The Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Approval Dependence in University Students: The Serial Mediation of Interaction Anxiety and Insight

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This research examined the serial mediating effect of interaction anxiety and insight into the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependence in university students. The research group comprised 511 volunteer university students, of whom 78,7% were females and 21,3% were males. Research data was collected via "The Two-Dimensional Self-Esteem Scale", "The Scale of Interpersonal Relationship Dimensions", "Interaction Anxiousness Scale", and "Insight Scale". In analysing the data, descriptive statistics were examined and the relationship between variables was calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The bootstrap method was used to test the mediation model. The mediation analysis results revealed that interaction anxiety and insight functioned as mediation variables in the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependence. According to the findings, an increase in self-esteem causes a decline in interaction anxiousness, which causes an increase in insight, which in turn leads to a decline in approval dependence. Findings related to the model that was tested were discussed following the literature. Suggestions for researchers and field practitioners were listed.

1. Introduction

Self-perception and self-awareness play an important role both in an individual's relationship with themself and others. As they perceive their environment based on their self-concept, people internalize the experiences that fit into that self-concept, and those that do not deny or change them in ways that do (Burger, 2006). This process involves the individual's gaining insight into who they are, while it also involves having feelings about who they are (Crocker, 2002). Self-esteem, which is considered the emotional aspect of the self, defines the individual's judgments such as contentment, respect, value, and so on, about each part of the self that constitutes the individual's self-concept (Thomaes et al., 2010). While in some approaches attitude is as an attitude that encompasses positive or negative cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses, for others it is the individual's response to him or herself rather than a mere attitude (Mruk, 2006).

Self-esteem is a structure that shows how much a person values themself and is considered an evaluative component in an individual's self-knowledge (Baumeister et al., 2003). Tafadori and Swann (2001), on the other hand, explain self-esteem with the concepts of self-liking and self-competence. The self-liking aspect represents the ability to regard oneself as socially valuable and consider oneself good or bad. That is to say, it

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reflects the individual's emotional assessments of themself by referring to the content of their emotions and thoughts (Leary, 2004). Self-competence, the other aspect of self-esteem, represents the individual's positive and negative attitudes towards themself as a source of power and competence. In other words, it defines the individual's beliefs regarding their control over their life (Tafarodi & Swann, 1995; 2001). Therefore, the self-competence-based approach to self-esteem emphasized the individual's ability and competence in realizing the things that have the upmost importance for them (Mruk, 2006).

A healthy level of self-esteem manifests itself as accepting oneself as a whole, sense of worthiness and self-confidence, and it effects well-being and functionality (Salmivalli et al., 1999). While high self-esteem indicates a mostly positive assessment of the self, low self-esteem indicates a negative assessment of the self (Baumeister et al., 2003). People with high self-esteem are less stressed than that have low self-esteem (Abouserie, 1994); happier, and less likely to succumb to depression in the face of stressful and traumatic events (Baumeister et al., 2003). On the other hand, people with low self-esteem are prone to undervaluing their skills and denying their success. They experience difficulty in setting goals and solving problems. As a result, they perform well below their academic and social abilities and have self-limiting beliefs (Plummer, 2014). Swann Jr et al. (2007) argue that people who have negative connotations regarding themselves tend to think and act in ways that reduce their quality of life. Some studies have also found that low self-esteem is associated with victimization experiences, bullying, defensive behaviors (Vaughan-Johnston et al., 2020), and internal problems such as depression, suicidality, eating disorders, and anxiety disorders, as well as external problems such as crime, substance abuse, etc. (Mann et al., 2004). Low self-esteem also manifests itself with a tendency to feel dependent on one's partner and be hostile toward them (Schutz, 1998). Individuals with low self-esteem tend to have difficulty in forming close relationships and believing that they are worthy of a satisfactory relationship. Low self-esteem can also lead to confusion, anxiety and misunderstandings, resulting in distorted beliefs about the self and others (Plummer, 2014).

It is assumed that the social environment and the society the individual belongs to play a significant role in developing self-esteem. Individual develops perceptions concerning themself and others based on the interactions with their environment (Koch, 2002). Self-esteem functions as sociometry during these interactions; helping the individual maintain their inner sense of self and motivating them to maintain their bonds with others (Leary et al., 1995). As a creature that both effects the environment and is affected by it, the human being has the opportunity to maintain their existence and fulfill their needs through the relationships they develop (Imamoğlu & Aydın, 2009). While these needs, which necessitate the presence of others, can be social needs such as to love, to be loved, to belong to one's environment, they can also be emotional needs such as the need for approval from others (Avci-Cayir & Kalkan, 2018). Disapproval of rejection experienced during the process of forming relationships can strongly affect individuals' sense of self and social perceptions. This effect within contexts where social exclusion instead of inclusion happens can cause the individual's self-esteem to decrease (Leary et al., 1995). When the individual does not have healthy perceptions, or mental models, regarding themself, others and the world, they may form their self-esteem based on the opinions and assessments of others and tend to seek their approval (Erden-Cinar, 2020).

The term approval dependence refers to the approval-seeking behavior of individuals and the prevalent and adverse effects of this behavior on their lives. It is determined depending on where, in what way, or to what extent it happens (Bebek, 2012). Approval dependence manifests itself as suggestibility, conformity, dependent behavior and sensitivity to interpersonal relationship clues in social situations. Here, the main motivation is the desire to form and maintain nurturing relationships (Bornstein, 1992). The individual, who tries to fulfill their own needs within the network of interpersonal relationships, is dependent on others to the extent that their need for security and love and approval is met (Avci-Cayir & Kalkan, 2018). Hence, notable inconsistencies can be seen in people dependent on their interpersonal relationships in different situations and settings. The desire or the goal to be directed and supported by others, and the belief, or the cognitive context in other words, that they are weak and in need of guidance and protection from others can be determinative in this inconsistency. In this context, the individual assesses the environment in terms of opportunities and risks, and behaves accordingly (Bornstein, 1992).

The need for approval, which has an important place in interpersonal interactions, can cause the individual to live according to the expectations and wishes of others rather than oneself and provide the establishment of social ties (Karasar & Ogulmus, 2016). In such a case, each potential impression the individual will leave on

others becomes a factor in their interactions. As a result of this anxiety, which is called social interaction anxiety, the individual does their best to make the desired impressions or avoid unwanted ones. Social interaction anxiety is defined as the anxiety or distress felt when meeting or talking to people of the opposite sex, strangers, or friends (Mattick & Clarke, 1998). It manifests itself as a person's avoidance or fear of meeting others, interacting, and expressing himself (Kashdan, 2004). It includes fundamental concerns such as the fear of being incomprehensible and boring, not knowing what to say or how to say in social interactions, and fear of being ignored (Mattick & Clarke, 1998).

Everyone might experience anxiety in social settings to a certain degree; however, some people feel this anxiety much more intensely in their interactions with others (Leary & Kowalski, 1995). When this anxiety is high, there is an effort to hide these concerned situations as much as possible or avoid such social environments (Kashdan et al., 2011). It is noted that people with social interaction anxiety constantly relive disturbing experiences in their minds and experience negative emotions (Kashdan & Roberts, 2007). Studies have shown that social interaction anxiety represents the subjective social anxiety that individuals experience regardless of the accompanying behaviors (Leary, 1983), and it has a strong correlation with perceived social support (Konan & Celik, 2019) and low self-esteem (Gumus, 2016; Leary & Kowalski, 1995).

Low self-esteem and social interaction anxiety are closely related to self-awareness and insight. Insight is an internal process expressed as gaining new knowledge and awareness regarding one's strengths and abilities (Akdogan & Turkum, 2018). Having a high level of insight involves the cognitive, emotional, and operational aspects of one's self-awareness (Hamachek, 2000). In this context, insight is conceptualized through a three-dimensional structure as a holistic view of oneself and conditions, self-understanding, and self-accepting with positive and negative qualities (Akdogan & Turkum, 2018). Insight includes awareness, acceptance, and understanding of oneself but also being aware of surroundings (Hamachek, 2000). With this aspect, insight sheds light on an important point in interpersonal interactions. It can be a vital structure for the person to be aware of both oneself and the environment, realize oneself, and act in the relationship systems accordingly.

Studies that have been conducted show that self-esteem is a predictor of life success (Orth & Robins, 2014; Orth et al., 2012) and mental health (Okcu, 2020) and that high self-esteem explains success and well-being in relationships, professional life, and health. Given the evidence concerning the importance of self-esteem, it is clear that the development of self-esteem has significance at a social level (Orth & Robins, 2014). Considering all this information, this study discussed the effects of the above variables on university students. University years coincide with a period called adulthood, where the individuals are still in a process of finding their identity, trying to gain a place in society, declaring their independence, and shaping their life and future (Arnett, 2004). In this period, the desire to gain the appreciation and approval of others in social life and interpersonal relationships may become more prominent compared to other developmental periods. This desire can sometimes distract the person from natural resources and assessments, increase their tendency to act following their value in the eyes of others, and lead to the emergence of approval dependence. This study was conducted to demonstrate the predictive role of self-esteem in the development of recognition dependence in university students and the effects of anxiety and insight on their interactions. Furthermore, insight emphasizes an interactive process with dimensions of self-knowledge and self-acceptance and gaining awareness of self and others. Therefore, in this model, the mediation effect of the insight variable through interaction anxiety in explaining approval dependence in interpersonal relations was also wanted to be examined. In addition, the fact that insight can be intervened in both individual and group counselling processes shows that this variable may have an important place in reducing approval dependence in relationships. With the data obtained at the end of this study, it aimed to contribute to the knowledge of experts and educators who work with university students regarding the general structure of this period and make inferences and suggestions for the prevention of possible problems. Thus, it was desired to create a steppingstone for the protective and preventive steps that will contribute to the healthy development of the students in this period. In this study, in which the serial mediating effect of the interaction anxiety and insight in the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependence, answers to the following questions were sought in line with the main objective: (i) Does interaction anxiety have a mediating role between self-esteem and approval dependence? (ii) Does insight have a mediating role between self-esteem and approval dependence? (iii) Do interaction anxiety and insight have serial mediating roles in the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependence?

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Model

The correlational survey model was used in this study, which examined the serial mediating roles of social interaction anxiety and insight in the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependence. Correlational survey models are used to determine the correlation between two or more variables and the extent of the correlation (Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun, 2011).

2.2. Research Sample

This study was used a convenience sampling technique. Convenience sampling is that the researcher selects participants based on their willingness and availability to study (Creswell, 2012). The research group consists of university students studying at the faculty of education of a university located in the western part of Turkey in the 2019-2020 academic year. The students were studying in the departments of Elementary Mathematics Education, English Education, Pre-school Education, Primary Education, Turkish Education, Psychological Counseling and Guidance, and Special Education. The study was conducted on 511 university students, and the age range varied between 18-26. The average age of the students was 20.84. Regarding gender variables, 78,7% of the group consisted of female participants, while 21,3% were male participants.

2.3. Data Collection Tools and Procedure

Two-Dimensional Self-Esteem Scale: It is a measurement tool developed by Tafarodi and Swan (2001) to measure self-esteem with self-liking and self-competence sub-dimensions. The scale consists of 16 items, and each sub-dimension contains eight items. The adaptation study of the scale into Turkish culture was conducted by Dogan (2011) on university students. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed as part of the scale's validity, and criterion validity was examined. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis confirmed the two-factor structure of the scale and revealed that the fit indices ($\chi 2$ = 258.93, df = 98, p = .001, RMSEA = .05, RMR = .05, AGFI = .91, GFI =.94, NFI = .95, CFI = .97) were at an acceptable level. When examining the scale in terms of criterion validity, it was found that the concurrent validity of the scale also has a sufficient level.Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient and test-retest reliability coefficient were calculated to test the scale's reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the sub-dimensions self-liking and self-competence were found to be .83 and .74, respectively. The test-retest reliability coefficient for both sub-dimensions was reported to be .72 (Dogan, 2011). In this study, the Cronbach's alpha of the scale was calculated as .86.

The Scale of Interpersonal Relationship Dimensions: The scale was developed by Imamoğlu and Aydın (2009) on young adults. The scale is graded as a 5-point Likert scale, and consists of 53 items. Principal Component Analysis tested the construct validity of the scale, and it was found that it had a four-factor structure. In addition, there are reverse items in the scale, which consists of four sub-dimensions: approval dependence, emotional awareness, trust for others, and empathy. The social desirability scale was used as part of construct validity, and it was found that the scale was not influenced by social desirability. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient and test-retest reliability coefficient were calculated to test the reliability. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficients of the sub-dimensions of the scale were found to be between .78 and .85., while the test-retest reliability coefficients varied between .62 and .96 (Imamoğlu & Aydın, 2009). In this study, the approval dependence sub-dimension of the scale was used, and Cronbach's alpha was calculated as .84.

Interaction Anxiousness Scale: The scale was developed by Leary and Kowalski (1993) and adapted into Turkish by Coskun (2009) with a sample of university students. Interaction Anxiousness Scale is a 5-point Likert scale consisting of 15 items. As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis that was conducted to verify the construct validity, it was found that the scale confirmed the single-factor structure, and the fit indices ($\chi 2$ = 292.90, df = 90, p =.00001, RMSEA =.06, RMR=.06, GFI=.82, NFI=.87, NNFI=.89, CFI=.90) were acceptable. The scale contains reverse items. Cronbach's Alpha value for the scale's internal consistency was calculated as .91. The test-retest reliability analysis performed every three weeks revealed the reliability coefficient as .80. It was found that the item-test correlations varied between .39 - .70. High scores from the scale represent high social interaction anxiety (Coskun, 2009). Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale was calculated as .86 in this study.

Insight Scale: The scale was developed by Akdogan and Turkum (2018) on university students. The scale consists of a holistic view, self-acceptance, and self-understanding sub-dimensions. It consists of 20 items and contains reversed items. The responses to statements are rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The three dimensions formed at the exploratory factor analysis explain 45,24% of the total variance. The confirmatory factor analysis confirmed the three-dimensional structure of the scale, and it was found that the fit indices ($χ2/df$ =1.77, RMSEA=.053, SRMR =.059, CFI=.90, GFI=.90) were at acceptable levels. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient and test-retest coefficient were calculated for reliability analysis. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated as .84 for the whole scale. In addition, scores of .80, .69, and .78 were calculated for the subdimensions of holistic view, self-acceptance, and self-concept, respectively. The test-retest reliability coefficient was calculated to be .84 (Akdogan & Turkum, 2018). Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale was calculated as .84 in this study.

2.4. Data Analysis

Model 6 in PROCESS v3.5 developed by Hayes (2018) as the SPSS macro was used to test the serial mediation of interaction anxiety and insight into the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependence. Mediation analysis is used to test and understand how X' s effect on Y operates (Hayes & Rockwood, 2017). Interaction anxiety is the first mediator in the direct and indirect effects of self-esteem, the antecedent variable in the serial mediation model, on approval dependence. Mediation hypotheses clarify how an antecedent variable (X) affects an outcome variable (Y) through one or more intervening variables or mediators (M) (Preacher ve Hayes, 2008). Therefore, a mediation model refers to two or more sets of causal events. The mediator should be positioned between X and Y, affected by X and affecting Y (Hayes & Rockwood, 2017). In this study, the bootstrap coefficient was obtainedThis study obtained the bootstrap coefficient by using 5000 bootstrap sampling. The effect's significance was tested by considering that the 95% confidence interval values do not include zero with the bootstrap technique (MacKinnon et al., 2004). Also, this study was examined the effects of interaction anxiety on approval dependence through insight, which is the second mediator variable. For this reason, the different mediation models that were intertwined for the mediation hypothesis were analyzed together. This way, the mediating roles of interaction anxiety and insight in the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependence were tested. In addition, it was examined whether interaction anxiety and insight displayed serial mediation in predicting approval dependence by self-esteem.

2.5. Ethical

The approval of the Ethics Committee required for the study was obtained by the resolution of the University Ethics Committee dated 29/11/2019 with resolution number 2019/19. Therefore, there are no issues affecting the mental and physical health of the participants.

3. Findings

This serial multiple mediator model examined the effect of interaction anxiety and insight, the mediator variables, on the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependence. Before conducting the mediation analysis, descriptive statistics regarding the variables were examined. Descriptive statistics (mean score, standard deviation, kurtosis, and skewness values) and Pearson Correlations for these variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics Results Regarding the Variables*

Variable	1	2	3	4
1.Self-Esteem	-	-,511**	-,525**	,419**
2.Approval Dependence		-	,539**	-,332**
3.Interaction Anxiety			-	-,362**
4.Insight				-
Mean	57,94	40,17	40,05	75,95
Standard Deviation	9,44	9,09	10,38	10,01
Skewness	-,215	,103	,174	,069
Kurtosis	-,247	-,445	,007	-,590

**p < .01

As can be seen in Table.1, self-esteem in university students have a significant negative correlation with approval dependence (r=-,51, p<.01) and interaction anxiety (r=-,53, p<.01). In contrast, it has a significant positive correlation with insight (r=,42, p<.01). Approval dependence has a positive correlation with interaction anxiety (r = ,54, p < .01), and a negative correlation with insight (r=-,33, p<.01). Also, interaction anxiety and insight have a significant negative correlation with each other (r=-,36, p<.01). When examined in skewness and kurtosis values, the variables ensure the normality conditions (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The serial mediation of interaction anxiety and insight in the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependence was analyzed through PROCESS Macro based on bootstrapping. The findings that were obtained are presented in Figure 1.
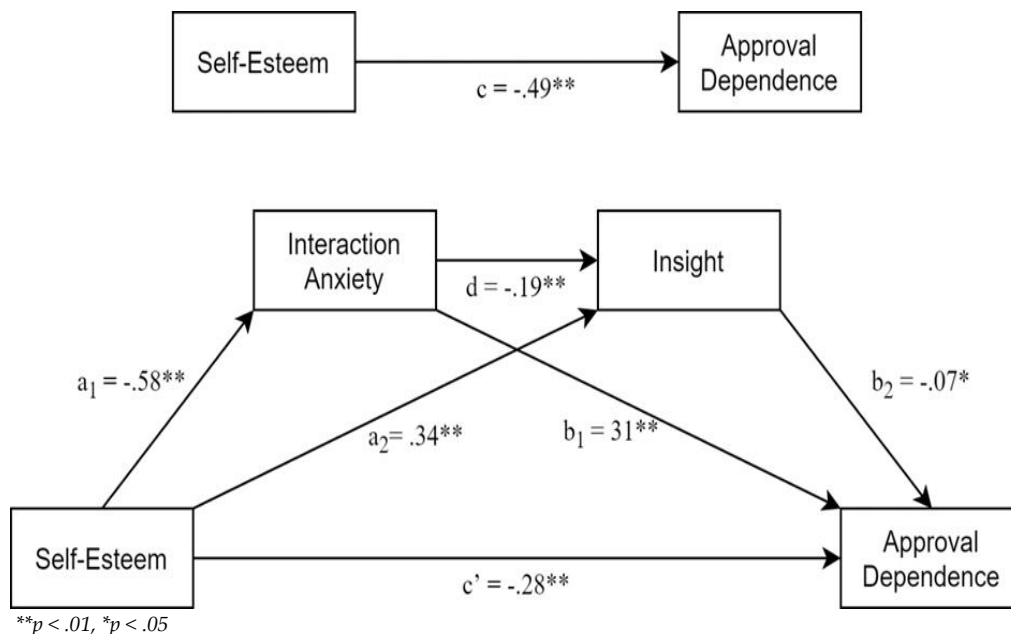

Figure 1. *Results of Serial Multiple Mediation Model in the Prediction of Approval Dependence*

As seen in Figure 1, self-esteem in university students directly negatively predicts approval dependence (c=-.49, p<.001). When interaction anxiety and insight, which are serial multiple mediators, are included in the model, a decrease in the value is observed (c'=-.28, p<.001), but it still shows a significant result. If the effect size decreases when the mediators are included in the relationship between the variables X and Y, the mediating relationship can be significant (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Therefore, it is seen that interaction anxiety and insight are partial mediators in the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependence. In addition to that, it is seen that self-esteem negatively predicts approval dependence (a1= -.58, p<.001) and positively predicts insight (a2 =.34, p <.001). On the other hand, interaction anxiety positively predicts approval dependence (b1 = .31, p <.001), while insight negatively predicts approval dependence (b2 = -.07, p < .05). The serial multiple mediation established is significant [F (3, 507) = 98.26, p<.001], and the independent variables and mediators explain 37% of the variance in approval dependency. In the model, the increase in self-esteem causes a decrease in interaction anxiety. The decrease in interaction anxiety causes an increase in insight, resulting in a decrease in approval dependence. The bootstrapping coefficients at 95% confidence intervals obtained at the end of the analysis performed to determine whether the indirect paths in the model are significant are presented in Table 2.

Table 3. *Bootstrapping Coefficients Regarding the Serial Multiple Mediation Model*

Effects	Coefficient	Standard Error	Bootstrapping Lower Limit	Bootstrapping Upper Limit
Total effect	-,4922	,0367	-,5643	-,4201
Direct effect	-,2789	,0417	-,3609	-,1969
Indirect effect(s)				
Total	-,2133	,0306	-,2768	-,1561
$X \to M_1 \to Y$	-,1807	,0277	-,2372	-,1292
$X \to M_2 \to Y$	-,0246	,0128	-,0504	-,0006
$X \to M_1 \to M_2 \to Y$	-,0080	,0048	-,0188	-,0002

(X = Self-esteem, Y = Approval dependence, M_1 = Interaction Anxiety, M_2 = Insight)

As seen in Table 2, three different indirect effects were found as a result of the serial multiple mediation model. In the first indirect effect, self-esteem significantly affected approval dependence through interaction anxiety (b=-.181, %95 GA [-.2371, -.1292]. In the second indirect effect, it was found that self-esteem significantly affected approval dependence through insight (b=-.025, %95 GA [-.0504, -.0006]. Lastly, in the third indirect effect, it was found that self-esteem significantly affected approval dependence through interaction anxiety and insight (b=-.008, %95 GA [-.0188, -.0002].

4. Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

This study examined serial mediation of interaction anxiety and insight in the effect of self-esteem on approval dependence in university students. As a result of the analysis that were conducted, it was found that interaction anxiety and insight were partial mediators between the two variables. While self-esteem directly affects approval dependence, this effect is decreased when interaction anxiety and insight are included in the model. Consequently, as self-esteem increases, interaction anxiety decreases, and as interaction anxiety decreases, insight increases, and as a result of this indirect effect, approval dependence decreases.

As a first step in the study, the mediating effect of interaction anxiety in the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependency was examined. It was observed that self-esteem negatively predicted interaction anxiety, and interaction anxiety positively predicted approval dependence. The literature has parallel research results that show that self-esteem predicts interaction anxiety (Sübasi, 2007; Erozkan, 2011; Ahmad et al., 2013). According to the findings obtained, increased self-esteem leads to a decrease in anxiety (Sübasi, 2007; Pettijohn et al., 2010; Sabini et al., 2000). Studies show that need for approval as a dysfunctional attitude predicts anxiety (Erozkan, 2011; Gumus, 2016) and self-esteem (Hamarta & Demirbas, 2009). This phenomenon has been explained by a high expectation of approval by those who care about the people's assessments (Hamarta & Demirbas, 2009). These findings support the discussion of self-esteem, approval dependence, and interaction anxiety together. In accordance with the aim of the study, the mediation of insight into the relationship between self-esteem and approval dependence was discussed. Our study concluded that self-esteem positively influences insight, whereas insight negatively influences approval dependence. When the literature is examined, it is found that clarity in the concept of self has a positive correlation with self-esteem (Kawamoto, 2020). In the theoretical definition of insight, there is an emphasis on accepting oneself with both negative and positive aspects (Akdogan & Turkum, 2018). The individual's accepting themself with all their sides is a sign of self-esteem (Salmivalli et al., 1999). These findings explain the predictive value of self-esteem on insight. On the other hand, no direct research findings have been found regarding insight predicting approval dependence. However, the assessment of insight as a structure positively correlated with cognitive flexibility and self-regulation (Grant et al., 2002) supports these findings. Based on the relevant literature and our findings, it can be deduced that people with high levels of insight have a high self-awareness. Thus, they can review themselves from a wider perspective, and show less approval dependence in their relationships.

In line with the study's main objective, the serial mediation of interaction anxiety and insight in the effect of self-esteem on approval dependence was discussed. In the analysis that was performed, interaction anxiety and insight were found to have serial mediator effects. In other words, increased self-esteem decreased interaction anxiety, and the decrease in interaction anxiety caused an increase in insight, which in turn caused a decrease in approval dependence. When the literature was examined, parallel research findings that explained the negative correlation between self-esteem and approval dependence were found (Schutz, 1998; Ozkan & Ozen, 2008; Hamarta & Demirbas, 2009). Also, findings suggest that individuals with low self-esteem try to protect themselves from social rejection by applying to indirect support (displaying distress or whining to get social support) (Don et al., 2019). When interaction anxiety and insight in the effect of self-esteem on approval dependence is considered, there are research findings that support the negative correlation of self-esteem with interaction anxiety (Pachankis & Goldfried, 2006; Rudich et al., 2007; Sübasi, 2007; Sabini et al., 2000; Ahmad et al., 2013). Eryananda and Oriza (2020) emphasize that individuals with social anxiety disorder are more sensitive to social approval and self-evaluation, which manifests as low self-esteem. All these findings reveal that as self-esteem increases, interaction anxiety decreases. According to Akdogan and Turkum (2018), insight refers to a high level of awareness regarding their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. Based on this, it can be inferred that in situations where the individual can focus on themself, away from concerns and anxiety, insight will further increase. Stefan and Cheie (2020), states that late adolescents with a high level of insight are more protected against social anxiety. All this data explains how the interaction anxiety of our

participants decreased with the increase in their self-esteem, and how they were able to focus more easily on themselves and increase their self-awareness as their anxiety decreased, and thus needing less approval from others and reducing their approval dependence.

There are some limitations to this study. First of all, the findings obtained from the study are limited to the students that participated in the study. Therefore, in future studies, data collection from more representative samples is essential in terms of the generalizability of the findings. In addition, this study did not examine the participants' demographic differences in detail. So, it was not focused on the possible effect of these differences. However, in future studies, the inclusion of demographic structures may be necessary for research findings. Moreover, including other variables that may affect the cause-effect relationship in the model or controlling the effects will ensure uncovering of the structures that have remained in the background.

The findings obtained from this research are expected to contribute to the consolidation of the field practitioners' interventions and determine the direction of the future studies of the field researchers. As mentioned before, the research study group consists of university students. The process of knowing and understanding oneself and building an identity through interactions with others takes place during university years. At this point it is quite important for the individuals to gain strength in their interpersonal interactions in their social lives and their relationship with themselves. Self-esteem, interaction anxiety, insight, and approval dependence, which are the study's main variables, provide useful ideas regarding people's relationships with themselves and others. Based on these findings, conducting studies that are protective, preventive, and supportive of the students' mental health in university guidance and research centers will play a significant role in the students' lives. It is possible to positively contribute to the development of students both through individual counseling interventions and psycho-education programs. Especially in interventions related to self-esteem, the position of university students in their interpersonal relationships can be studied. To prevent and work with anxiety, it is essential to gain awareness of whether it depends on the approval of others. Especially in psycho-educational interventions, their insight and awareness formed by sharing within the group can be functional. In this way, the anxiety they experience will be reduced, and the insight and awareness they gain will reduce the need to receive approval in their relationships. Eryananda and Oriza (2020) also emphasize the necessity of psychological interventions in addressing the emotions and thoughts of students that cause social anxiety. These two constructs are vital for university students to be stronger individuals and to have healthier relationship systems. For this reason, these interventions will be very functional for them regarding the roles and positions in the emerging adulthood process.

One other suggestion will be the necessity of studies requiring family participation. When family is considered the building block of the identity and the institution where learning about self and others first takes place, raising awareness within the families will be once more evident. Therefore, seminars, training and courses by experts through ministries, municipalities and non-governmental organizations aimed at raising awareness in the families on the issues of interfamilial relationships and parenting will be extremely helpful. Thus, when viewed from a broader perspective, it is believed that these gains will benefit the family and society and all individuals in social life. It is thought that individuals with high self-esteem, who are not worried about their interactions, who know themselves in all aspects and who care about their resources rather than the approval of other people, and the relationships established through these individuals will make a healthier society. It can be specified some recommendations for future research. First, it is essential to test the causal relationships between variables in social science. Therefore, it will be essential to control variables that can affect approval dependence for the study's validity. For instance, the difference in personality traits may determine both self-esteem and approval dependence. Likewise, some cognitive and emotional variables may be determinative in the relationship between these two variables. Therefore, it is vital to take consider these possible variables. Finally, it can be suggested that quantitative findings should be handled more comprehensively with qualitative research designs in future studies. Significantly, the effect of interaction anxiety and insight in this relationship may be examined using qualitative interviews and other qualitative data collection tools. Thus, it is thought that more comprehensive knowledge about the subject area will be obtained with mixed-method studies.

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