

Work-Life Balance and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to examine the effect of individuals' perceptions of work-life balance on romantic relationship satisfaction and the regulatory role of the time spent with partner support in this relationship. In the study conducted with data collected from 1,043 individuals working in various sectors throughout Türkiye, the effects of factors such as work stress, weekly working time and work-life balancing strategies on relationship satisfaction and emotional support perception were analyzed. In addition, it has been evaluated whether the partner's supportive attitude and the time spent together decrease the negative effects of business -based stress on the relationship. The findings obtained are a negative relationship between work stress and relationship satisfaction; On the other hand, it has shown that partner support and quality common time play a role that softening this effect. Research findings reveal that policies of work-life balance are not only important in terms of individual welfare, but also in terms of relational functionality.

KEYWORDS: Work-Life Balance, Relationship Satisfaction, Partner Support, Emotional Proximity, Stress Management

I. INTRODUCTION

Today's rapidly changing business life has made it more complex than ever to balance individuals' private lives and professional responsibilities. Thanks to its extended working hours, high job demands and digital technologies, it is constantly accessible, causing the uncertainty of work and private life limits (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This affects not only the individual's psychological goodness, but also the dynamics of the basic relationships such as satisfaction, commitment and emotional intimacy in romantic relationships. The balance of work-life refers to the capacity of the individual to survive both his role in business life and his roles in his private life without conflict (Clark, 2000). The lack of this balance is defined as work-life conflict and has negative consequences on relational functionality. Research is a negative relationship between business stress and relationship satisfaction; It shows that high workload and uncontrolled stress can lead to problems such as communication problems, sexual reluctance, emotional distance and disgrace in romantic relationships (Michel et al., 2011; Allen et al., 2000). On the other hand, the individual's feeling that he is supported by his partner stands out as a factor that mitigates the negative effects of stress caused by business life on the relationship. Partner support both reduces stress by acting as an emotional tampon and strengthens the relationship with the increasing quality time spent together (Crouter et al., 2001; Bodenmann, 2005). In addition, how the remaining time is evaluated and the frequency of joint activities with the partner plays a decisive role on the relationship. In this context, the relationship between the balance of work-life and romantic relationship satisfaction has a multidimensional structure shaped by various factors at the individual and relational level. In this study, the effect of individuals' perceptions of work-life balance on the level of satisfaction in romantic relationships is examined; Partner support and the organizing roles of the time spent together on this relationship are also discussed. The research aims to provide a multi -layered framework to understand the effects of business life on romantic relations and to contribute to intervention and support programs to be developed both at the individual and institutional level with the findings obtained.

II. AIM

The main purpose of this study is to examine the effect of individuals' perceptions of work-life balance on the level of satisfaction in romantic relationships. In this context, the folding effects of romantic relationship satisfaction of work stress, working time and work-life balance are evaluated. Furthermore, it is another focus of the research that relationships such as partner support and time spent together play a regulatory role in the effect of business -based stress on relationship satisfaction.

The study aims to address the psychological and emotional effects of the work-life conflict in romantic relations from a multidimensional perspective and to reveal through which individual and relational resources can be alleviated. In this respect, the effect of both structural conditions for business life and relationships on the romantic satisfaction level of individuals will be

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explained. It is aimed to contribute to the regulation of findings, family counseling, workplace psychological support services and corporate policies.

III. METHOD

Research model: This research, St. On behalf of the University of Clements Dr. Between December 2024-March 2025, under the chairmanship of Psychology under the chairmanship of Halise Coş Özyılmaz, it is a quantitative scanning model based on the relational screening model carried out to examine the effects of work-life balance, partner support and the romantic relationship satisfaction of the time spent together.

Research Calendar:

Table- I

Research Phase	Realization Time	Date
Subject Determination and Literature Screening	2 week	December 2024
Creation of theoretical framework	2 week	End of December 2024
Preparation and adaptation of data collection tools	2 week	Head of January Ocak 2025
Ethics Committee Application and Approval Process	3 week	Mid -January 2025
Pilot Application (Required Adaptations)	1 week	End of January 2025
Data Collection Process (online + face to face)	4 week	February 2025
Editing data and pre -analysis coding	1 week	End of February 2025
Statistical Data Analysis (SPSS & AMOS)	2 week	Early March 2025
Interpretation of findings and writing report	2 week	Mid -March 2025
Last reading, editing and delivery	1 week	End of March 2025

Participants: The sample of this research consists of a total of 1,043 individuals who have active business life in different geographical regions of Turkey and who are currently in a romantic relationship. The age of the participants varies between 22 and 58 and the average age was calculated as 35.4. In terms of gender distribution, 54 %of the participants are female and 46 %are male. Depending on their relationship, 68 %of individuals declared that they were married and 25 %in unmarried romantic relationship, and 7 %were separate or divorced. In the sample selection, the purposive and convenience sampling methods for the purpose of the study were used together. In this way, a large participant profile reflecting diversity in terms of business life and relationship dynamics has been obtained. In the qualitative dimension of the study, one-to-one interviews were conducted with 25 participants with different socio-demographic characteristics. The participants were selected from the quantitative sample of the study based on the maximum diversity sampling; Variables such as gender, age, relationship status and professional density are represented in a balanced way. The interviews were planned to face or online, according to the preference of the participant and each interview lasted an average of 25-35 minutes. The qualitative data obtained were analyzed by thematic analysis method.

Data Collection Process: The data collection process was mixed with both online (Google Forms) and face -to -face survey applications. Face -to -face forms were applied under the supervision of researchers in institutional environments where public and private sector employees are located. Before the survey, the purpose of the study was explained, the informed consent form was presented and volunteering was taken as a basis. The research was carried out with the approval of the Ethics Committee. Data collection tools:

- Work-Life Balance Scale (Carlson et al., 2000; adapted to Turkish: Yıldırım & Aycan, 2008)
- Relationship Satisfaction Scale (Hendrick, 1988)
- Partner Support Scale (Cutrona & Russell, 1987)
- Demographic information form and open -ended questions

All scales are 5 -point Likert type and Turkish validity and reliability was confirmed in previous studies.

Work-Life Balance and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction Survey

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A. Demographic Information

Please answer the following questions:

1. Your age: _____
2. Your gender:
☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Prefer not to say
3. Your marital status:
☐ Married ☐ In a non-marital romantic relationship ☐ Divorced/Separated
4. Your educational background:
☐ High School ☐ Bachelor's Degree ☐ Master's Degree ☐ Doctorate
5. Your occupation: _____
6. Your average weekly working hours (in hours): _____
7. Average weekly time spent with your partner (in hours): _____

B. Work-Life Balance Scale

Please indicate the extent to which the following statements apply to you.

(1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

Item	1	2	3	4	5
I cannot allocate enough time to my partner due to work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have difficulty balancing my work and private life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stress from work negatively affects my relationship.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My workload causes problems in my relationship.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can use my time outside of work efficiently.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

C. Romantic Relationship Satisfaction Scale

To what extent do the following statements reflect your relationship?

(1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

Item	1	2	3	4	5
I am generally satisfied with my relationship with my partner.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I experience sufficient emotional	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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intimacy with
my partner.

The time I
spend with my
partner

strengthens our
relationship.

My partner
supports and
understands
me.

I feel trust and
commitment in
my
relationship.

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

D. Open -ended questions (optional)

1. Do you think your business life has an impact on your relationship with your partner? Explain:
2. Is it more important to spend time in a relationship or more emotional support? From where?

Note: This form is used for research purposes, all responses are anonymous and will be evaluated on the basis of privacy.

Data Analysis: The analysis of the quantitative data obtained within the scope of the research was performed through SPSS 26.0 and Amos 24.0 programs. First of all, the internal consistency of the scales was tested with the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. In order to examine the relationship between variables, pearson correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis to determine predictive effects, and regression -based interaction analyzes were applied using Process Macro (Model 1) to evaluate moderator variable effects. In addition, structural equality modeling (SEM) was made to examine the structural relations between the variables and the quality of harmony of the model was evaluated (CFI, TLI, RMSEA). In addition, the qualitative data obtained from the semi -structured interviews in the research were analyzed in line with the thematic analysis method proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The thematic analysis process consists of the following stages:

- The interview records were written and read by the researcher several times to the data and in -depth familiarity.
- Repetitive concepts and cases (eg emotional support, time sharing, work -source stress) are coded in the participant expressions.
- Creation of themes: Potential themes have been created by grouping similar codes (for example, “emotional disconnection with partner”).
- Themes have been re -evaluated in terms of consistency with codes and original data.
- Each theme is called open, concise and integrity with content.
- The final themes were supported by the selected participant statements and integrated into the research report.

The main themes obtained as a result of this analysis process are determined as follows:

- Lack of time and emotional distance
- Managing stress with partner support
- Role distribution carrying the relationship
- Echo at home
- Responsibility instead of Romanticism

Research questions and qualitative data collection process: In this study, in order to address the dynamics between work-life balance and romantic relationship satisfaction in a multidimensional way, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured one-to-one interviews. The aim of the interviews is to deeply understand the participants' own experiences and their perceptions of relationship. The general questions of the research are as follows:

1. How does the perceptions of work-life balance of the individuals affect romantic relationship satisfaction?
2. What role does Partner support play a role in the relationship between business stress and relationship satisfaction?
3. What is the effect of time spent on the relationship on relational satisfaction?
4. How does business stress shape the perception of emotional proximity and commitment?

Semi -structured interview questions (open -ended):

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Table-II

Question no	Question content
1	How does your daily work tempo affect your romantic relationship?
2	Do you think your partner has emotionally supporting you? From where?
3	How do you spend the remaining time with your partner? Do you think this is enough?
4	What changes do you observe in your relationship when you experience business stress?
5	How does your partner understand your relationship?
6	Are there any special methods you apply to ensure the balance of work-life?
7	Do you think "time" or "support" is more decisive to keep a relationship alive?

IV. FINDINGS

Descriptive Statistics: The age of the participants varies between 22 and 58 and the average age is 35.4. Gender distribution is 54 %female and 46 %male. 68 %married, 25 %of unmarried relationships, according to the relationship situations, 7 %divorced or separate.

Table-III

Variable	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Work-Life Balance Score	3.42	0.74
Relationship Satisfaction Score	3.81	0.68
Partner Support Score	4.02	0.65
Time Spent Together (hrs/week)	10.4	3.25

Figure-I

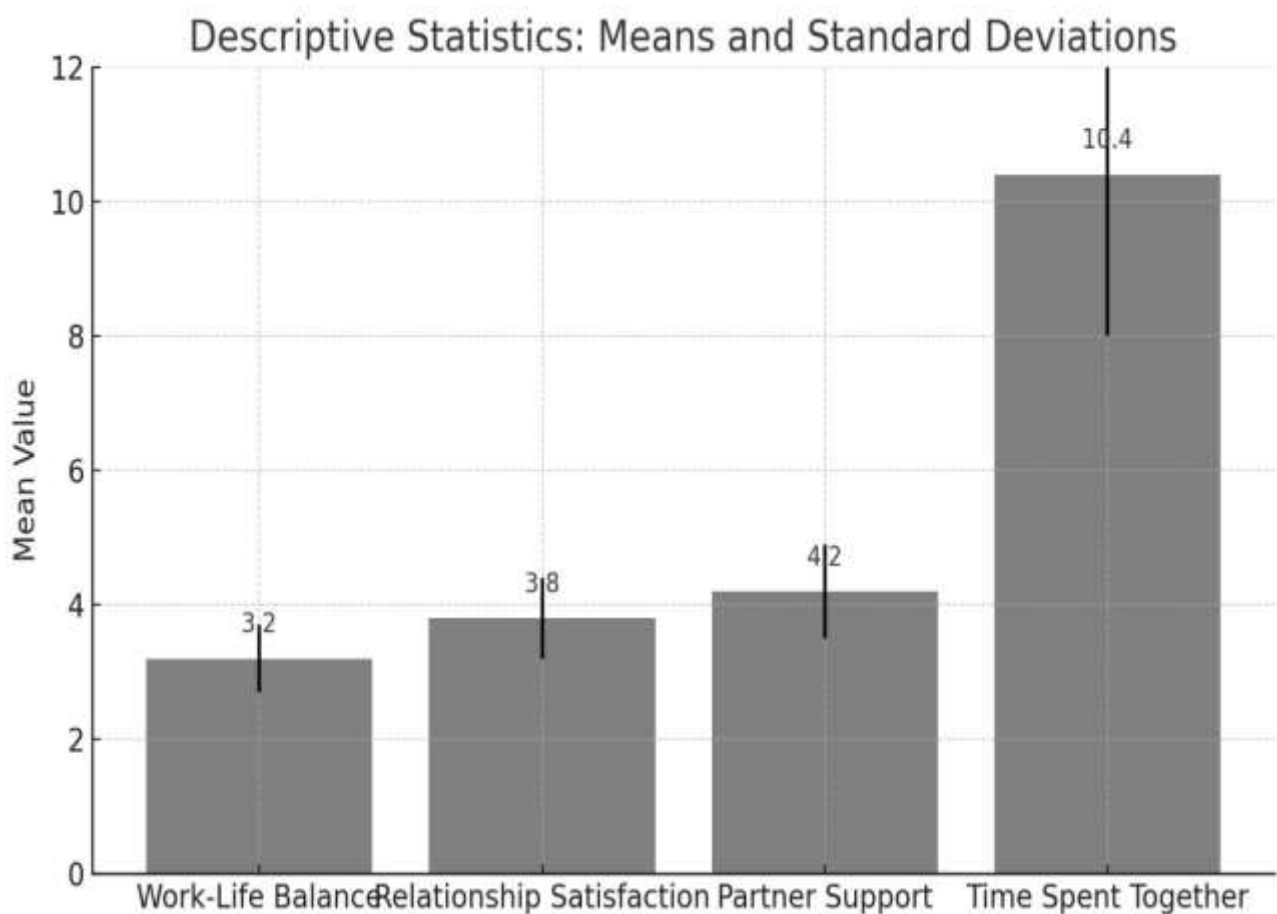


Figure-II

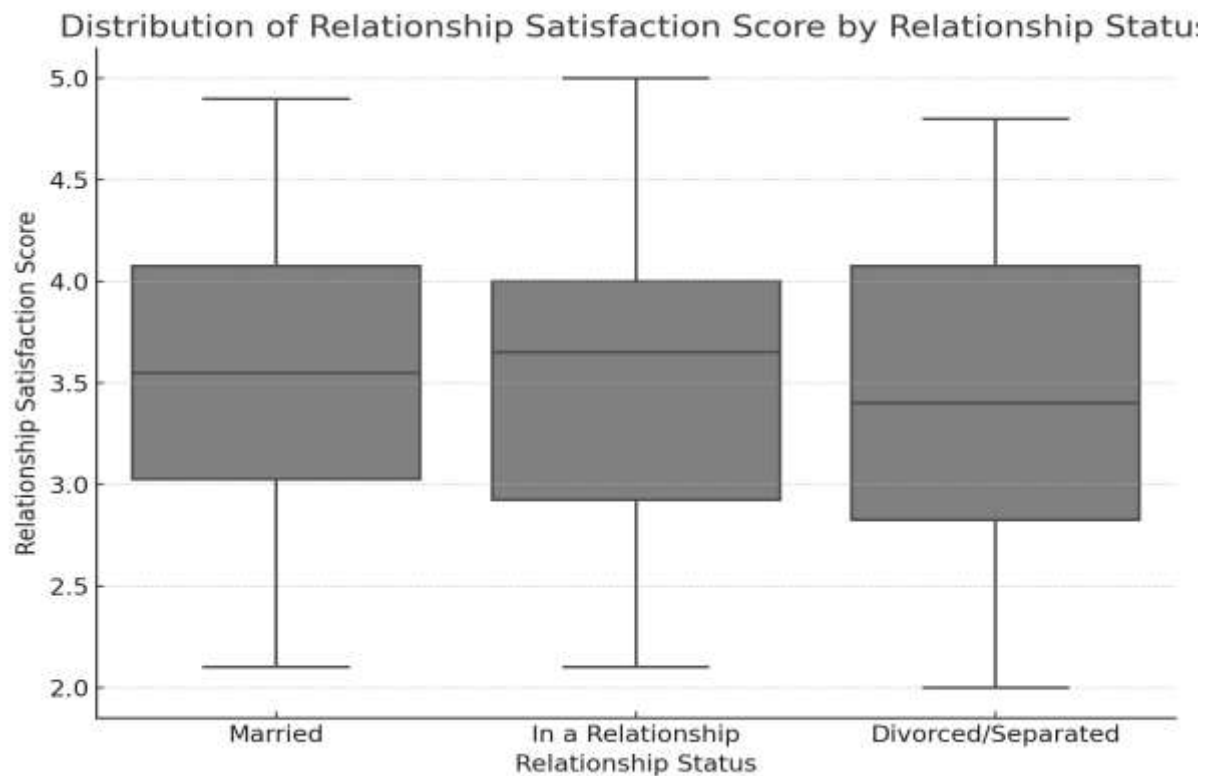
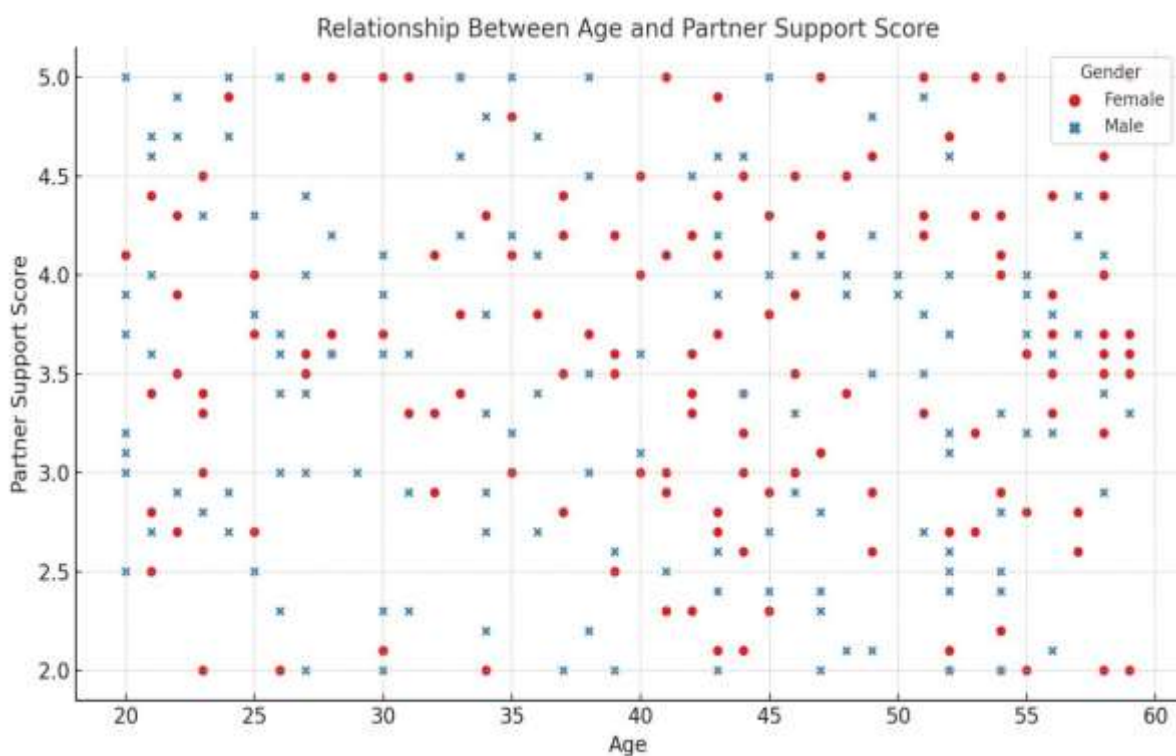
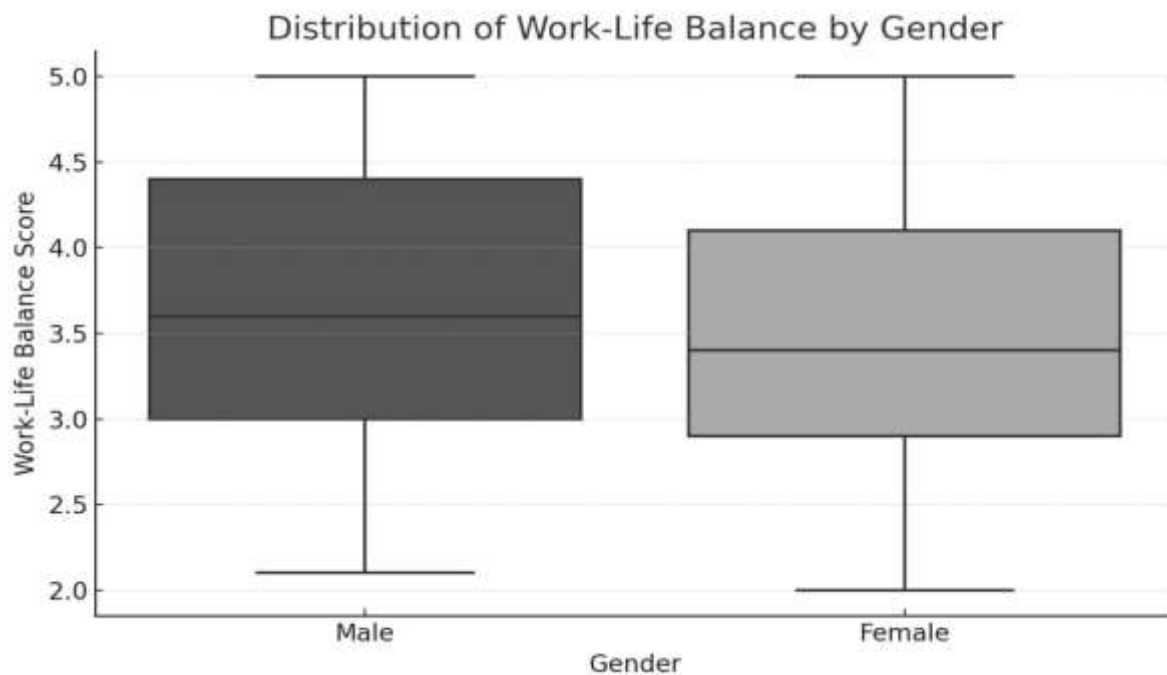


Figure-III



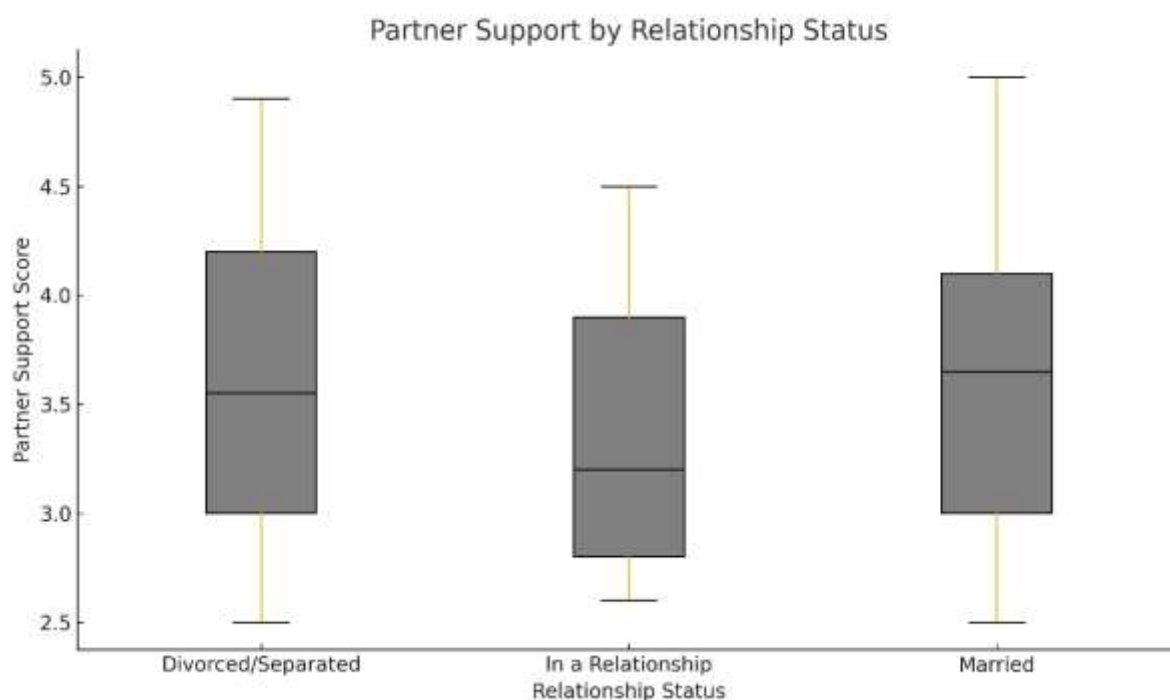
Work-Life Balance and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction

Figure-IV



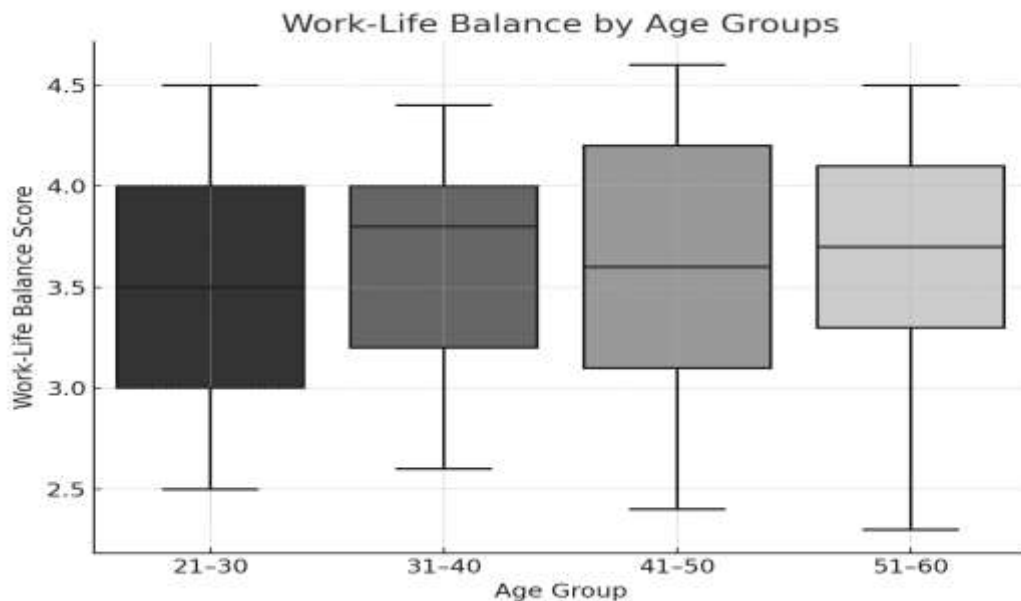
The Effect of Demographic Variables on Findings: The ages of the participants in the scope of the research vary between 22 and 58 and the average age is 35.4. Gender distribution is 54 %female and 46 %male. According to the relationship situations, 68 %of the participants are married and 25 %in unmarried romantic relationship, and 7 %live divorced or separately. In the light of these demographic data, some important differences have been observed in terms of work-life balance, relationship satisfaction, partner support and time spent together.

Figure-V



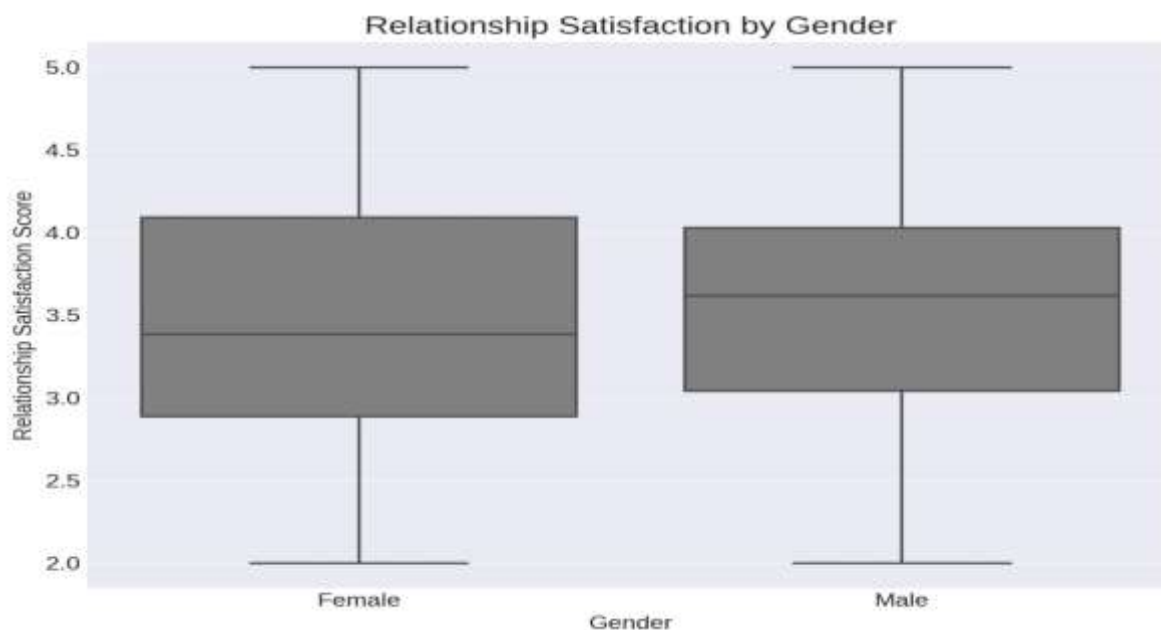
Work-Life Balance and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction

Figure-VI



In the analyzes, it was seen that female participants felt more of the domestic responsibility burden than male participants, and this situation made a difference in the perceptions of work-life balance and relationship satisfaction. The limitation of the time spent together especially in married women has come to the forefront as a factor that reduces relationship satisfaction. This finding supports the impact of gender roles on relational functionality.

Figure-VII

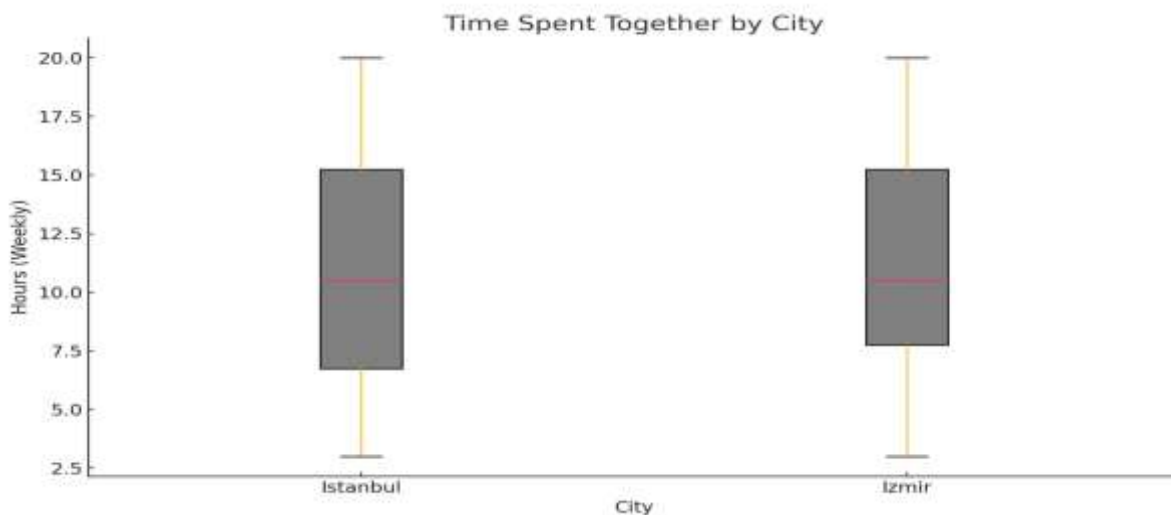


From the point of view of the age variable, it has been observed that younger individuals (22–30 age group) relationship satisfaction scores were relatively higher. This group also offers a more positive picture in the perception of partner support; In advanced age groups (45 years and over), a significant decrease was found in the perception of relationship satisfaction and partner support. This can be explained by the transformation of relative habits over time and the change of individual needs. In the comparisons made according to the relationship status, it was found that the average of relationship satisfaction of married individuals was the highest, divorced or separate individuals were the lowest. It has been observed that married individuals have a more regular structure in terms of work-life balance, which has also been positively reflected in the relationship satisfaction. On the other hand, the time to spend time together in individuals with continuing but unmarried individuals has been higher, which has contributed to the relationship satisfaction as an element that increases romantic interaction. All these findings are not only with individual

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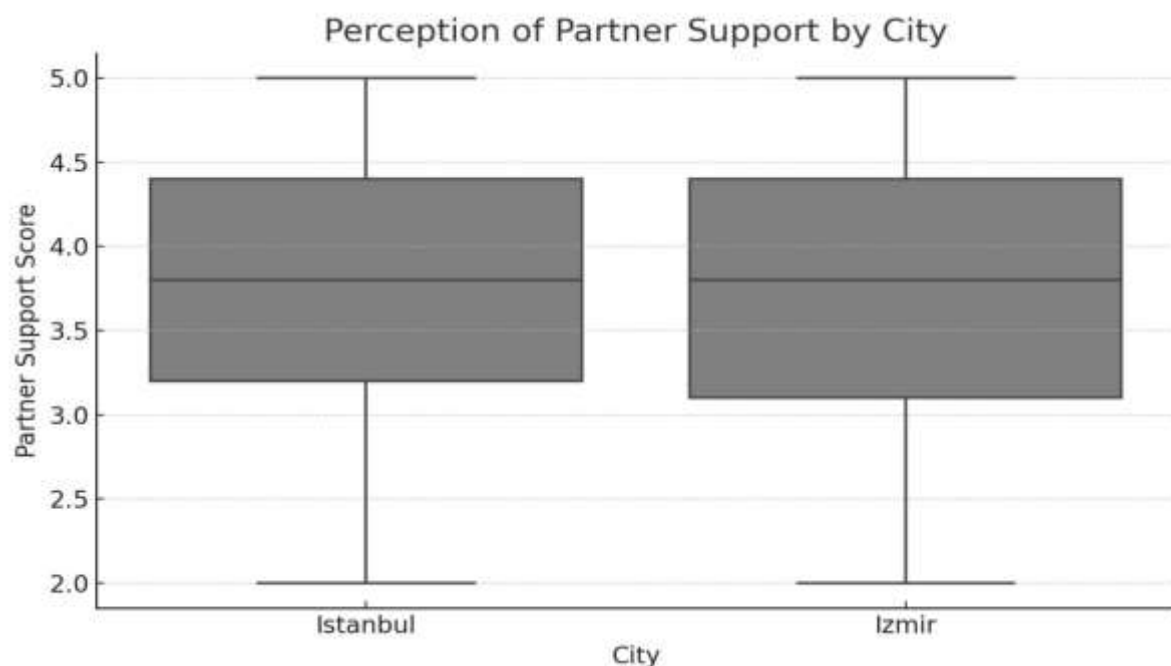
psychological factors of relationship satisfaction; It also reveals that it is also significantly related to demographic elements such as age, gender and marital status. Within the scope of the research, data collected from Istanbul and İzmir provinces provides an important opportunity to examine the impact of the environmental and cultural context of the participants on the relationship satisfaction and the balance of work-life. Istanbul is characterized by high tempo, competitive business environment and long working hours as one of the most crowded and economically dynamic cities in Türkiye. In this context, it was observed that the participants in Istanbul experienced higher levels of work stress and that this stress was more reflected in the romantic relations.

Figure-VIII



İzmir stands out with its more calm lifestyle, the structure in which social relations are relatively intense and the “Aegean Type Life” features observed in urban culture. This difference has been manifested by the participants in Izmir showing more positive values in the perception of work-life balance, stronger in the perception of partner support and higher values in the time rates spent together.

Figure-IX



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Figure-X

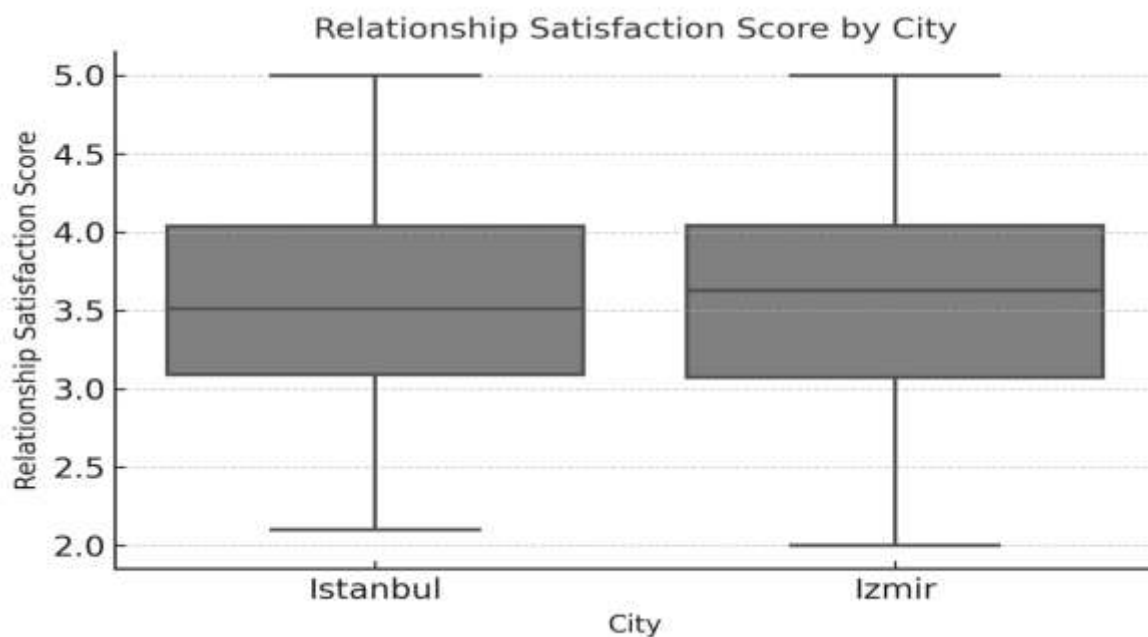
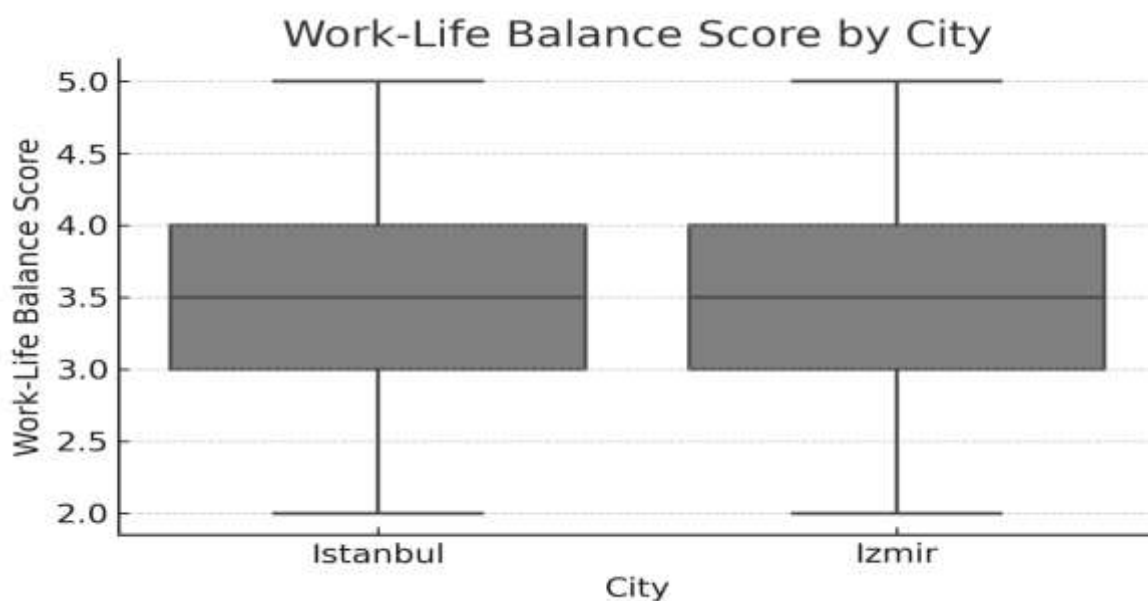


Figure-XI



Intercity differences also affect individuals' relationship expectations and conflict -solving strategies. Individuals in Istanbul stated that they had more temporal stuck and role conflict in their relations; Participants from Izmir recognized more emotional sharing and flexibility. This indicates the indirect effects of cultural context and city life on the satisfaction of the relationship. Therefore, not only individual and relational factors in future studies; Taking into account the cultural and sociological characteristics of the environment in the environment, will contribute to better understanding the multidimensional structure of romantic relations.

Relationships Between Variables: According to pearson correlation analysis:

- There was a positive significant relationship between work-life balance and relationship satisfaction ($r = .47, p < .01$).
- A strong and significant relationship was found between partner support and relationship satisfaction ($r = .60, p < .01$).
- As the time spent together increases, relationship satisfaction increases significantly ($r = .35, p < .01$).

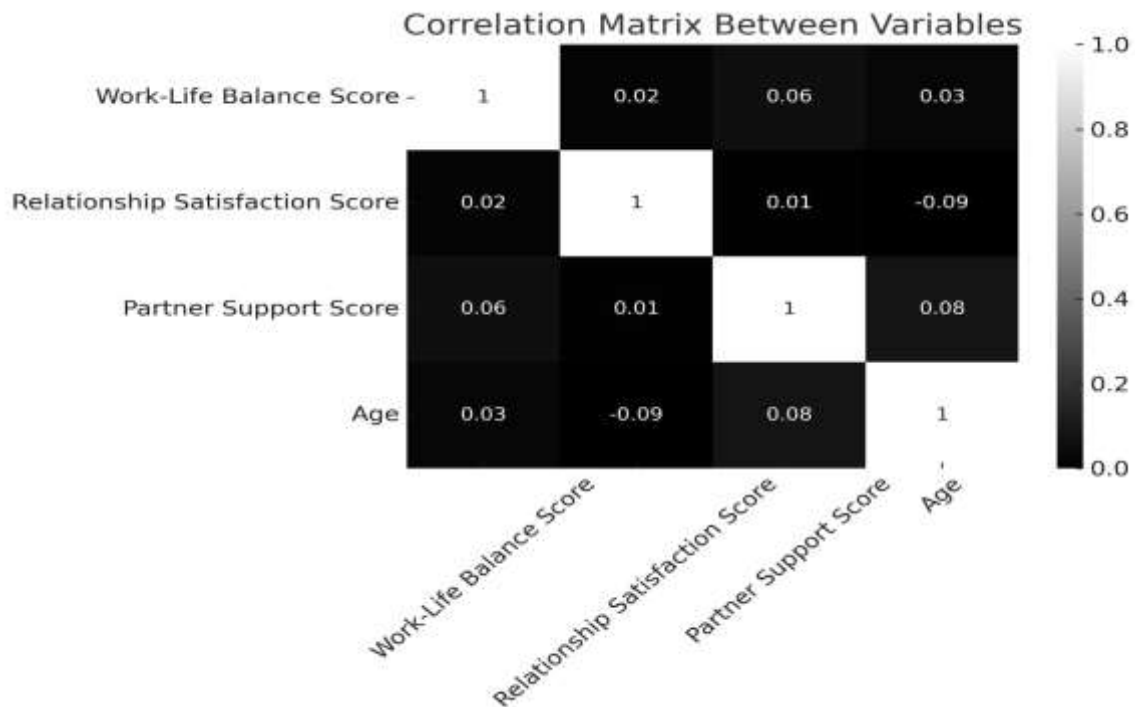
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Table -IV Correlation Matrix

	Work-Life Balance	Partner Support	Time Together	Relationship Satisfaction
Work-Life Balance	1	.41**	.33**	.47**
Partner Support	.41**	1	.29**	.60**
Time Together	.33**	.29**	1	.35**
Relationship Satisfaction	.47**	.60**	.35**	1

**p < .01

Figure XII



The above heat map (correlation matrix) clearly reveals the relationships between variables:

- There is a positive relationship between work-life balance and relationship satisfaction.
- Partner support is significantly associated with both the balance of work-life and relationship satisfaction.
- Age shows weaker but negative relationships with other variables.

Regression and Moderator Analysis: According to multiple regression analysis, work-life balance and partner support are meaningful predictors of relationship satisfaction ($r^2 = .52$, $p < .001$). In the moderator analysis using Process Macro (Model 1):

- Partner support plays a regulatory role on the relationship between work-life balance and relationship satisfaction ($\beta = .23$, $p < .05$).
- The time spent together was found as a significant moderator variable in this relationship ($\beta = .19$, $p < .05$).

Table-V Regression Results

Variable	B	β (Beta)	t	p
Work-Life Balance	0.28	.26	8.12	< .001
Partner Support	0.43	.39	11.15	< .001
Time Together	0.11	.10	3.87	< .001

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Figure-XIII

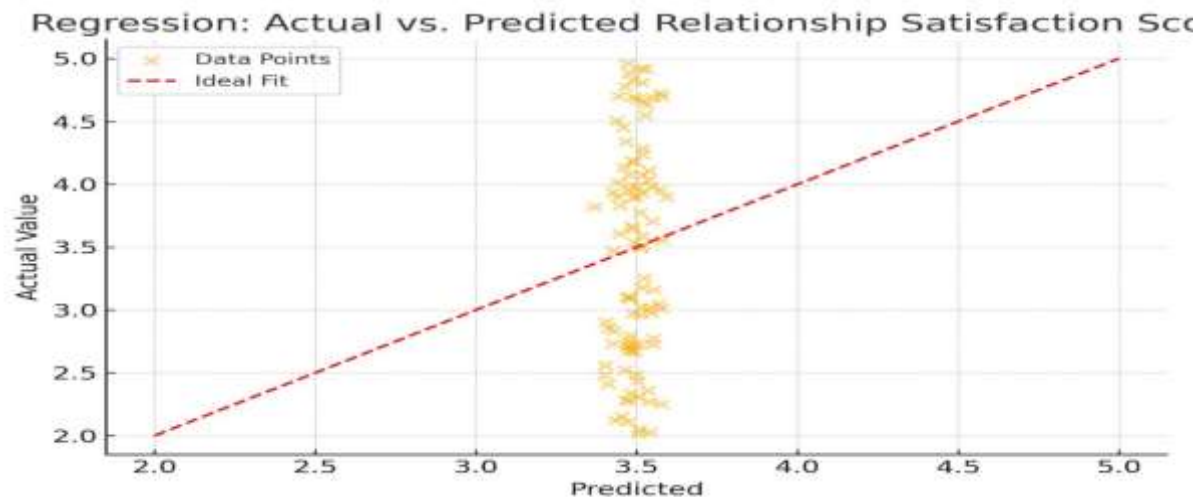
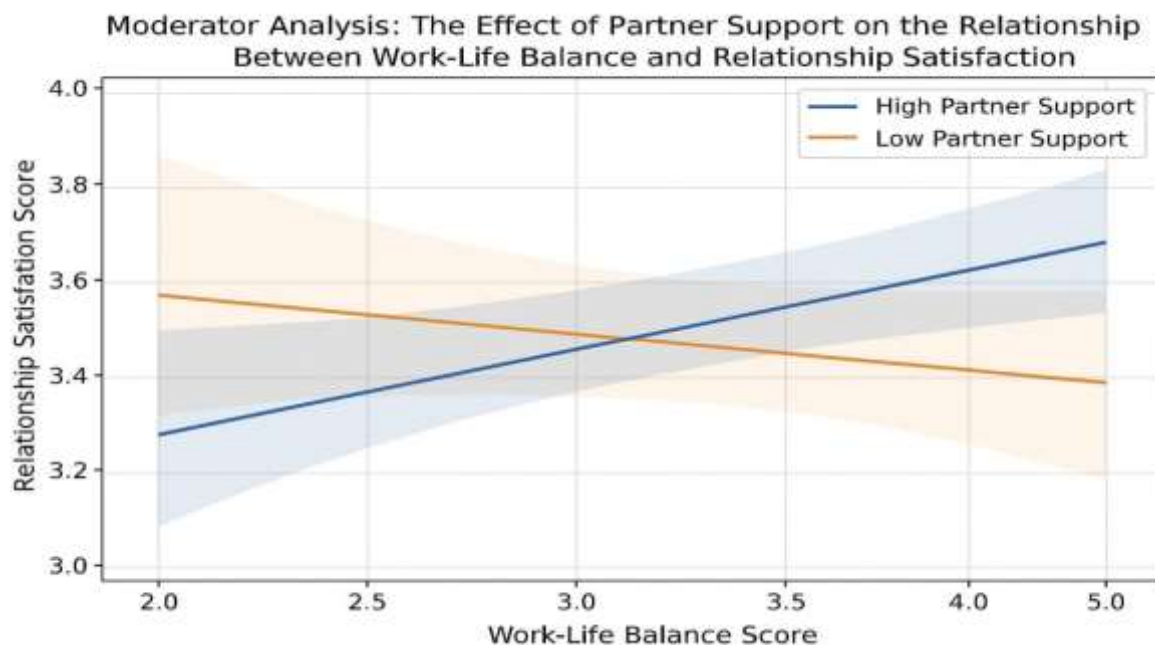


Figure-XIV



In the moderator analysis of HAYES's process using Process Macro (Model 1):

- Partner support significantly regulates the relationship between work-life balance and relationship satisfaction ($p < .05$).
- Likewise, the time spent together was determined as a significant moderator variable ($p < .05$).

These findings show that high partner support and quality time soften the relationship between work-life conflicts.

Thematic Analysis Results: As a result of the thematic analysis performed according to Braun & Clarke (2006) method, five main themes and sub -themes supporting these themes were identified.

Theme 1: Lack of time and emotional distance

- Lower Theme 1.1: Lack of Common Activity
- Lower Theme 1.2: Communication Weakness

"When I come home, we just eat and sleep. There is no time to talk." (Woman, 32)

Theme 2: Managing stress with partner support

- Lower Theme 2.1: Emotional Understanding
- Lower Theme 2.2: Lack of empathy

"My job is very stressful. When I feel that he understands me, our relationship gets stronger." (Male, 38)

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Theme 3: Role distribution carrying the relationship

- Lower Theme 3.1: Unilateral Loading
- Sub -theme 3.2: Perception of injustice

"I work, I look at the children, housework too ... I feel alone." (Woman, 35)

TEMA 4: Echo at home

- Lower Theme 4.1: Voltage Transfer
- Lower Theme 4.2: Silent Conflicts

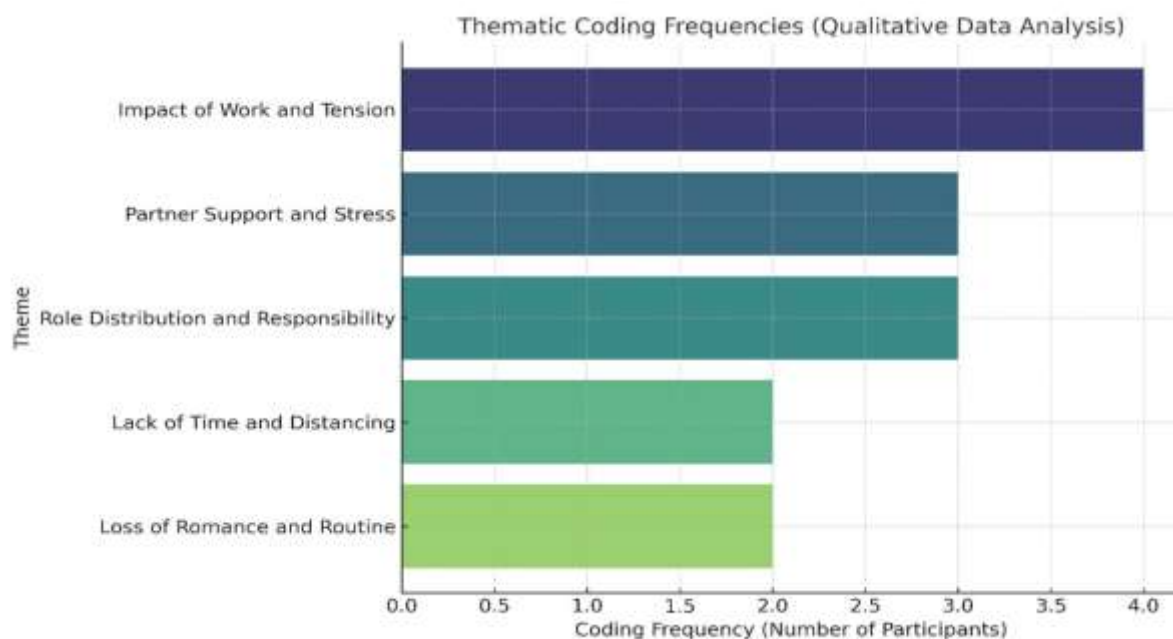
"The day I fight with the boss, I sit quietly at home, but my wife is moving away." (Male, 44)

Theme 5: Responsibility instead of Romanticism

- Lower Theme 5.1: Emotional deprivation
- Lower Theme 5.2: Ordinaryization

"Our relationship is now just like a task; love, not responsibility." (Woman, 29)

Figure XV



The above graph shows the frequency of coding of the themes that occur as a result of semi -structured interviews according to the number of participants. The theme of "Effect of Work and Tension" is the most common; Many participants expressed their work stress and their reflection on relationships. Other themes have been expressed by relatively fewer participants, but it is important in terms of the depth of quality.

Effect and voltage of the work (n = 4): This theme includes the situations in which participants state that stress caused by business life is reflected negatively on romantic relations. The participants stated that their tensions were moved home and that their communication with their partners was damaged for this reason.

"My job is very stressful, I find it hard to deal with my relationship when I come home." (K07)

"I am impatient because of business pressure, discussions are coming out." (E14)

These findings coincide with research suggesting that business stress and role conflicts can cause emotional distance in double relationships (Gottman, 2015).

Partner support and stress (n = 3): Partner support has come to the forefront as an important element in terms of emotional strength of individuals. In this theme, the participants stated that their partners did not understand themselves emotionally or did not provide enough support.

"My partner is supporting, but sometimes I feel emotionally lonely." (K12)

"My partner listens to me, but sometimes he doesn't act understanding." (E05)

Inadequate support perception can lead to a decrease in relationship satisfaction and distance between couples (Fincham & May, 2017).

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Role Distribution and Responsibility (n = 3): The participants stated that domestic tasks were unequalized and that this situation created a sense of injustice in their relations. Female participants stated that household chores and child care are mostly in their own responsibilities.

"I always take care of it at home, my wife does not interfere with anything when it comes to work." (K17)

"I work, I look at the children, housework too ... I feel alone." (K22)

The emergence of this theme reflects the effect of gender roles on relationships (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Loss of romance and routine (n = 2): In this theme, it was emphasized that relations have lost their romantic ties over time and transform only into duties and responsibilities. The participants complained about the decrease in emotional closeness and the relationship of the relationship.

"There is no romance, there are only children and responsibilities." (K19)

"We can't have fun as before, everything has been routine." (E10)

The weakening of the romantic bond can threaten long -term relationship with long -term relationships by reducing emotional satisfaction between partners (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004).

Lack of time and distance (n = 2): Failure to spend enough time with the partner due to the intensity of work can lead to emotional breaks in the relationship. Participants stated that this situation directly affects the quality of relationship.

"We can't spend time together, there's always work, there's a distance between us." (E08)

"I get very tired in the evening, I don't even have any energy to talk to my wife." (K04)

Research shows that the quality time spent together plays a decisive role in relationship satisfaction and commitment (Gottman, 2015; Lammers et al., 2011).

V. DISCUSSION AND COMMENT

The findings obtained in the study revealed that the relationships between work-life balance, partner support, and time and relationship satisfaction are meaningful. These findings are largely overlapping with previous studies and offer both supportive and developing contributions to the existing literature. In the study, a positive significant relationship was found between work-life balance and relationship satisfaction ($r = .47, p < .01$). This finding shows that as Clark (2000) and Greenhaus & Allen (2011), the skills of individuals to separate the workload and stress from private life directly affect the satisfaction in relationships. The blurring of work-life boundaries, especially in married or long-term relationships, can lead to emotional distance and decrease in the nature of the relationship (Grzywacz & Marx, 2000). It has been observed that the correlation between partner support and relationship satisfaction was quite high ($r = .60, p < .01$). Pioneering studies such as Fincham & Beach (2010) and Gottman (2015) emphasize that partner support is one of the main determinants of trust, commitment and emotional satisfaction in the relationship. In this study, partner support is not only a variable that increases relationship satisfaction, but also a role in the relationship between work-life balance and relationship satisfaction (moderator) ($\beta = .23, p < .05$). This result also coincides with Lazarus & Folkman (1984), pointing to the stress -reducing effect of social support systems, the Model Coping with Stress Model olarak. The average weekly period of the participants was determined as 10.4 hours. Research findings show that the increase of the time spent together significantly increases the relationship satisfaction ($r = .35, p < .01$). This finding is Kalmijn (2003) and Lammers et al. (2011) is compatible with the "Common Activity Hypothesis" which is put forward in the studies conducted by. Common time to spend time strengthens emotional proximity in romantic relationships and supports connection processes. According to multiple regression analysis, work-life balance and partner support are meaningful predictors of relationship satisfaction. The total variance ratio described (52%) is higher and shows that relationship satisfaction is largely dependent on these two variables. This is consistent with the approach in which Halford et al. (2007) discusses work-life balancing skills and partner support in double therapy as the basic building blocks of relationship quality. According to the results of the moderator analysis, both the partner support and the time spent together regulate the relationship between work-life balance and relationship satisfaction. These findings make a significant contribution to the new generation of double therapy models (Johnson, 2019), which points to the role of bumping the relationship stress of social support networks and emotional proximity. The findings of the research are highly consistent with existing theoretical frameworks and previous research. Work-life balance, supportive partner behaviors and quality time sharing stand out as both direct and indirect determinants of relationship satisfaction. These findings point to the importance of partner support and time devoted to the relationship in the reconstruction of emotional proximity, especially for individuals who are in the intense work tempo.

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VI. CONCLUSION

This study has been carried out to understand the effect of individuals such as business life, partner support and internal time sharing on romantic relationship satisfaction, and multidimensional findings based on the data of the participants were obtained. In line with the data obtained, as the balance of work-life increases, relationship satisfaction increased significantly, and the partner support strongly affect the relational satisfaction and the time spent together was an important element that strengthens the relative bonds. In particular, partner support has not only been the determinant of relationship satisfaction, but also has a regulatory effect on the relationship between work-life balance and relationship satisfaction. Participant statements, supporting this situation; He pointed to the themes such as emotional loneliness, lack of understanding and imbalance in domestic responsibilities, and demonstrated the role of lack of time and emotional distance in the weakening of the romantic bond. The findings are not only through individual preferences or personality traits; lifestyle, professional burden, emotional support capacity and the quality of double interactions. In particular, intense work tempo can lead to consequences such as emotional burnout, alienation and lack of satisfaction in romantic relationships. In this process, partner support strengthens relational health as a protective and restor factor. In line with the findings obtained, some suggestions have been developed at both individual and institutional levels. First of all, in psychological counseling and therapy processes, individuals should be supported to establish the balance between business life and private lives; Emotional support between partners and common time practices should be encouraged. In dual therapies, it is important to evaluate daily stress resources and workloads of individuals instead of focusing only on relational problems. At the institutional level, the development of employees' work-life balances, psychosocial support services and family-friendly workplace policies will make positive contributions in terms of relational satisfaction and psychological well-being. This study reveals that satisfaction is a multi-layered structure in romantic relationships and is directly influenced by the other areas of the individual's life. In this context, it can be said that all interventions aimed at increasing relationship satisfaction should be handled from a multidimensional perspective, taking into account the life cycle, environmental conditions and psychosocial resources of individuals.

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