Predictor Relationships between Values Held by Married Individuals, Resilience and Conflict Resolution Styles: A Model Suggestion[*]

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Abstract

The aim of the present research is to reveal the predictor relationships between the values held by married individuals, resilience and conflict resolution styles. The research adopts a relational screening model that is a sub-type of the general screening model. The sample of the research consists of 375 married individuals, of which 173 are females and 202 males, selected through random sampling from married individuals between 2013 and 2014. In the research, the Values Scale was used to determine which values were held by married individuals, the Resilience Scale was used to determine individuals' levels of resilience, and the Scale of Conflict Resolution Styles was used to determine which conflict resolution styles were preferred by married individuals. Data were analyzed by the AMOS 16 Program's "Structural Equation Model." The research found that the most important variable affecting resilience are the values held by individuals. This case suggests that the values of married individuals differ according to their resilience levels. According to another finding of the research, the most significant variable affecting conflict resolution styles are the values held by married individuals. As such, conflict resolution styles used by married individuals differ on the basis of values. Furthermore, it was concluded that the second most important variable affecting conflict resolution styles was married individuals' resilience levels. This suggests that the conflict resolution styles used by the married individuals differ according to their resilience levels.

Keywords: Values • Resiliency • Conflict in the marriage • Conflict resolution styles • Married individuals

Values have become as of late one of the more popular topics of interest in the social sciences. The concept of values has been discussed by a number of different branches within the social sciences, and a wide range of research has been conducted on this topic. It is observed that a variety of interpretations defining what constitutes values as a concept have been made by researchers in the literature. Although the structure of values and their relationships with other variables have been studied, it is difficult to clearly state what values include. Since the concept of values is an area studied by different disciplines, arriving at a single, shared definition remains difficult (Dilmaç, 2007). Budak (2000) defines the values as common opinions and as standards about what is good, bad, wrong, right, desirable, or undesirable in a certain population. According to another similar definition, values are beliefs about what judgments are wrong, right, desirable, and undesirable according to an individual (Dilmaç, Deniz, & Deniz, 2009). According to Akbaş (2008), values indicate what is important, what should be preferred, and how an individual is to live. Values appear as a criterion in an individual's thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors and creates an indissoluble part of social integrity (Dilmaç, Bozgeyikli, & Çıkılı, 2008). Doğan (2000) suggests that values are either a life style or an action accepted by an individual or a society. Dilmaç (2007) defined values as body of beliefs that include features and basic characteristics specific to humans differentiating them from other living creatures. According to another definition, value is sensitiveness of the individuals produced against another person, creature, event, case etc. (Yaman & Peker, 2012). Values are related to humans' emotions, thoughts, and behaviors and have an essential importance in explaining human behaviors (Dilmaç, 2007). Values play an important role in the preference of one behavior pattern over another. Another perspective suggests that values not only constitute the source of one's behaviors, but also determine the criterion for a certain behavior over another. (Dilmaç et al., 2009).Since it is both safer and more effective to ascertain attitudes from one's values instead of the other way around, examining values is generally more functional than examining attitudes and behavior. Therefore, moving from observable and measurable values, attitudes may be discussed easily; even if value preference of the individual is determined, attitudes and behaviors may be predicted. We may, during this process, say that our values affect our lives and that values should be investigated in order to understand individuals' attitudes and behaviors (Yapıcı & Zengin, 2003).

An increase in the number of studies conducted on the concept of values has occurred lately. Values have been explained by investigating many variables. Benzies and Mychasiuk (2009) mentioned in their study that values are associated with individual resilience and familial resilience. The results obtained from Bhana and Bachoo's research (2011) are consistent with this finding. In spite of these studies, no research has been performed on married individuals regarding values and the resilience of married individuals. Studies on resilience have been observed to be performed on children and adolescents in general, and a number of recent studies on adults' resilience has been associated with the resilience of families with disabled children (Bayraklı, 2010; Kaner, Bayraklı, & Güzeller, 2011; Özbay & Aydoğan, 2013). Resilience is the ability to overcome problems, it is not a natural characteristic, and it may be improved over time. Accordingly, to explain the association between values of married individuals and resilience is important.

Initial studies of resilience are based on the longitudinal studies of Werner and Smith (1992) focusing on children who faced problems or risks in Kauia and who successfully overcame it. Initial studies carried out on resilience have attempted to define the individual features required to overcome different stress states in general. Moreover, recent studies suggest that resilience should be discussed within the context of individual processes and of certain socio-cultural aspects (Özbay & Aydoğan, 2013). Resilience has become one of the most important concepts of psychology at the present time. Klohnen (1996) has evaluated resilience as a personality trait, defining it as the ability to being adopted to new conditions and as an important function including important patterns of the personality (Demirbaş, 2010; Klohnen, 1996). According to Cowen (1991), resilience is the ability to rebound from stress as a result of biological, psychological, and environmental hazards. Another definition suggests that resilience is used by adults to overcome difficult or unexpected life events (Özbay & Aydoğan, 2013).

Another variable of the present study is conflict resolution style. Different concepts of conflict in marriage and conflict resolution styles were discussed in association with the variables of marriage harmony and satisfaction. However, it is considered that the conflict resolution styles used in the marriage are associated with many variables. The present study attempts to reveal the relationships between values held by married individuals, resilience, and conflict resolution styles. Conflict occurs when resolution methods are not satisfactory (Özen, 2006). According to Tumer

(1998), marriage conflict is an interpersonal process that appears when one spouse interferes in the actions of the other spouse (as cited in Günay, 2007). Esleman (1991) suggests that conflict is an assumed and expected part of all systems and interactions, including family systems and marriage interactions. Therefore, if spouses frequently experience conflict, the issue is not merely how to avoid conflict, but also how to cope with and resolve conflicts (as cited in Öner, 2013). Conflict resolution styles in marriage are defined as patterns that couples use to seek a viable solution to the problems that they face in their relationships (Cann, Norman, Welbourne, & Calhoun, 2007 as cited in Hacı, 2011). Conflict, being a process appearing in the case of disagreement, divergence, or disharmony between individuals, is an unavoidable part of all relationships. Conflict exists in every relationship, with differences manifesting in how frequently it occurs and whether it is overt or concealed. Although all married couples find themselves experiencing conflict at one time or another (Şimşek, 2004), contrary to popular belief, conflict in marriage may be positive, even leading to an improved relationship when constructive conflict resolution styles are used. With this aspect, conflict may be the source of many innovative and creative means to positive change (Basım, Çetin, & Meydan, 2009). In other words, unhappiness in marriage occurs when conflicts are not resolve properly (Gürüz & Eğinli, 2005). The inability to resolve conflicts efficiently damages relationships, causing psychological separation and eventually leading to relationship breakdown (Bahadır, 2006). Positive or negative results of the study are related to which approaches are presented to resolve the conflict (Basım et al., 2009). Since conflict resolution is one of the most effective factors in a sustaining marriage, it is important to determine variables affecting resolution styles of the conflict and conflict. Özen (2006) specifies in his research that the conflict resolution styles used and the values held by married individuals have an important role in marriage. Accordingly, the present study will reveal the relationships between the values held by married individuals, resilience, and conflict resolution styles. In this vein, the aim of the current research is to reveal predictor relationships between the values held by married individuals and both resilience and conflict resolution styles.

Method

Research Model

The current study has aimed to reveal the predictor relationships between the values held by married individuals, resilience, and conflict resolution styles. The relational screening model, itself being a sub-type of general screening model, was used in the research. Relational screening is a research model performed to determine the relation between two or more variables and to obtain clues associated with cause and effect (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç-Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2008).

Study Group

The study group consists of the individuals who were married between 2013 and 2014. The study group was selected by random sampling so as to select a sample group representative of the entire population. Each element has an equal chance to be selected and selection of one individual does not prevent another from being selected (Şimsek & Yıldırım, 2004). The study group for this research consists of 375 married individuals selected through random sampling method, of whom 173 are female and 202 are male. The age range of the participants were 19-65 and the average age was 37.4.

Means of Data Collection

The values Scale developed by Dilmaç and Arıcak (2012) was used to determine the values held by married individuals. The Resilience Scale developed by Gürgan (2006) was used to determine individuals' levels of resilience. Furthermore, the Conflict Resolution Styles Scale developed by Özen (2006) was used to determine the conflict resolution styles used by married individuals

Values Scale by Dilmaç and Arıcak: The Values Scale developed by Dilmaç and Arıcak (2012) is based on scoring the value expressions which are considered to be reflected best by the individual according to the sense and importance in the life of the individual. The scale consists of 39 value expressions and 9 sub-dimensions: (1) Social Values, (2) Career Values, (3) Intellectual Values, (4) Spiritual Values, (5) Materialistic Values, (6) Honor of Humanity, (7) Romantic Values, (8) Freedom, and (9) Munificence and courage. The study uses a Likert-type scale scored between 0 and 9. A lower score indicates that such value does not hold an important place in the individual's life whereas a higher score indicates that such value is integral in the individual's life.

First, an explanatory factor analysis was performed for all of the value expressions' basic components. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling adequacy value was found to be .926 and the approximate Ki-square value of the Barlett Sphericity Test was found to be

14543.11 ($p < .001$). When the rotated component matrix performed by the Component matrix and the Varimax method was examined, it was observed that all values clustered under 13 factors, explaining 65.37% of total variance. The covariance of "time" outside (.431) was found to be complete on .50'n. However, 14 values included in the rotated component matrix had a load value either equal to or over 32 with a difference lower than .10 under multiple factors at the same time or alone under a single factor (Family, Time, and Personal Inner Integrity are single values). Therefore, these 14 values were excluded and the exploratory factor analysis was repeated with similar causes twice under the same conditions. Five values in the third factor analysis and two values in the fourth factor analysis were excluded. The remaining 39 values were observed to be clustered under nine factors, explaining 64.74% of total variance without any problem. In the last factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling adequacy value was found to be .910 and the approximate Ki-square value of the Barlett Sphericity Test was found to be 9133.26 ($p < .001$). All values except that of Justice/Fairness (.466) were observed to range between .50 and .80 of the common variance.

The Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients of the Values Scale were calculated on the factor basis. At the end of the analysis, the following scores were calculated; .90 for "Social Values," .80 for "Career Values," .78 for "Intellectual Values," .81 for "Spiritual Values," .78 for "Materialistic Values," .61 for "Honor of Humanity," .66 for Romantic Values," .65 for "Freedom," and .63 for "Munificence and Courage." Consequently, the first psychometric finding of the Values Scale is that the scale is a valid and reliable means for measurement.

The Resilience Scale is a Likert type scale consisting of 50 items developed by Gürgan (2006). It consists of the following 8 factors: "being strong," "being promoter," "being optimistic/holding on to the life," "communication/contact," "being prescient," "succeeding," "being a leader," and "being an explorer." Scoring of the scale is performed as "Not defining (1)," "Slightly defining (2)," "Intermediately defining (3)," "Well defining (4)," and "Great defining (5)." The scale's score ranges between 50 and 250. A higher score indicates a higher level of resilience.

In the reliability study of the scale, the test-retest reliability and the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated. The Test-Retest Reliability Coefficient was found to be .89 and the Cronbach Alpha value was found to .78 for the first implementation and .87 for the second implementation. The scale's validity and structure validity were evaluated in the validity study of the scale. When both factorial and conceptual correlations associated with some variables such as hopelessness, problem solving and focus of control are based on, it may be concluded that the Resilience Scale is reliable to measure resilience.

The Conflict Resolution Styles Scale (CRSS) was developed by Özen (2006) to measure the conflict resolution styles of the couples. The CRSS is a Likert-type scale consisting of 25 items through a six staged grading system. The scale measures four conflict resolution styles: positive, negative, subordination, and retreat. In the scale, the following sub-dimensions are included: positive conflict resolution styles includes six items (5, 9, 11, 13, 22, and 24), negative conflict resolution styles include seven items (1, 6, 8, 12, 14, 16, and 25), retreat conflict resolution styles include six items (3, 10, 15, 18, 21, and 23), and subordination conflict resolution styles include six items (2, 4, 7, 17, 19, and 20). Each item is scored between 1 and 6 in the CRSS. However, the scale does not provide a total score and is based on the scores of the sub-scales. A high score from the scale's sub-dimensions indicates a more frequent use of the conflict resolution style constituting the sub-dimension whereas a low score shows a less frequent use (Özen, 2006).

The results of the research indicate that the scale has high structural validity with high item loadings (a minimum of 54), high criterion validity, high divided semi-test reliability, and high internal consistency with significant correlations. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients for the positive, negative, retreat, and subordination sub-dimensions of the Conflict Resolution Styles Scale were calculated to be .77, .81, .75, and .80, respectively. Furthermore, item correlations were found to be higher than .20. Finally, it may be concluded as a result validity and reliability studies conducted by Özen (2006), that the scale is both valid and reliable.

Data Collection and Analysis

To collect the data, the list including the Values Scale, Resilience Scale, Conflict Resolution Styles Scale, and a Personal Information Form was given in a closed envelope to the individuals in the sample group. The individuals were asked to read the instructions at the beginning of the tests, to answer the tests, and to return their answered in a closed envelope. The implementation lasted approximately 15 to 20 minutes. The scales were assessed individ-

ually, and those tests answered deficiently or incorrectly were not included in the sample. As a result, the scales answered by 375 married individuals were included in the evaluation.

The predictor relationships between values, resilience, and the conflict resolution styles used by married individuals were analyzed using the AMOS 16 Program's "Structural Equity Model." Structural equity modeling is a statistical approach revealing the causal and mutual relationships between observed and potential variables to test a theoretical model (Shumacker & Lomax, 2004).

Findings

In the last model obtained (X^2 = 201.44, df = 67, p < .001), six exogenous (social values, career values, intellectual values, spiritual values, materialistic values, humanity dignity values, romantic values, freedom values, and values related to munificence and courage) and two endogenous (resilience and conflict resolution styles) data exist. Each of the paths shown in the model was found to be statistically significant. The Bentler-Bonett normed fit index (NFI), The Tucker-Lewis coefficient fit index (TLI), and other fit indexes showed that the model fits well (table 1). Both of the two way correlations among the endogenous data in the model have high values and are statistically significant. This case is also affected by the correlation values of the value scale's sub-dimensions used in the study.

Table 1
Statistical Values Associated With Adequacy of the Structural Equation Model

Measurement	Well Adequacy	Acceptable Adequacy	Adequacy Index Values of the Model
(X^2/sd)	≤ 3	≤ 4-5	3.007
RMSEA	≤ .05	.06 - .08	0.073
SRMR	≤ .05	.06 - .08	.078
NFI	≤ .95	.94 - .90	.907
CFI	≤ .97	≤ .95	.935
GFI	≤ .90	.89 - .85	.929
AGFI	≤ .90	.89 - .85	.889
TLI	≤ .95	.94 - .90	.912

When the adoptive values in Table 1 are examined, X^2/sd = 3.007; $RMSEA$ = .073; $SRMR$ = .078; NFI = .907, CFI = .935; GFI = .929; $AGFI$ = .889 and TLI = .912 were found. In general, it is understood that the model has compliance values at desired level (Bollen, 1989; Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Byrne, 2010; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2011; Tanaka & Huba, 1985). The single factor model tested is shown in Figure 1. All paths shown in the model are significant at a level of .001.
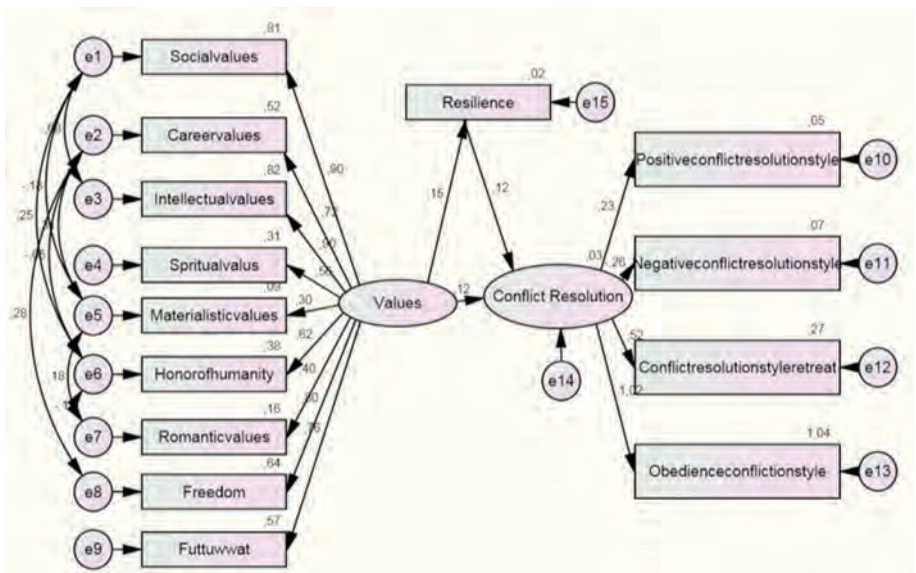

Figure 1: Path analysis towards direct and indirect relationships of conformed and unconfirmed related variables of the model hypothesized (*N*=375). All numbers are standardized path analysis values.

Table 2

Model Towards Descriptive and Predictor Relationships Between Values and Resilience and Conflict Resolution Styles of the Married Couples

Predictor Variable	Dependent Variable	Total Effect	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Standard Error	Critical Value
Value	Resilience	.150	.150	0	.013	4.709*
Value	Conflict resolution styles	.117	.117	0	.047	1.887*
Resilience	Conflict resolution styles	.117	.117	0	.005	1.976

Note .ª Total effect= Direct effect + Indirect effect.*$p < .01$, ** $p < .05$.

When the model shown in the above figure is examined, values are observed to be the most important independent variable affecting resilience ($t = 4.71$, $p < .01$). The correlation coefficient value related to this factor was found to be β = .15. A positive linear relation was determined between the values and married individuals' levels of resilience. In other words, this case suggests that married individuals' values may differ according to their levels of resilience.

Furthermore, the most important variable affecting conflict resolution styles ($t = 1.89$, $p < .01$) are the values held by married individuals. The correlation coefficient value related to this factor was determined to be β =.12. A positive linear relation was determined between the values held by and the conflict resolution styles used by married individuals. In other words, this case suggests that the values held by married individuals may differ according to the conflict resolution styles that they use.

Furthermore, the second important variable affecting conflict resolution styles ($t = 1.99$, $p < .01$) in the model tested is married individuals' resilience. The correlation coefficient value related to this factor was determined to be $β =.12$. A positive linear relation was determined between married individuals' resilience levels and conflict resolution styles. In other words, this case suggests that married individuals' resilience levels would differ according to the conflict resolution styles that they use.

Discussion

According to the findings of the research, the most important independent variable affecting resilience is values. This specific case suggests that the values held by married individuals differ according to their resilience levels. No research was found in the literature discussing married individuals' values and resilience levels. Özen (2006) has suggested in his study investigating effect of value compliance on marital adjustment that resemblance of the values of the spouses predicts marital adjustment of the couples and wives positively whereas has no effect on marital adjustment of the husbands. Kalmykova (1984) mentioned that the values adopted by couples are of vital importance in marriage. This case asserts that the values held by spouses have an important effect on their marriage relationship. In the literature, there are a number of studies underlining the relationships of values and the concept of resilience. Bhana and Bachoo (2011) suggested in their research that the values and belief systems held by individuals effect both individual and family resilience. Benzies and Mychasiuk (2009) also specified that both individual and family resilience are affected by such variables as values, spiritual values/beliefs, self-confidence, and one's ability to efficiently overcome difficult situations. When such studies suggesting the relationship between resilience and values are considered together with the role of values in marriage relationships, married individuals' values and resilience levels appear as two concepts related to another. Since one's level of resilience aids his/her ability to face and overcome problems (Özcan, 2005), it is believed that the values held by married individuals affect their levels of resilience and abilities to overcome problems. Although no study in the literature has directly investigated the relationship between married individuals' values and resilience, many studies have been conducted examining the variables associated with values. Dilmaç et al. (2009) have examined the relationship between self-intelligence and value choices. Self-intelligence is defined as behaving attentively and tolerantly toward oneself, considering negative experiences to be a part of life, and seeking for logical solutions rather than making much of negative emotions and thoughts (Neff & Harter, 2002). As a result of such research, a positive relation was found between self-intelligence scores and the sub-dimensions of success, hedonism and excitation, universality, helpfulness, adoption, and safety in students. Baş (2014) examined the relations between values and the meaning of life in his research, asserting that values and the meaning of life are two related variables and those values are an important predictor one's understanding of the meaning of life. When studies on values and their findings are

reviewed together, it is understood that married couples' values and resilience are two related concepts and that the values that one holds affect his/her resilience.

As a result of the study, the most effective variable on conflict resolution styles was determined to be the values held by married individuals. In other words, this case suggests that the values held by married individuals differ according to the conflict resolution styles that they use. Although no research discussing the values and conflict resolution styles of married individuals was found in the literature, the effects of the values adopted by couples on conflicts in marriage and on their preferred conflict resolution styles were revealed. Kalmykova (1984) reported that disharmony in couples' value judgment causes conflict in marriage and also affects which conflict resolution style couples use to resolve their conflicts. On the other hand, previous studies focusing on conflict in marriage, marriage harmony, and marriage satisfaction have examined the causes of conflict in marriage, which conflict resolution styles are preferred by married individuals based on gender, and which variables predicting conflict in marriage and conflict resolution styles. Özen (2006) investigated the effect of conflict resolution styles preferred by spouses on marriage harmony in his research, suggesting that while the conflict resolution styles used by husbands has a significant effect on marriage harmony, the conflict resolution styles used by wives does not have a significant effect on marriage harmony. In fact, it was discovered that marriage harmony is negatively affected when husbands use negative conflict resolution styles. Furthermore, it was found that spouses' conflict resolution styles were significantly effective at predicting couples' levels of marriage harmony. Hacı (2011) also mentioned that negative and subordination conflict resolution styles are one of the significant predictors of marriage harmony. Öner (2013) found that marriage conflicts and the conflict resolution styles of married individuals differ by gender, education level, whether the wife is employed or not, the number of children, and which spouse initiates the conflict. Despite these studies, there is no research in which conflict resolution styles and values in marriage are discussed or whether relationships existed between these two concepts existed. As such, when previous studies and their findings are reviewed together, it is understood that the conflict resolution styles and values are two related concepts and that the values held by individuals affect which conflict resolution styles are used by married couples.

Furthermore, it was observed that the second most important variable affecting conflict resolution styles was married individuals' resilience. In other words, this case suggests that married individuals' resilience levels differ according to which conflict resolution style is used by married individuals. Although most studies conducted on resilience focused on children and adolescents in general, studies focusing on family resilience and those variables affecting family resilience have recently been conducted abroad. When resilience is considered in light of marriage and family, some families are broken up in the face of crises whereas others grow even stronger (Kaner & Bayraklı, 2010). Patterson (2002) defines resilience in a family as the ability to overcome and to readjust when faced with danger. The concept of family resilience was discussed as a concept of evaluation and intervention associated with the family system, focusing on "relational resilience" within the family rather than individual resilience (Walsh, 1996). As in individual resilience, a family may remain standing and develop against a crisis. In this case, family members should have the ability to resolve problem. Because resilient individuals not only have efficient interpersonal communication skills, but also high problem solving skills (Gürgan, 2006), resilient individuals with these skills are expected to overcome conflicts efficiently. McCubbin and McCubbin (1988) reported that one of the protective factors within the family is its ability to reconcile differences in the case of conflict. However, according to the conceptual descriptions and research findings, conflict resolution styles and resilience are two associated concepts. In the literature, the variables affecting individuals' levels of resilience were discussed more than the resilience. Terzi (2008a) reported that one's ability to overcome problems does not change by gender and that the variables of optimism, self-efficacy, and the adoption of problem solving oriented strategies are predictors of resilience. Serbest (2010) reported that university students perceive depressive symptoms presented on resilience negatively; however, approval of mother had a positive effect. Terzi (2008b) proved a relationship between hardiness and perceived social support. Similarly, Bayraklı (2010) stated that problem-oriented coping and social support perceived affect the resilience positively. The findings of the present research indicate that resilience and conflict resolution styles of married individuals are related and that married individuals' resilience levels affect which conflict resolution styles are used.

According to the findings obtained from the study, values held by married individuals differ according to their resilience levels and preferred conflict resolution styles. Accordingly, a program aiming to

teach values to married individuals may be organized and the effect of this program on individuals' resilience levels and preferred conflict resolution styles may be investigated. Although studies on conflict resolution styles and values are relatively common in Turkey, studies on resilience are limited. As such, further studies on resilience may be useful in order to understand this concept in fuller detail. Furthermore, new researches in which relationships between values, conflict resolution styles, and resilience will be reviewed may be carried out.

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