

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED PARENTING PRACTICES AND WELL-BEING AMONG YOUNG ADULT FEMALES IN TURKEY

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Abstract

The family in modern Turkey faces a challenge in balancing the traditional collective value system that emphasizes the group over the individual, while also integrating a greater push toward self-expression and autonomy among young adults. Providing autonomy support within the relational bonds of the family represents a challenge for the collectivistic-oriented family in Turkey. The focus of this study was to examine this problem through an analysis of parenting practices and their influence on emerging adult well-being in the context of cultural change. A non-random convenience sample of 238 female emerging adults living in Istanbul, Turkey, reported on their mothers' and fathers' parenting practices and their own psychological well-being. A series of multiple regression analyses explored the predictive strength of parenting practices. For mothers, the most consistent predictor of participant well-being was autonomy support, while for fathers it was emotional warmth. Participants indicated mothers were more involved and provided more autonomy support than did fathers. Parental involvement was not significantly related to any well-being measure. Significantly higher optimism and life satisfaction was found for participants identifying as an adult. The results are suggestive of the emergence of a new fathering role in urban middle-SES families. Mother and father warmth scores were not perceived to be different, but father warmth was predictive of well-being, indicating both a transition away from traditional authoritarianism and toward a greater emotionally-present democratic parenting style. These novel findings are interpreted as a reflection of a change in fathering related to mothering.

Keywords: emerging adulthood; well-being; parenting; autonomy

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Introduction

Research suggests individuals do not directly move from adolescence to adulthood, but rather go through a preparation phase before maturity (Eryılmaz & Atak, 2011). Developed by Arnett (2004), the term “emerging adulthood” refers to the period between adolescence and adulthood, which typically corresponds to the ages of 18 to 25 (Tanner & Arnett, 2009). Emerging adulthood is a transitional stage in which occurs the development of skills leading to independence and self-sufficiency. Emerging adults face numerous academic, financial, and social challenges (Mahmoud et al., 2012), and this period can be stressful and anxiety-provoking (Austin et al., 2018), often leading to feelings of failure and dissatisfaction with life. Riggs and Han (2009) state that during this period, emerging adults face significant transitions that can bear both hazards and opportunities for growth. For instance, the most striking transformations occur in the family structure, as emerging adults attempt to maintain close relationships with their parents and simultaneously strive for greater autonomy (Melendro et al., 2020).

Turkey has recently experienced economic and social changes that have deeply affected many aspects of life, including the family. One of the most important changes over the last two decades has been the increasing representation of women in the workforce, which has had as its concomitant effect greater female enrollment in higher education (Çakıroğlu, Çevik, & Gündüz Hoşgör, 2020). With greater enrollment of women in higher education and the increase in the mean age at marriage, the average age of becoming a parent has also increased (TurkStat, 2020). Individuals in Turkey, especially in educated circles, often postpone marriage and children until they complete their education. According to Atak (2007), these changes provide support for a ‘new’ life stage for Turkish youth, especially urban youth from middle- to upper-socioeconomic classes.

Although emerging adulthood as a developmental stage has been proposed as a universal aging experience, fewer research studies have explored how the self-perception of adulthood status by young adults (Smith et al., 2015) affects psychological outcomes. This is important to consider as the perception of adulthood status has been associated with substance abuse (Smith et al., 2015), level of identity exploration (Wider et al., 2015), and psychological well-being (Cusak & Merchant, 2013) and to vary across cultures and economic and social classes (Crocetti et al., 2015). Thus the importance of investigating how

participants view their adulthood status and to determine the important factors influencing both development transitions and experiences within developmental stages.

One important influence on young adults transitioning through emerging adulthood is the role of parents. From childhood to early adulthood, children and young adults seek advice from and depend on their parents, emotionally, psychologically, and materially (Ratelle, Simard, & Guay, 2013). Simultaneously, developing autonomy is a chief concern for emerging adults. Being both emotionally close to parents and exerting autonomy can be difficult for emerging adults to balance and negotiate successfully (Inguglia et al., 2015). Turkish researchers have recognized the dilemma facing emerging adults in the context of a traditional society in transition to a more urbanized, modern economic structure. Kağıtçıbaşı (2013) suggested the concept of the “autonomous-related self” in which identity is constructed through both relational bonds and autonomous movement, while İmamoğlu (2003) has proposed a balanced integration-differentiation model. Both models propose that maintaining emotional closeness and integration in the family and exercising greater autonomy are both crucial components of successful identity development.

The experience of autonomy entails an authentic endorsement of one’s actions and choices and making decisions that reflect self-chosen interests and values (Wichmann, 2011). While this process may be less filled with family-youth conflict in societies providing greater emphasis on the value of individualism (Hofstede, 2011), in collectivist cultures, such as Turkey, this process may engender both family and individual stress and conflict (Akyıl, 2012). In collectivist cultures, it would be predicated that with autonomy being less valued at the cultural and family level, any provision of autonomy support would have greater salience for young adults, as research suggests that Turkish adolescents and young adults place greater value on autonomy and independence than previous generations (Corapci, Benveniste, & Bilge, 2018). The emergence of autonomy has an influence on interpersonal relations, feelings about identity, psychological adjustment, and psychopathology (Wichmann, 2011). It is crucial to have a supportive environment providing autonomy support through childhood and into adolescence and emerging adulthood (Musağaoğlu & Güre, 2005) so as to minimize the stresses often involved.

Parent influence on autonomy and relatedness

Autonomy development is considered to be an important task and developmental process for adolescents and emerging adults (Morsünbül, 2012; Özdemir & Çok, 2011). The development of autonomy in adolescence is closely related to the child rearing attitudes and parenting style of parents (Musağaoğlu & Güre, 2005; Özdemir & Çok, 2011; Power, 2013), with democratic parenting demonstrating greater autonomy support (Álvarez, Castillo, & Moreno-Pellicer, 2019). Studies conducted in Turkey with university students have demonstrated that autonomy development is inhibited when parents are too strict with their children and that authoritative parenting providing both autonomy support within an emotionally close relationship promotes both well-being and independence (Musağaoğlu & Güre, 2005). For example, Sunar (2009) found that self-esteem was positively related with autonomy support but negatively related to perceived parental control across three generations of families in Istanbul, Turkey. Parental control is often asserted by fathers as the authoritarian family figure. But as non-traditional male gender roles have become more accepted, it has been shown that many fathers are expressing greater emotional closeness with children and providing greater support for the development of their autonomy (Tekke, Ghani, & Kassim, 2020).

Grolnick (2003) defined autonomy support as “the degree to which the environment allows individuals to feel that they initiate their actions, rather than they are being coerced” (p. 13). According to self-determination theory, three psychological needs, autonomy, competence and relatedness, are integral to psychological well-being and their development is furthered in the presence of a supportive interpersonal environment (Ratelle, Simard, & Guay, 2013). Autonomy support has been seen as one of the three chief elements of successful parenting—others being involvement and structure (Joussemet, Landry, & Koestner, 2008). Research suggests that parental autonomy support is significantly and positively correlated with academic achievement (Duchesne et al., 2007; Ratelle et al., 2005; Guay et al., 2008) and various measures of positive outcomes (Ratelle, Simard, & Guay, 2013). Vleioras and Bosma (2005) found significant correlations between autonomy and self-acceptance, personal growth, positive relations with others, and purpose in life. Cross-cultural studies have revealed a clear relationship between autonomy and well-being (Chirkov et al., 2003; Kocayörük, Genç, & Tutkun, 2018; Hahn & Oishi, 2005; Shadon et al., 2004; Yu, Levesque-Bristol, & Maeda, 2018).

In addition to autonomy support, other parenting practices are associated with well-being among emerging adults, including emotional closeness and involvement. Ho (1986) defines parental warmth as emotional support, caring, concern, affection, kindness and tenderness. The definitions of parental warmth and involvement include various components such as the expression of care, fondness and love for children, engagement in children's interests, and appreciation of children's accomplishments (Butterfield et al., 2021). Suchman et al. (2007) suggested that parental autonomy support promotes behavioral competence and autonomy in children, whereas parental involvement seeks to endorse relatedness with parents. In other words, parental involvement is considered to promote relatedness through time spent with children, showing care and interest, providing availability, as well as having knowledge about children's daily lives. Children who receive parental warmth and acceptance are less likely to experience later psychological maladjustment (Riley, 2003). Parental involvement and closeness to parents are also predictors of subjective well-being (Flouri, 2004).

Ryan (1991) pointed out that relatedness and autonomy are not necessarily contradictory; nevertheless, the dynamics of individualistic cultures often puts them at the opposite ends of the spectrum (İmamoğlu, 2003; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2013). Cross-cultural studies suggested that the cultural background of a society is important in terms of promoting the dual components of closeness and independence (Özdemir, 2012). The Turkish sociocultural context is traditionally typified by interpersonal relationships and close ties with family and relatives. Turkish families emphasize close relationships more than autonomy and individualism, which are highlights of the Western family structure (Aslan, 2009). According to Sunar (2002), the Turkish family structure is based on a patriarchal system. It is observed that in Turkish family structure the ultimate authority figure is the father; whereas the caregiver figure is considered to be the mother.

Parenting practices and subjective well-being

Santos and colleagues (2012) defined subjective well-being (SWB) as "a person's cognitive and affective evaluations of his/her life" (p. 33). According to Flouri (2004) this evaluation includes cognitive states such as life satisfaction and current affect, both positive and negative. Feelings of happiness, satisfaction, vitality and meaning in life are considered components of SWB (Santos et al., 2012; Zika & Chamberlain, 1992). Some studies consider optimism as another

component of well-being since it is closely related to happiness and life satisfaction (Kleiman et al., 2017). Robbins and Kliever (2000) defined SWB as being the self-evaluation of life satisfaction. Similarly, Veenhoven (1984) stated that SWB corresponds to overall happiness and life satisfaction.

Çankaya (2009) found that SWB among university students was predicted by family and peer autonomy support. Özpehriz (2020) found that authoritative parenting, which supports autonomy development in children and entails both close emotional bonds and active involvement, was associated with higher levels of self-esteem in university students. Cenkseven (2012), for example, found that adolescent female life satisfaction was higher in authoritative families where autonomy development was encouraged. Autonomy support is often communicated through interactions that may not be seen as promoting autonomy. For example, Kurt and Taş (2018) observed that parental autonomy support and parental involvement in adolescents' lives predicts fulfillment of the need for autonomy, which in turn increases intrinsic motivation at school. This suggests parent involvement provides a different avenue through which parents provide autonomy support and which helps predict adolescent and young adult well-being.

Objective

The objective of the current study was to address subjective well-being among female emerging adults as a function of perceived parenting practices, including autonomy support, involvement, and warmth. Previous research has suggested that various cultural and social transformations occurring in the last two decades in Turkey have led to structural changes in the Turkish family and changes in how parents define the mother and father roles (*see* Sunar, 2002, 2009). Mothers are still perceived as the primary caregivers (Sen, Yavuz-Muren, & Yagmurlu, 2014) and are found to demonstrate greater emotional closeness with children compared to fathers (Acar, Şükran Uçuş, & Yıldız, 2019) and engage in more emotional labor (Hochschild, 1979). Other family relationships (*i.e.*, father-child) are partly defined through the mother as the primary family center (Celik, 2019; Güder & Ata, 2018; Pekel-Uludağlı, 2019). Based on these observations, it would be predicted that in an analysis of parenting and well-being, that mothers would be perceived to be more involved and demonstrate greater warmth compared to fathers.

A consistent finding in recent scholarship regarding adolescents and young adults in Turkey, is a greater orientation toward the development of

autonomous selves and the construction of independent spaces to build identities separate from the family (Corapci, Benveniste, & Bilge, 2018). This is especially found to characterize the identity development processes of middle- and upper-socioeconomic status individuals in urban environments (Coskan et al., 2015). This would suggest that participants would be sensitive to parental support for autonomy and because of its importance, there would be a significant relationship between autonomy support and subjective well-being, as seen in studies across different cultures (Kocayoruk, 2012; Lan, Ma, & Radin, 2019; Lokes, 2010). Moreover, it is predicted that the changing dynamics in how men understand gender roles, father parenting practices, and the movement away from authoritarianism, especially among urban middle-class fathers, would lead to greater predictive power for their involvement in children.

As mentioned above, an important consideration in understanding the experiences of emerging adults is to ascertain their self-perceived adulthood status, which may provide insight into underlying identity dynamics that would not be seen otherwise. Thus, it is predicted that well-being, especially optimism, will be partly influenced by reported adulthood status. Relatedly, it is predicted that there would be a significant difference in the perception of parenting in the domain of autonomy support between participants' adulthood statuses, with self-defined adults reporting that parents were more autonomy supportive than non-adult participants. Based on these considerations, the following research questions guided our study.

Question 1: What are the differences in perceived parenting practices (involvement, autonomy support, and warmth) between mothers and fathers?

Question 2: How do perceived mother and father parenting practices predict participants' subjective well-being and vitality?

Question 3: How does self-reported adulthood status predict participants' subjective well-being and their perceptions of parenting practices?

Method

Participants

All procedures performed in this study were in accordance with the ethical standards of the university institutional committee before data collection began. Participants were recruited using an online survey software program (SurveyMonkey) which was distributed across several different undergraduate

courses in the psychology department and through social media channels (e.g., Facebook). All participants completed an Informed Consent that specified their participation was voluntary and no personally identifying information was collected. Participants did not receive extra credit or additional incentive for taking part in the study. Additionally, no funding was received and no ethical conflicts were reported.

The participants in this study included 238 young adult females living in Istanbul, Turkey. The age of participants ranged from 19 to 26 ($M=22.58$, $SD=1.79$). Over half of the participants were students ($n=169$, 56%) and living with their families ($n=158$, 53.3%) at the time of data collection. When asked to report on their adulthood status, 45.6% ($n = 145$) indicated they were adults, 2.5% said they were not adults ($n=6$), and 28% ($n=89$) said they were sometimes an adult/sometimes not.

Measures

Subjective Well-Being (SWB; Krueger & Schkade, 2008). Subjective well-being was evaluated with the following indicators: happiness, optimism, satisfaction, and vitality. Each item was assessed using a 7-point Likert scale. Happiness was assessed with the question “In general how happy are you?” Optimism was assessed with the question: “How optimistic are you for your future when you consider everything?” And satisfaction was assessed with, “How satisfied are you with your life generally?” These three questions were evaluated using a 7-point Likert scale and analyzed separately.

Subjective Vitality Scale (SVS; Ryan & Frederick, 1997). Vitality level of the participant was assessed with the Subjective Vitality Scale (SVS), a 7-item measure developed by Ryan and Frederick (1997) and adapted to Turkish by Akın et al. (2012). The SVS asks participants to indicate to what extent they agree with a series of statements. Higher scores indicate higher levels of perceived vitality. The Cronbach alpha value of the scale was .84 in its original Turkish administration. In this study, the SVS demonstrated high reliability, $\alpha=.93$.

Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS; Robbins, 1994). Perceived parenting practices (parental autonomy support, parental warmth and parental involvement) were measured using the Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS) for college-aged students (Robbins, 1994). The POPS evaluates young adults' perceptions of their parents' autonomy, support, involvement, and warmth using a 7-point Likert scale. The scale has 42 items; 21 items include mother-related questions, and 21 items include father-related questions. There are six subscales that are calculated by averaging scores on the individual items: autonomy support, involvement, and warmth for both mother and father. All items were translated from English to Turkish and then reverse-translated from Turkish to English by three individuals fluent in both English and Turkish. Differences between translations were discussed and a resolution was agreed upon based on whether the resulting translation was loyal to the original English. All subscales demonstrated high internal consistencies. Means, standard deviations, and reliability estimates are listed below. See Table 1.

Table 1. Reliability coefficients and descriptive statistics for scales

Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS)	Reliability (α)	M (SD)
Mother Involvement	.82	5.41 (1.28)
Mother Autonomy Support	.91	5.07 (1.39)
Mother Warmth	.87	5.56 (1.41)
Father Involvement	.87	4.79 (1.48)
Father Autonomy Support	.88	4.72 (1.33)
Father Warmth	.87	5.38 (1.38)

Data analyses

A series of multiple regression analyses were conducted in order to explore the relationship between perceived maternal and paternal parenting practices and well-being. Independent groups t tests were conducted with adulthood status entered as the group variable and both parenting practices and well-being variables entered as dependent variables. Alpha was set at a conventional level of $p < .05$ for the determination of significance for all analyses. A-priori power analysis using conventional standards for effect size ($f^2 = .15$) and power level (.80) indicated a minimum sample size of 97 participants. This requirement was exceeded in the current study, indicating a sufficient level of power.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Pearson correlation analyses were conducted to examine the relationships among the measures of SWB. As shown in Table 2, all correlations revealed significant results which reinforces that these constructs are related with each other.

Table 2. Inter-correlations between Subjective Well-Being variables

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Happiness	—			
2. Satisfaction	.83*	—		
3. Optimism	.65*	.62*	—	
4. Vitality	.59*	.57*	.59*	—

Note: * $p < .01$.

Differences in perceived maternal and paternal parenting practices (involvement, autonomy support, and warmth)

The first research question explored the difference between perceived maternal and paternal practices through an examination of the differences between perceived maternal and paternal autonomy support. Paired samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the differences between maternal and paternal perceived practices in terms of involvement, autonomy support and warmth.

Mother involvement and father involvement were positively correlated with each other, $r=.30$, $p<.00$. There was a statistically significant difference between mother and father involvement scores, $t(143)=5.10$, $p<.00$. Participants perceived their mothers ($M=5.47$, $SD=1.23$) to be more involved than fathers ($M=4.78$, $SD=1.49$). Mother autonomy support and father autonomy support were positively correlated with each other, $r=.35$, $p<.00$. There was a statistically significant difference between mother autonomy support and father autonomy support, $t(140)=3.25$, $p<.00$. Participants perceived more autonomy support from their mothers ($M=5.15$, $SD=1.33$) than fathers ($M=4.74$, $SD=1.29$). There was no statistically significant difference between mother warmth scores and father warmth scores, $t(141)=1.61$, $p=.11$. Participants perceived the same level of warmth from their mothers ($M=5.60$, $SD=1.34$) and fathers ($M=5.40$, $SD=1.41$).

Participants' subjective well-being (SWB) and vitality as a function of perceived parenting practices

A regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between perceptions of mothers' parenting practices (involvement, autonomy support, and warmth) and subjective well-being (SWB). Participants' reported general happiness was significantly predicted by the combination of mothers' perceived parenting practices, $F(3,146)=4.37$, $p<.01$, $R^2=.08$, with autonomy support the only significant predictor ($\beta=.42$, $t=2.69$, $p<.01$). For life satisfaction, the regression model was significant, $F(3,146)=4.14$, $p<.01$, $R^2=.08$, with mother autonomy supporting a significant predictor ($\beta=.39$, $t=2.48$, $p<.05$). The model for predicting optimism did not reach significant, $F(3,146)=2.40$, $p>.05$, $R^2=.05$.

For perceived father parenting practices, the regression model was significant in predicting life satisfaction, $F(3,121)=7.30$, $p<.00$, $R^2=.11$. Perceived father warmth was the only significant predictor in the model ($\beta=.35$, $t=2.21$, $p<.05$). Similarly, the model was significant for optimism, $F(3,121)=1.75$, $p<.05$, $R^2=.13$, with father warmth being the only significant predictor ($\beta=.33$, $t=2.02$, $p<.05$). Lastly, the model for general happiness was significant, $F(3, 121)=3.97$, $p<.05$, $R^2=.07$. No predictor reached conventional standards of significance.

For vitality, the combination of predictor variables for perceived mother parenting practices explained a significant amount of variability in participants' reported feeling of vitality, $F(3, 145)=4.18$, $p<.01$, $R^2=.13$, with no predictor reaching conventional standards of significance. For fathers, the predictors explained a significant amount of total variability, $F(3,123)=5.89$, $p<.01$, $R^2=.14$, with perceived father warmth the only significant predictor ($\beta=.32$, $t=2.04$, $p<.05$).

Well-being and vitality as a function of self-reported adulthood status

Participants were asked to self-report whether they considered themselves an adult, not an adult, or sometimes an adult, sometimes not. The majority of respondents indicated they were an adult ($n=135$, 59.7%), while 37.6% ($n=85$) reported being sometimes an adult, while only 2.5% ($n=6$) reported not being an adult. Due to the small group in the 'not adult' category, these participants were dropped from further analyses. To examine adulthood status as a predictor of participant's well-being and vitality, a series of independent groups t tests were conducted with adulthood status entered as grouping variable and SWB and vitality entered as dependent variables.

Results indicated that participants self-reporting being an adult had a greater level of optimism ($M=4.84$, $SD=4.39$) than participants who were sometimes an adult/sometimes not ($M=4.39$, $SD=1.35$, $t(217)=2.42$, $p<.05$). A similar finding was reported for satisfaction, with adults reporting greater life satisfaction ($M=4.35$, $SD=1.29$) than those not identifying as an adult ($M=4.00$, $SD=1.21$), $t(216)=2.02$, $p<.05$. No significant difference was found for happiness, $t(217)=1.63$, $p>.05$, or vitality, $t(147)=1.59$, $p>.05$. To determine differences in perceived autonomy support between adulthood statuses, a series of independent groups t tests were conducted. Neither the difference in perceived autonomy support for mothers or fathers reached significance, $t(149)=.14$, $p>.05$, and $t(136)=-.43$, $p>.05$, respectively.

Discussion

Parents play a major role during their children's transitional stages, including the period of emerging adulthood, as young adults attempt the dual task of maintaining relational bonds while exerting autonomy within the family unit (Ratelle, Simard, & Guay, 2013). The strong collective value system of the family in Turkish society can problematize the fulfillment of this task as group harmony and the emphasis on 'togetherness' often overrides the exercise of a self-independent from the group. Yet, as Sunar (2002, 2009) has written, both structural and cultural changes within Turkish society have altered family value systems to varying degrees, especially in families from middle-class socioeconomic statuses. These families are having to balance a system of values that prioritizes the family, both immediate and extended, over the individual, with an emerging set of values that places greater emphasis on individual self-expression and identity development rooted more in an 'I' rather than a 'We'.

Mothers and fathers in Turkish families have traditionally been reported to occupy different roles and to engage in different parenting practices related to the development of children's autonomy and relational bonds (Sen, Yavuz-Muren & Yagmurlu, 2014). But much as the family system in Turkey has been exposed to influences that have challenged many long-held values regarding the individual's relationship to the group, the way in which parenting is enacted has also undergone change. More profoundly, the way that mothers and fathers conceptualize and define their parenting position and its inherent responsibilities will undoubtedly reflect larger cultural and social shifts occurring in society.

These considerations suggest the importance of an examination of the way in which mothers and fathers enact their roles related to autonomy support and the expression and development of emotional bonds with their young adult children. Previous research (as discussed above) points to the importance of such an examination since autonomy development and its support has been associated with myriad positive outcomes, which we conceptualized as subjective well-being in this study. But a strict focus on parenting practices related to autonomy would minimize the cultural and social importance of strong emotional bonds within the family in Turkey.

The primary objective of the current study was to evaluate how young adults perceive their parents' relative to autonomy support, involvement, and warmth, and how this perception relates to measures of well-being. The first research question thus addressed the difference between perceived maternal and paternal practices. The results indicated that emerging female adults perceived their mothers to be more involved with them than their fathers and they perceived more autonomy support from their mothers. The primary caregiver of the child in Turkey has traditionally been the mother. In this manner, it is not surprising that participants perceived their mothers as more involved and supportive than their fathers regarding their autonomy. These findings correspond with Fişek and Sunar's (2005) claims that the urban youth in Turkey tend to communicate more with their mothers than their fathers and that mothers are generally more involved in the lives of children, especially female children. Kocayörük (2012) also reported that mothers are more autonomy supportive than fathers, which is consistent with this study's finding.

The second research question addressed the relation between perceptions of parenting practices and subjective well-being. The results indicated that mother autonomy support was the only consistent predictor. For fathers, warmth significantly predicted satisfaction, optimism, and vitality, autonomy support and involvement were not significant predictors. While these results support previous findings in Turkey that perceived parenting practices predict well-being (Kocayörük, 2012) the different significant predictors for mothers and fathers suggest this influence is directed toward children through separate mechanisms.

According to Sunar and Fişek (2005), Turkish parents expect dependence and obedience from their daughters and thus may provide more restrictions for girls than boys. In the current study, results indicated that participants perceived their mothers to provide greater levels of autonomy support than provided by

fathers. This finding is not surprising given the often-stark contrast in gender roles held by fathers and mothers in Turkey. Erkal et al. (2007) reported that mothers are still the primary caregivers and are expected to receive greater satisfaction from child care than are fathers. Families in Turkey place high importance on obedience, authority, and dependency (Palut, 2009), with a divide between the largely modern urban centers and rural areas. However, it is important to note that contemporary mothers endorse greater acceptance and support for children's autonomy compared to earlier generations (*see*, Kağıtçıbaşı & Ataca, 2005; Kağıtçıbaşı, Ataca, & Diri, 2005).

More significantly, even though mothers provided greater autonomy support, fathers' warmth exhibited a significant relationship with the indicators of well-being. This finding overlaps with what Tuzgöl (2010) reported: paternal democratic parenting exhibited a significant relationship with well-being but not maternal. This finding may be explained by Turkish fathers' greater tendency toward authoritarian parenting and limited involvement in child rearing and domestic responsibilities, although it should be noted that father involvement is influenced by many factors (Ivrendi & Isikoglu, 2010). This finding suggests two interpretations. First, it is possible that urban, middle-class fathers may define fatherhood in a manner that involves a greater appreciation for emotional closeness as a defining characteristic. Previous research suggests that both the experience of and the parenting practices of being a father are to an extent dependent on the subjective interpretation of what it means to be a man and a father. The understanding of fatherhood and its role enactment is profoundly influenced by culture (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2012) and thus the lack of a significant difference in warmth reported by participants may reflect larger social changes that have led many contemporary fathers to have re-defined their role and transition away from being the emotionally detached authoritarian parent and toward a greater emotional engagement. The finding that father warmth scores predicted well-being across different indicators and did not show a significant difference from mother warmth, suggests that fathers were as emotionally close as mothers but that this closeness exhibited a stronger influence on children. This novel finding of father warmth predicting well-being while being equal in perceived frequency as mothers' warmth suggests that modern urban Turkish fathers may occupy a position in the family that challenges preconceived understandings of Turkish fatherhood associated with authoritarianism.

A related interpretation is that the warmth expressed from fathers had greater salience for participants than did mother warmth. Mothers were perceived as more involved and providing greater support for autonomy development than fathers, so it is possible that their emotional closeness was expected and held less salience for participants than did fathers' expressions of warmth. With fathers perceived as less involved, any movement to be closer emotionally would be perceived by participants as noticeable and recognizable, and the greater salience would relate with having a greater impact on developmental outcomes. This interpretation is supported in the literature as the subjective experience of parental warmth may be differently interpreted based on whether it is expressed by a child's mother or father (Etkin et al., 2014; Gözü, 2019) and also based on whether the target of the warmth is male or female (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2008; Easterbrooks & Goldberg, 1984; Rollè et al., 2019).

The last research question examined self-defined adulthood status and its relationship with well-being. The only differences in well-being measures between adulthood statuses were with optimism and satisfaction. Happiness and vitality did not show a significant difference across groups. The difference between these two results is proposed to relate to their respective time orientations, insofar as optimism points to the future and the direction one is travelling, and satisfaction suggests a contentment with that future trajectory, while happiness and vitality suggest a subjective evaluation of one's current state of being. In this regard, participants who are self-categorized as sometimes adult/sometimes not, may be experiencing a moratorium period (Arnett, 2004; Erikson, 1950; Kroger & Marcia, 2011) defined by experimentation and a lack of a settled future plan.

Study limitations

The main limitation of the study was the sample characteristics. Participation was voluntary and participants were recruited by a non-random convenience sampling technique. One question that arises considering this limitation is whether the findings can be generalized to other populations of young adults in non-urban and rural areas of Turkey. It is possible that the concept of emerging adulthood would not be as applicable to young adults living outside of urban population centers. Urban middle-class mothers are less authoritarian and engage in less corporal punishment while providing more support for autonomy (Coban, 2013). It is important to take into account this difference as a limiting factor, but considering that urbanization in Turkey has increased dramatically in

recent years, our results may be more representative.

A second limitation is the assessment of several well-being (happiness, satisfaction, and optimism) variables with single items. While this may under-represent the variability of participants' scores, single item measures are supported as valid and reliable measures of well-being (Vanderweele et al., 2020) and thus provides a comparison of the current results with previous findings (Flouri & Buchanan, 2003).

Contribution and implications

The results of this current study, in conjunction with the previous research on parenting, revealed valuable insights into parenting practices among Turkish families. A novel insight suggested from this study is that fathers in Turkish families may not differ from mothers in their emotional warmth with young adult children, an indicator that authoritarianism is no longer the primary definition of the father role. Although this finding may apply mainly to urban and middle-income fathers, it nevertheless problematizes the traditional acceptance of authoritarianism that informs most discussion of Turkish fathers. One practical implication of this finding is that professions working with adolescents and young adults, including psychologists, psychiatrists, and school counselors, should provide greater attention to the salience of the father-daughter dynamic and to move away from an exclusive focus on the role of mothers. Moreover, recognition of how parenting practices exert influence on emerging adult well-being can help professionals to focus on the stresses and opportunities inherent in the struggle for autonomy within a collectivist family value system. This study also provided evidence for the concept of the relational-autonomous self, proposed by Kağıtçıbaşı (1996), insofar as participants reported autonomy as important but without severing the relational bonds with parents. This is reflected when considering the influence of both these parenting practices in helping to predict well-being among respondents. For mothers, the most important predictor was autonomy support, and for fathers, emotional warmth. These results help extend the extant literature on family functioning in Turkey and point toward the need for greater examination of modern parenting, especially in regard to fathering.

Ethics statement

This study was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Research Ethics Committee Istanbul Bilgi University. The protocol was approved by Istanbul Bilgi University. In accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, all participants gave written informed consent for their participation in the study.

Declaration of conflicting interests

The author declares no potential conflicts of interest.

Author contributions

Both Ryan Macey Wise and Ayin Erbahar designed the study, conducted the statistical analyses, and wrote the manuscript.

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