consideration of Turkish culture and to test whether childhood experiences predict life satisfaction of an individual. To that end, at the first stage of the study, a scale, which can measure the childhood experiences of individuals, is developed. The draft scale, which consists of 25 items, is applied on 345 undergraduates (187 female, 158 male) in academic year 2013-2014. Hereby Scale on childhood experiences consists of 2 sub-aspects (Communication Problems and Abuse of Authority), with 12 items under the former and 5 belonging to the latter. During the reliability studies on the scale, the coefficient "Cronbach's alpha" is found to be .90. Upon the factor analysis on 17-item scale on childhood experiences, a 2-factor structure with an eigenvalue of 2.98 that explains 47% of total variance is obtained. The confirmatory factor analysis on the mentioned structure yielded the fit index values as RMSEA= .047, GFI= .91, CFI= .91, AGFI= .90, NFI= .90, NNFI= .90 and SRMR= .048, respectively. At the second stage of the study, the working group comprised a total of 323 graduate individuals, with 187 (59%) females and 135 (41%) males. At the second stage, the effects of childhood experiences of individuals on their ego, as well as the relation between ego and life satisfaction, are explored. It is concluded that the negative self-image predicts the life satisfaction of an individual at a negative rate of -.32.

Keywords: childhood experiences, life satisfaction, happiness, experiences scale, psychological health

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[i] Correspondence: email ahmetozpolat@hotmail.com

1. Introduction

Childhood experiences determine how happy individuals will be in their adulthood. In turn, the happiness of individuals depends on their personality structures and life satisfaction.

In the literature of psychology, the personality structure of an individual is predominantly related with the experiences during childhood (Freud, 1901; Adler, 1993; Erickson, 1968; Harlow & Zimmermann, 1958; Bowlby, 1958). The significance of such experiences for individual is very important, just as which of them the individual primarily remembers. The hurtful or traumatic childhood memories may have negative psychological effects on the personality of an individual (Gilbert, et al. 2003). In daily life, certain wishes and expectations may mean a lot to child, while parents are unaware of the situation; consequently, in case the parent or any other adult does not respond to such wish or expectation, the lack of fulfilment may lead to offence and traumas for the child (Bifulco et al., 2006; Hinnen et al., 2009). The main titles that may pave way for negative childhood experiences include rejection, humiliation, isolation, deception, intimidation, terrorisation, threatening, disregard, disparagement, sarcasm, nicknaming, extreme repression and authority, dependence-building and over-protection. Upon an analysis on these topics, childhood experiences can be generally subsumed under general titles of communication problems between child and parents (disregard, disparagement, sarcasm, nicknaming), affective traumas on child (rejection, humiliation, isolation, deception, intimidation, terrorisation) and abuse by parents of authority on child (extreme repression and authority, dependence-building and over-protection). Hereby study seeks treating the childhood experiences with respect to the memories arising from Communication Problems and Affective traumas of child, as well as from Abuse of Parental Authority. Only a limited number of studies has been realised in collectivist societies in regard to such memories, since such societies principally defend presence of strong parental authority on child (Eskin, 2013).

2. Review of Literature

A review of related literature may yield many studies about childhood experiences (Batcho et al., 2011; Rispoli et al. 2013). Especially the personality structure, well-being and life satisfaction of adults are under notable influence of their childhood experiences (Strauman 1992; Brewin et al. 1993; Widom and Morris 1997; Marcenko et al. 2000; Moran et al. 2002). Such theoretical knowledge in literature encouraged scholars to develop scales that may measure the memories regarding childhood experiences (Smith et al. 2002). Nevertheless, the groups within most of these scales belong to western societies with an individualistic cultural background (Gilbert, et al. 2003). In company with the scales and interview forms developed in western societies, the scholars have

analysed the childhood memories of individuals and the influence of such memories on psychological health (Heather, 2014). Particularly, the studies in positive psychology demonstrate that the well-being of individuals is largely related with their life satisfaction (Martin et al., 2008). Life satisfaction is an important determinant regarding the individual development, familial connections and socialisation of individuals. The persons with higher life satisfaction are found to be more successful in their life and personal relationships (Lyubormirsky et al., 2005). In this respect, the life satisfaction is influential over ego structure and personality of an individual as well. The researches on this issue have treated the relation between life satisfaction and many variables, such as socioeconomic status (SES), personality traits and cognitive processes (Huebner, Suldo, & Gilman, 2006). However, we have not come across any study that treats in detail the relation between childhood experiences and life satisfaction, and that puts forth the potential interaction between these two features. Yet again, in case the child has many traumatic memories regarding childhood experiences, this will potentially have a negative effect on his/her intellectual and social development and self-esteem (Horton & Cruise, 2001).

In recent years, there are numerous researches about the problem in individualistic societies (Batcho et al. 2011); however, there are no such studies in eastern societies with collectivist culture. Yet, the style of child-raising in collectivist societies differs from western culture (Özdemir & Çok, 2011). And it is known that childhood experiences are strongly related with the early childhood experiences of the child. In this respect, the collectivist and individualistic societies differ. The main objective of hereby study is to analyse the influence of childhood memories of individuals in collectivist societies on their personality structure, as well as the relation between the personality structure and life satisfaction. To that end, the following issues are handled:

1. To develop a scale, capable of measuring childhood experiences in Turkey, and that complies with the collectivist cultural foundations of the country
2. To determine how much the childhood experiences can predict the life satisfaction of individuals

3. Method

Hereby study is a general screening effort with the aim of developing a scale and ensuring its application. Screening is a research method that intends to describe a past or present case, event, individual, society or object in its own conditions and as it is (Karasar, 2005). In this respect, at the first stage of our study, a scale, which is able to measure the childhood experiences of individuals, is developed. The second stage investigates how much the childhood experiences can predict the life satisfaction of individuals.

3.1. The working group

The sample working group for scale development efforts consists of a total of 345 undergraduates, with 187 females (57%) and 157 males (43%) from department of art teaching (n=58), department of Psychological Counselling and Guidance (n=53), department of Mathematics Teaching (n=68), department of Physical Education Teaching (n=67), department of music teaching (n=50) and department of Turkish teaching (n=49) at Faculty of Education, Erzincan University. The research working group in the second stage of our study consists of 323 graduates between 20-29 year-olds, with 187 females (59%) and 135 males (41%) with an average age of 25. The research working groups are elected via Convenience/Incidental Sampling method. The individuals have voluntarily participated in research working groups.

3.2. Data Collection Tool

3.2.1 Early Life Experience Scale

Early Life Experience Scale (ELES) consists of three subscales, developed for measuring threat, submissiveness and unvalued memories in childhood by Gilbert, et al. (2003). ELES comprises 15 items and has a five-degree assessment ("1" Completely untrue, "2" Very occasionally true, "3" Sometimes true, "4" Fairly true, "5" Very true). Each subscale yields separate scores, while the scale also generates a total childhood experiences (negative experiences) score via reverse coding of items 6, 7 and 9. The exploratory factor analysis, applied for structural validity of scale, revealed that the conformity coefficient of ELES sample is .92, the items are gathered under three factors and that 63% of total variance is explained. The factor loadings range between .65 and .84 for unvalued memories subscale, .53 and .90 for threatening memories subscale, and between .37 and .87 for submissive memories subscale, respectively. ELES was adapted to Turkish by Akın et al. (2013). Results of confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated that the fifteen items loaded on three factors (threat, submissiveness, and unvalued) and the three-dimensional model was well fit (x^2=163.71, df=86, p=0.0000, RMSEA=.049, NFI=.95, CFI=.97, IFI=.97, SRMR=.043). Factor loadings ranged from .36 to .68 and the corrected item total correlations of ELES ranged from .33 to .60. Internal consistency reliability coefficients were .57 for threat subscale, .71 for submissiveness subscale,.78 for unvalued subscale, and .85 for overall scale.

3.2.2. Satisfaction with Life Scale-SWLS

Life Satisfaction Scale was developed by Diener, Emmons, Laresen and Griffin (1985), in order to measure general life satisfaction and it consists of 5 items. It is a Likert scale with items marked between 1 and 7 points. Diener et al. (1985) found that the scale has an internal consistency of 0.87 and the test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.82. The adaptation of SWLS to Turkish was realised by Durak, Senol-Durak and Gençöz (2010). In the wake of reliability studies by Durak, Senol-Durak and Gençöz (2010), the test-

retest reliability coefficient of the scale, which was applied twice with an interval of three weeks, was found as .85. Besides, at the first and second studies, the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients was found as .76 and .82, respectively.

3.2.3. Oxford Happiness Questionnaire

Argyle et al (1989), who developed the scale, have reported the Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient as .90, and test-retest reliability coefficient as .78. There is a correlation of -.52 (p<.001) between OHQ and Beck Depression Scale. The Turkish adaptation of scale was conducted by Doğan and Çötok (2011), who detected the internal consistency and test-retest reliability coefficients as .74 and .85, respectively.

3.2.4. Personal Information Form

PIF determines the variables and details regarding gender, age, department, perceived academic achievement and economic status.

3.2.5. Childhood Experiences Scale (Turkish Sample)
3.2.5.1. Preparation of Scale Items

In the beginning of the scale development process, the literature was scanned and searched in terms of periodicals, books and literature on early life experiences and similar scales. Pursuant to these searches, the items about early life experiences are written down and an item pool is created under general titles of Communication Problems and Affective traumas, as well as Abuse of Parental Authority regarding childhood experiences. Two professors from Department of Psychological Counselling and Guidance, Faculty of Education, Erzincan University, contributed to the creation of item pool. The first item pool includes 36 items. The items were sent to five professors at various departments of Psychological Counselling and Guidance all around Turkey for an initial assessment, so that the content validity is ensured and similar items are excluded, as well as for review of expressions. In line with opinions of these specialists, the similar items are excluded from the scale, and a draft was formed so as to incorporate 23 items which attained an agreement of 90% among experts. This 23-item form was applied on 50 students of Faculty of Education, Erzincan University, in order to test its clarity. During the application, the feedbacks from student regarding grammar and comprehensibility are noted down, and the scale was given its final form following necessary regulations.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient is calculated as an indicator of internal consistency of the items within 23-item early life experiences scale; the findings of the calculation are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient in Childhood Experiences Scale

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,908	23

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
C1	42,6150	227,106	,424	,907
C2	41,1338	229,942	,377	,907
C3	42,2011	223,473	,557	,903
C4	42,6687	225,162	,566	,903
C5	43,0913	234,022	,392	,906
C6	42,6649	226,134	,575	,903
C7	42,6953	224,912	,585	,903
C8	42,5758	222,752	,615	,902
C9	42,9036	224,650	,672	,901
C10	42,4791	226,586	,462	,905
C11	42,6741	225,098	,612	,902
C12	42,8269	224,547	,676	,901
C13	42,6543	227,437	,494	,905
C14	43,0921	227,698	,581	,903
C15	42,9674	227,808	,526	,904
C16	42,7812	225,982	,593	,903
C17	42,7649	230,909	,423	,906
C18	41,9760	227,010	,423	,907
C19	42,9764	232,674	,392	,907
C20	42,0690	223,159	,527	,904
C21	42,5612	227,388	,486	,905
C22	42,5694	225,208	,561	,903
C23	42,8779	226,599	,606	,902

Table 1 shows that the value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient is .91 and that the coefficient of items is at an expected level. After this analysis as an indicator of internal consistency, an exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis was conducted in order to test the structural validity of early life experiences scale.

3.2.5.2. Structural validity of *Childhood Experiences Scale*

An exploratory factor analysis is configured in order to analyse the factor structure of *Childhood Experiences Scale*. For 23 items, the factor number is analysed by means of principal components technique, using varimax rotation; it is found that the items are gathered under 2 factors. Varimax rotation was applied to ensure independence, as well as clarity and significance in interpretation. The vertical rotation is a common method of scale development in social sciences. Varimax and quartimax are the most commonly used vertical rotation techniques. Both methods intend to approach the load value of

items to 1.0 at one factor and to 0.0 at another (Büyüköztürk, 2004). Hereby study opts for varimax rotation technique thanks to its broader application in practice.

3.2.5.3. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

Hereby study adopts exploratory factor analyses in order to comprehend whether the factors, which consist of theoretically prescribed scales, namely, observed variables, can factorise independently from one another. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test is applied for understanding the applicability of factor analysis of the data, whereas Bartlett test was used in order to comprehend whether the correlation between the variables, which are to be analysed, is significant and non-zero. The findings are present in Table 2.

Table 2: KMO and Barlett Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test (KMO)		.918*
	Chi-square	2858.992
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	S.d.	253
	P	.001

Table 2 shows a KMO coefficient of 0.91. Hereby value is expected to be equal to or greater than 0.70 (Hair et al., 1998). Then again, according to the Table, the chi-square value from Bartlett test is significant at a significance level of $p < .001$. Such finding reveals that the data may undergo factor analysis. Once the suitability of data for factor analysis is determined, the principal components analysis over 23 items, 1 of which has reverse scoring, is configured without dimension definition, and the factor structure, which was subject to varimax vertical rotation for ensuring and enhancing conceptual significance, was duly analysed. Findings of the analysis are given in Table 3.

As Table 3 reveals, a 2-factor structure that explains 40% of total variance with an eigenvalue of 4.00 is obtained following the factor analysis on the 21-item Childhood Experiences Scale. Another method for determination of factor number is ScreePlot test. By means of ScreePlot test, it is observed that the first sudden change in the slope of graphic curve takes place on 2nd factor.

Table 3: Variance-explanation rates of items and factors regarding
Childhood Experiences Scale

Component	Initial Eigenvalues								
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7,930	34,479	34,479	7,930	34,479	34,479	5,461	23,746	23,746
2	1,447	6,293	40,772	1,447	6,293	40,772	3,916	17,027	40,772

Hereby data supports the 2-factor structure of items. Figure 1 shows the result of ScreePlot test.

Figure 1: Result of Childhood Experiences Scale Screeplot test
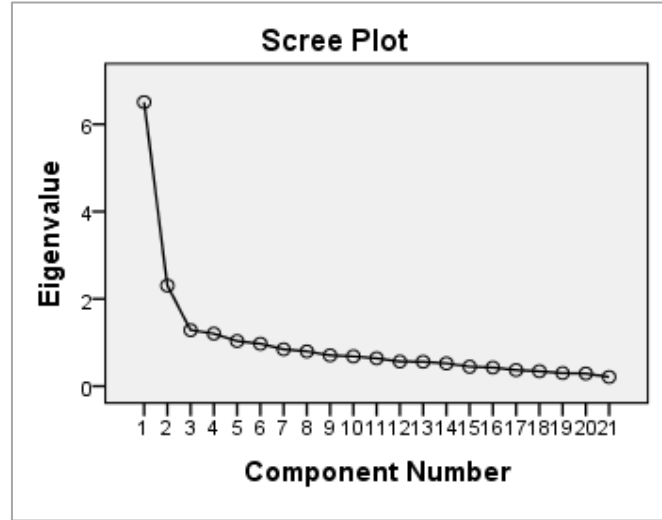
Pursuant to factor analysis, it is acceptable that the factor loadings are equal to or greater than .40 (Kline, 1994). The distribution of items in 2 factors following the Varimax rotation method is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Factor Loadings Matrix following application of Varimax Rotation Method

Item	Component	
	1	2
C8	,717	,181
C22	,703	,109
C11	,632	,276
C3	,621	,199
C23	,603	,313
C6	,592	,267
C14	,563	,327
C12	,562	,461
C13	,558	,170
C7	,550	,335
C4	,538	,322
C2	,228	,011
C1	,271	,284
C5	,248	,277
C19	-,067	,794
C15	,193	,692
C20	,175	,683
C9	,514	,524
C16	,439	,497
C17	,225	,290
C21	,322	,464

C10	,239	,201
C18	,279	,288

A review of Table 4 reveals that the 6 items in factors 1 and 2 have a low factor load, and it has a negative effect on these factors. In order to eliminate this effect, the items no. 1, 2, 5, 10, 17 and 18 are excluded from the scale, and the latter was put to factor analysis once again. The variance rates, explained by scale items, have increased following the removal of mentioned items. The results are available in Table 5.

Table 5: Variance-explanation rates of items and factors regarding
Childhood Experiences Scale

Component	Initial Eigenvalues								
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6,752	39,718	39,718	6,752	39,718	39,718	5,113	30,077	30,077
2	1,350	7,939	47,657	1,350	7,939	47,657	2,989	17,579	47,657

As is seen in Table 5, the factor analysis on 17-item and 2-factor Childhood Experiences Scale has yielded a 2-factor structure with an eigenvalue of 2.98 that explains the 47% of total variance. The explanatory factor analysis is reconfigured in order to calculate the factor loads of scale items. The factor loadings of scale items following Varimax rotation are given in Table 6.

Table 6: Factor Loadings Matrix following application of
Varimax Rotation Method (Application II)

| Item no	Item	Component	
		1	2
1	My parents **never understood** what I felt	,740	,109
2	I could **never be sure** about what my parents actually wanted from me	,715	,064
3	I could **never predict** how my parents would react to any behaviour of mine	,651	,255
4	I could **win** no discussion against my parents	,636	,166
5	My parents were **angry** with me when I expressed my emotions	,636	,288
6	My parents **did not** allocate sufficient time to solve my problems with them**.**	,618	,230
7	I was in **constant quarrel** with my parents	,604	,409
8	Sometimes **I felt** like my parents did really not want either me or my siblings	,592	,282
9	I **remember** that when I began to argue with one of my parents, the other began to argue with me too.	,580	,097
10	I could never **predict** what my parents wanted from me	,568	,309
11	My parents **never let** me take my own decisions**.**	,567	,293
12	I **always heard** offending words of my parents.	,549	,508
13	My parents did mercilessly **punish** me when they did not approve my behaviours	-,029	**,833**

14	In my childhood, my parents **punished** me fiercely in physical manner**.**	,237	**,688**
15	My parents were respectful to my personal space **(R)**	,215	**,655**
16	My parents **never answered** the questions I asked as a child**.**	,459	**,499**
17	My parents ceaselessly **argued** at home**.**	,358	**,451**

Table 6 shows that upon exclusion of 6 items, the factor loading of scale items has come to an acceptable level. In the wake of a review on the items that constitute the two-factor structure of 17-item Early Life Experiences Scale, the following names are recommended for the factors. Factor 1: The factor, which consists of 12 items, namely, items no. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, can be called Communication Problems and Affective Traumas aspect. Factor 2: The factor, which consists of 5 items, namely, items no. 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17, can be called Abuse of Authority aspect.

3.2.5.4. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

Once the 2-factor structure of 17 items is obtained on theoretical basis, the model of 2-dimensional structure of the scale is tested through Confirmatory Factor Analysis, pursuant to results from Exploratory Factor Analysis. The fit indexes obtained at the end of CFA (Goodness of Fit Index=GFI, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index=AGFI, Comparative Fit Index=CFI, Normed Fit Index=NFI, Non-Normed Fit Index=NNFI, Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation=RMSEA and Standardized Root-Mean-Square Residual=S-RMR) are analysed and chi-square value is found at an acceptable significance level (χ^2=357.555, df = 118, $\chi2 / df$ =3.03, p=0.01). On the other hand, the fit index values are found as RMSEA= .047, GFI= .91, CFI= .91, AGFI= .90, NFI= .90, NNFI= .90 and SRMR= .048, respectively. For the fit indexes, > .90 is set as benchmark for GFI, CFI, AGFI, NFI, and NNFI, while < .05 is determined as benchmark for RMSEA and S-RMR (Hu and Bentler, 1999; Sümer, 2000). In consideration of these fit index values, a certain symmetry is found between the model and observed data, and the recommended model has a reasonable level of compliance. The path diagram and factor loadings of model are given in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Path Diagram and Factor Loadings regarding Childhood Experiences Scale
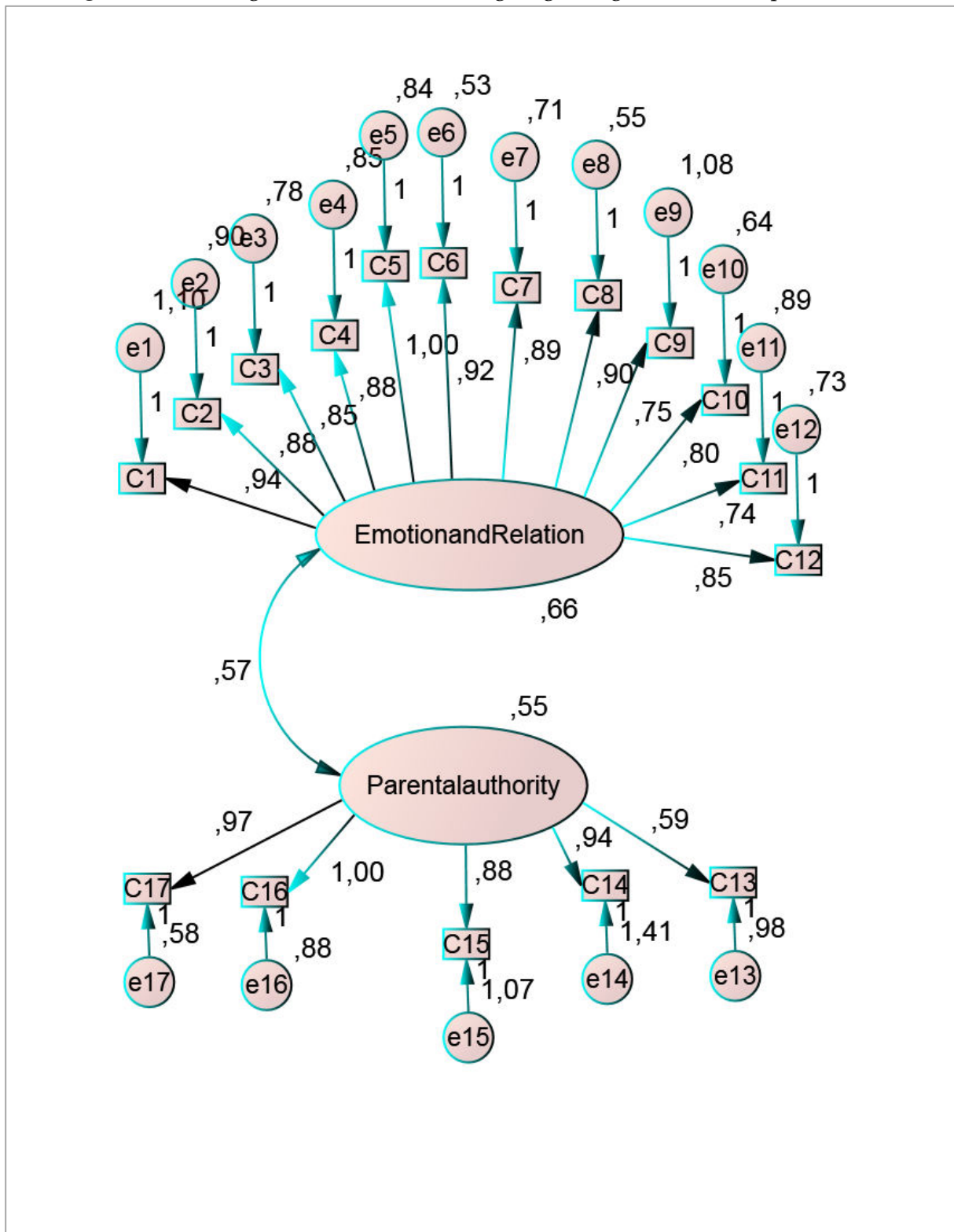
According to CFA results in Figure 1, the factor loadings vary between .59 and .97. At the end of CFA, the scale attained its final 2-dimensional and 17-item status. Based on the data, we can say that all items, which are included in the model, are in compliance with it.

Moreover, the relation between subscales of *Childhood Experiences Scale* and total subscales score is analysed through calculation of Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient; the results are given in Table 7.

Table 7: Correlation between Subscales

		TOPC	CDTOTAL	CPOTOTAL
TOPC	Pearson Correlation	1	,975**	,860**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,001	,001
	N	345	345	345
CETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	,975**	1	,726**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,001		,001
	N	345	345	345
CPOTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	,860**	,726**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,001	,001	
	N	345	345	345

As is seen in Table 7, there is a positive correlation from .72 to .97 between the *Childhood Experiences Scale s*ubscales and total score of subscales.

3.2.5.5. Childhood Experiences Scale item analysis

A subgroup-supergroup comparison of 27% is given in order to test the item distinctiveness of Early Life Experiences Scale. The t values regarding the differences between the 27% item scores of subgroups and supergroups are found to be between 8.08 (p<.01) and 12.37 (p<.01). The findings are available in Table 8.

Table 8: t values within Childhood Experiences Scale regarding differences between item scores of 27% subgroups and supergroups pursuant to total scores

Factor	Item No	t	Factor	Item No	t
Communication Problems and Affective traumas	1	12.37*	Abuse of Authority	13	8.83*
	2	12.01*		14	14.93*
	3	13.41*		15	9.83*
	4	11.34*		16	11.49*
	5	11.51*		17	10.45*
	6	11.97*			
	7	11.22*			
	8	11.29*			
	9	9.25*			
	10	8.58*			
	11	8.08*			
	12	11.11*			

Table 8 shows that all t values regarding each item and total score of Childhood Experiences Scale are found meaningful at a significance level of p< .01. These findings reveal that the items and subdimensions under Childhood Experiences Scale can distinguish the memories regarding communication problems and affective trauma, as well as those with higher or lower memories about Abuse of Parental Authority.

Moreover, total scores of scales similar to Childhood Experiences Scale that is developed by Gilbert (2003) et al. and adapted in Turkish by Akın (2013) et al. are compared via Pearson's correlation method in terms of similar scale validity. The subscale and internal consistency coefficients of scale total items within Childhood Experiences Scale are analysed as well as convergent validity, and the results are given in Table 9.

Table 9: Internal Consistency and Convergent Scale Validity

Childhood Experience	Int Cons N=479	ConScaleTest N=120
Total Score	.90*	.72*
Relation Emotion (RE)	.85*	
Parental Authority (PA)	.81*	

Table 9 demonstrates that the internal consistency and Convergent Scale Validity coefficients, which are obtained for total score and subscale scores, are meaningful and high. The results are construed as an indicator of validity and reliability.

3.2.5.6. Assessment on scores of Childhood Experiences Scale

Childhood Experiences Scale is a 17-item Likert-type scale, developed for measuring the early life experiences of individuals. The individuals are asked to mark the suitability of each item in the scale to their situation, with a grade between 1 and 5. The answers are graded as 5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree and 1=strongly disagree. The scale comprises two sub-aspects. Communication Problems and Affective traumas aspect contains 12 items, while there 5 items under Abuse of Authority aspect. In the scale, 1 item is subject to inverse scoring.

The lowest and highest possible scores from the scale are 17 and 85, respectively. Low scores mean the person has no traumatic memories regarding childhood experiences, while high scores point out the presence of such traumatic memories. The scale, which can be applied in collective or individual manner, has a standard response time of 25 minutes.
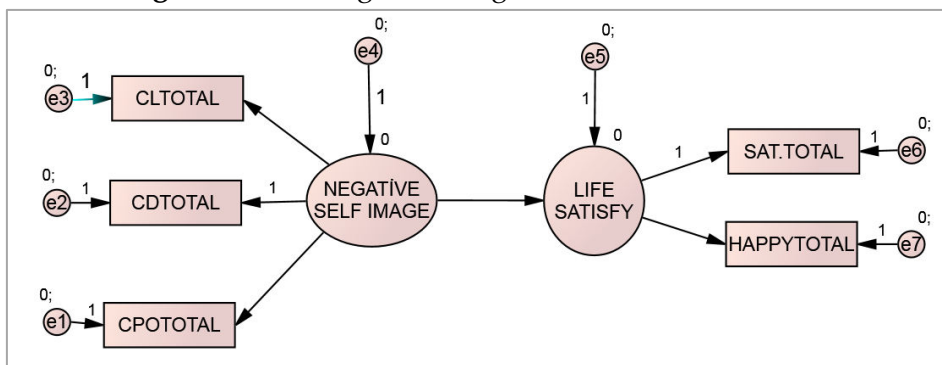
4. Results

At the second stage of the study, a model is developed in order to test how influential the childhood experiences are on life satisfaction of individuals. A path analysis is

configured for determination of whether the model, in line with this hypothesis, is meaningful.

The model to be tested grounds on assertion that the sub-dimensions of *Childhood Experiences Scale*, namely, Communication Problems and Affective traumas, and Abuse of Authority, as well as the total score from early life experiences scale, which is adapted to Turkish by Akın (2013) lead to formation of negative self-image for individuals. In this respect, the childhood experiences are considered as observed variable, while the negative self-image is treated as unobserved variable. Moreover, life satisfaction scale, adapted to Turkish by Durak et al (2010), and Oxford happiness scale, adapted to Turkish by Doğan and Çötok, are employed in order to deal with the influence of childhood experiences on life satisfaction. In this respect, the total scores from Life Satisfaction and Happiness scale are assessed as observed variable, while individual life satisfaction is evaluated as unobserved variable. The constructed model is given in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Path diagram in regard to constructed model

This model, which is constructed in view of research hypothesis, is tested and the analysis results and path diagram of model test are provided below.

Figure 3: Path analysis results diagrams of the model
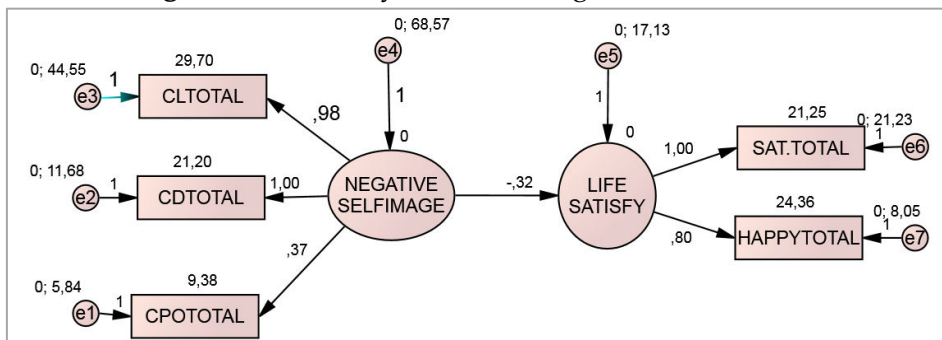
A review on the concordance coefficients, which are obtained regarding the tested model, shows the following: CFI, .99; IFI, .99; NFI,.98; TLI, .97 and RFI, .96. Besides, the chi-square is 2.79 while RMSEA value equals to .07. The model is considered acceptable

since the concordance values such as CFI, IFI, NFI, and TLI are greater than .90, Chi-square is lower than 5, and RMSEA is equal to .07 (Şimşek, 2007). Hence, there was no need to investigate the rectifying indexes. According to findings obtained in the model test that explains the life satisfaction of individuals, the childhood experiences lead to a negative self-image for individual. Negative self-image principally originates from the childhood memories due abuse of parental authority, communication problems with parents, and related affective traumas, as well as unvalued, threatening and submissive memories regarding early life experience.

Such negative self-image negatively predicts the life satisfaction of the individual by .32. In turn, the life satisfaction of an individual consists of the level of satisfaction and happiness from life.

5. Conclusion

In the light of the results concerning the first problematic of the study, a scale, which is capable of reliable and valid measurement of *Childhood Experiences* in two sub-dimensions within the scope of collectivist cultures, has been developed. Moreover, this new scale is compared to Early Life Experience Scale created by Gilbert (2003) for western societies, in order to enhance its generalisation. The comparison demonstrated that the new scale has an acceptable level of validity.

The data, obtained for the second problematic of our study, has shown that affective traumas, communication problems with parents, as well as abuse of parental authority during childhood lead to formation of a negative self-image for individuals. According to Horton & Cruise, (2001), traumatic childhood experiences have a negative effect on the self-image of child. Individuals with a negative self-image perception keep developing pessimistic view in face of any event during their adulthood. Such a point of view will prevent the individual from life satisfaction. An individual with low life satisfaction will evidently have more negative psychological well-being (Martin et al., 2008). Therefore, the early life experiences loaded with traumatic memories injure psychological health of individual. Individuals with poor mental health cannot conduct their self-relations and peripheral relation in a healthy manner (Brewin et al. 1993; Widom and Morris 1997). Such individuals cannot be successful persons in life, and the failures constrain them from life satisfaction (Lyubormirsky et al., 2005). Consequently, the individuals who are not satisfied with their life feel hopeless, unhappy and exhausted. In fact, the lack of life satisfaction and relevant impairment of psychological health depend on the attitudes of the adult with whom the individual is in relation during childhood (Hinnen, et al., 2009). In this respect, we may state pursuant to findings of hereby study that the adults in relation with their children should refrain from affectively offending the children and should not abuse their authority. The study by Rispoli et al. (2013) also emphasises that as of birth, an individual perceives the

adults who are in relation with him/her and that so, these adults have to satisfy the children particularly in affective terms. In this respect, the results of our study coincide with the research by Rispoli et al. The parents should be careful even more in eastern societies, where a collectivist social structure reigns. Indeed, in collectivist cultures, the parents may reveal their feelings to children less, and display generally more authoritarian attitude. Such behaviour is encouraged in collectivist cultures due to their cultural structure. Nevertheless, the children, who are grown in this manner, are more inclined to become unhappier individuals lacking joy of life.

Hereby study is configured and applied on individuals from 20 to 29 year old. In this respect, the study is limited in terms of its capacity to be generalised to include similar groups. However, samples from different age groups and a developmental study configuration may more clearly reveal the influence of early life experiences on individuals through stronger results. Hereby study is restricted to findings obtained exclusively from quantitative data. Nonetheless, it is important that individuals verbally express their memories regarding early life experiences. The individuals may be asked to share their most important memories of childhood; thus, the results from the studies supported by qualitative data may more efficiently manifest the level of exposure from such memories. Moreover, the results of our study are limited to communication problems, affective memories and parental authority-related memories of individuals. Even though the childhood memories begin with the family as it is the most important environment, other environmental elements are also highly influential.

In such studies, it is important to incorporate other environmental elements. Then again, hereby study exclusively concentrates on the life satisfaction of individual. The early life experiences, however, affect many different variables such as personality structure of an individual. Therefore, different variables can be handled in different studies.

6. Implications

The contribution of hereby study to related literature will be as follows: The studies on early life experiences are seldom especially in collectivist cultures, mostly because of the lack of a culturally suitable scale. By means of hereby scale that is developed pursuant to culture, it will be possible in collectivist societies to realise correlative and causative researches between early life experiences and other variables. There upon, the scientific domain in collectivist cultures will be provided with more contribution in terms of early life experiences. Besides, pursuant to the second problematic of our research, it is possible to claim that early life experiences are influential on adult life in conventional collectivist cultures. From this aspect, the study reveals that the parents, who maintain relationship with these individuals, have an affective and authoritarian influence on them. We know that the emotional development of the child begins at early ages

(Denham et al., 2002). Therefore, parents should be educated for ensuring effective communication with child lest they hurt the child in terms of emotions and authority.

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