

THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG SELF CONSTRUAL, FAMILY FUNCTIONING  
AND SIBLING NUMBER IN TERMS OF GENDER IN HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG SELF CONSTRUAL, FAMILY FUNCTIONING AND SIBLING NUMBER IN TERMS OF GENDER IN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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The goal of the study was to understand the nature of the relationship among self construal, family functioning and sibling number in terms of gender. Five hundred twenty-nine high school students participated in the study. Participants were selected from seven general public high schools in Ankara. Data was gathered via Personal Information Questionnaire, Autonomous-Related Self in the Family Scale (Kađıtçıbađı, 2007a) and Family Assessment Device (Epstein, Balwin & Bishop 1983). Results of the study indicated that, for both genders, relational self-construals had significant correlations with healthy family functioning. It was also evidenced that autonomous self-construal scores of males were significantly higher than females and related self construal scores of females were significantly higher than males. Furthermore the family functioning dimensions that families tend to be

healthy or unhealthy were displayed. All findings were discussed in line with the relevant literature.

Keywords: Self construals, Family Functioning, Individualism-Collectivism, Gender Differences

## ÖZ

### LİSE ÖĞRENCİLERİNDE CİNSİYET BAĞLAMINDA BENLİK KURGUSU, AİLE İŞLEVSELLİĞİ VE KARDEŞ SAYISI ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ

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Araştırmanın amacı, lise öğrencilerinde cinsiyet bağlamında benlik kurgusu, aile işlevselliği ve kardeş sayısı arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmaktır. Çalışmaya, Ankara'daki yedi farklı genel liselerde öğrenim gören beşyüz yirmi dokuz öğrenci katılmıştır. Veri toplama aracı olarak Kişisel Bilgi Formu, Aile Bağlamında Benlik Ölçeği (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007a) ve Aile Değerlendime Ölçeği (Epstein, Balwin & Bishop, 1983) kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre kızlarda ve erkeklerde bağımlı-ilişkisel benlik kurgusu ile sağlıklı aile işlevselliği arasında anlamlı ilişkiler tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, erkeklerin kızlara göre özerk-ayrık benlik kurgusu puanlarının anlamlı düzeyde daha yüksek olduğu ve kızların erkeklere göre bağımlı-ilişkisel benlik kurgusu puanlarının anlamlı düzeyde daha yüksek olduğu bulunmuştur. Buna ek olarak, Aile İşlevselliği alt boyutlarından hangilerinde

ailelerin sađlıklı veya sađlıksız olmaya yatkın olduđu ortaya konmuştur. Elde edilen tüm bulgular ilgili alanyazın çerçevesinde tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Benlik kurgusu, Aile işlevselliđi, Bireyselcilik-Toplulukçuluk, Cinsiyete bađlı farklılıklar

*To my universe,*

*with love...*



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
M	Mean
SD	Standard Deviation
I-C	Individualism-Collectivism
AUT	Autonomous Self Construal
REL	Relational Self Construal
AUT-REL	Autonomous-Relational Self Construal
FAD	Family Assessment Device
FF	Family Functioning
GF	General Functioning
SES	Socioeconomic status

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In the following section, background information on self construal and family functioning, the purpose and significance of the study and the definitions of the terms will be provided.

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Self construal has a cherished place in cross-cultural psychology. There have been numerous studies conducted up today that enlightens its nature and that shows its relation to cultural characteristics (Boucher & Maslach, 2009; DeCicco & Stroink, 2007; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Psychological theories of self construal development have emphasized the critical importance of the effect of culture (Imada & Yussen, 2011; İmamoğlu & Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, 2004; Triandis, 1989) on individuals. Tough there are different views on its definition and how cultures are categorized; the relationship of culture with self construal development seems to be an agreed-upon phenomenon.

The idea of explaining personality development with self-construal goes back to two dimensions commonly used in psychological studies. These two dimensions are individualism and collectivism. In the past years, this idea of

comparing cultures on the basis of differences in these two dimensions has been used frequently, mostly due to the impressive work of Geert Hofstede (Hofstede, 1980). According to his view, cultures are examined with respect to being close to individualism or the opposite. For cross-cultural psychologists, the popularity of these dimensions was due to its usage in culture-level explanations for observed differences in behaviour (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007a). It was also critically noted that variations in self-construals are definitely a possible mediator which explains a wide range of cross-national differences.

It has been a continuing fact that some cultures are focusing on autonomy, individuality, responsibility and personal choice and others on relatedness and conformity however two-way discrimination solely based on these features may not be enough to reflect all cultural elements. Moreover, it is not feasible to expect individuals of a culture to display only the features of their specific culture. Some theories choose to emphasize either one of the dimensions and thus bring a limit to understanding of individuals' psychological development fully (Cross & Madson, 1997; Guisinger & Blatt 1994). From this respect, the self construal model of Kağıtçıbaşı is considered to be successful in including a third dimension; autonomous-relational self in that it shows dimensions may not necessarily be opposite ends and can coexist (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1996).

The coexistence of autonomy and relatedness as self construals was seen to be emphasized as healthy and thus beneficial for personality development; they are underlined as two basic human needs (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). There are examples in psychology that agree on the coexistence of opposites as healthier. For Ryan and

Deci (2000), the existence of autonomy and relatedness together helps for the optimal development. In the relevant literature, studies supporting this togetherness continue to exist (Keller, 2011; Luciano, 2009).

Elements of self construal are known to be culture specific. When the question “what influences the development of self construal?” is asked, family comes to mind which reflects the culture it belongs to in the first place. The structure of the family and the dynamics within the family are closely tied to the culture it exists in, because family is a small model of the society it belongs to. Thus family has a special place in analyzing how differences in self construal come to exist. For which self construal to be dominant in the individual is affected by the culture one lives in and by the socialization processes of their families (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2000).

It is a known fact that the smallest unit that individuals grow up in, the family, has an important place in the social, psychological, cognitive development. It is the environment where the child gains his first experiences, learn basics on behavior, beliefs and communication. It is possible to understand an individual’s closeness to Hofstede’s cultural values (individualism and collectivism) in accordance with the individual’s family (Segrin & Flora, 2005).

On the basis of the term family functioning, families are categorized in two categories. Functional families are considered as “healthy” and dysfunctional family as “unhealthy” (Epstein, Balwin & Bishop, 1983). Nystul (1993) gives the functions of the healthy family as follows: gaining the skills of sharing emotions,



understanding feelings, accepting individual differences, transmitting relation and love, cooperation, covering the basic needs, solving problems without argument, possessing social values, agreement and taking responsibilities, expressing mutual appreciation, communication, spending free times together and coping with problems .

It was considered to be more appropriate to approach the concept of self construal with a family model that takes the system perspective into account. According to McMaster Approach to families used in the present study, the structure and organization of a family is very effective in influencing and determining the behaviours of its members (Miller, Ryan, Keitner, Bishop, & Epstein, 2000). Family members' open communication, being flexible, being good listeners, being open to different views and involving other members in decisions making, showing genuine involvement in each other are the features that take place and are emphasized in the definition of healthy families for the Mc Master Approach to families that was used in the present study. (Epstein et al., 1983). It is of significance that healthy family includes the elements that foster the development of both autonomy and relatedness. Hence a relationship between self constural and healthy family functioning was expected by the researcher.

Within the Turkish culture and thus Turkish family environment, the presence of different gender roles is a common practice (Yılmaz et al., 2009). These may even limit psychosocial development and social relations. According to Witt (1997), the strongest effect on gender role development seems to occur within the family setting because within this setting parents pass on, both overtly and covertly,

to their children their own beliefs on gender. Girls and boys are expected to differ on the way they think and behave, on their values and attitudes and in the present study this is expected to have a reflection in their self construal development and family functioning perceptions. The roles of men and women are categorized; roles attributed to women involve accountabilities such as being responsible for domestic affairs and being passive in professional life and roles attributed to men involve accountabilities such as being the head of the house (Zeyneloğlu & Terzioğlu, 2011).

These facts have led the researchers to conduct a study on the relationship between self construal and family functioning among adolescents. At this point it has been proposed that using a self construal scale developed in the Turkish society can be more advantageous in order to grasp unique cultural dynamics. Healthy family functioning was expected to be associated with the healthy self-construal model of autonomous-related self in the present study.

All in all it was considered to be beneficial to determine the nature of self construal in high school students and add to the existing literature by explaining its relationship with family functioning.

## **1.2. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between self construals, family functioning perceptions and sibling number among high school students in terms of gender. It has been recognized by the researchers that there were not enough number of studies on the relationship between family environment

and the development of adolescents' self construal. Additional concerns for this study was to put forth in which dimensions of family functioning, adolescents' families were healthy and unhealthy and to understand the possible gender differences between males and females in terms of self construal and family functioning.

### **1.3. Significance of the Study**

Autonomy is a critical concept in the studies concerning self construal which is one of the constructs underlined in the scale used in the present study. According to Gembeck-Zimmer and Collins (2003), during the stage of adolescence, the development of autonomy highly accelerates because of the physical and cognitive changes along with the increase in social relationships and in rights and responsibilities. In cultural psychology the concept autonomy is most frequently reflected in the concept "Self Construal" (Morsünbül, 2012). Transition from childhood into adolescence is signified more by a trading of dependency on parents for dependency on peers instead of a straight-forward growth in autonomy (Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986). Hence the family environment gains a special importance in this period. It is especially in adolescence that separation-individuation phases gain a central place in the relationship between children and parents (Beyers, Goossens, Vansant, & Moors, 2003).

The criteria for the healthy development of the individual has to do with optimal and adaptive self development (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2008). According to the self-construal model used in the present study, healthy development has to do with

autonomy and relatedness which are parts of the self construal. Oyserman, Sakamoto and Leuffer (1998) argues that melding of two self construals; autonomous self construal and related self construal, benefits the development of individuals and thus the society and moreover enables people to understand the value of both being autonomous and being socially responsible. In that sense it was considered that autonomous-related self would be a more optimal model of the self. According to Kağıtçıbaşı, the skills of autonomy and relatedness are both central for adaptation to social change and in being successful (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2012). From another point of view, research in family psychology suggests that relatedness along with autonomy should be better appreciated and realized (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1996). Moving from this point and the crucial effect of family environment on adolescents' development, the fact whether healthy family functioning is related to this optimal development was under investigation.

The present study has a contextual approach in that the socio cultural environment; family is taken as a context that effects development. The development of autonomous-related self is best comprehended from a contextual/functional perspective (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007a). This point of view resembles Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Additionally, the family structure is not stable and changes with regard to the different improvements and developments in the society. According to Kağıtçıbaşı (1999), changes and variations in ecology, economy and social structure and variations in family interactions and values take place. So in the present study, it

was considered to be important to analyze self construal; a construct sensitive to the changes in a culture within the perspective of family environment.

There are studies in the literature involving the relatedness of self construal and family (Allen, Hauser, Eickholt, Bell, & O'Connor, 1994; Her & Dunsmore, 2011; Özdemir, 2010). They focus on the attitudes of parents rather than the family interactions and dynamics. A different type of focus can be found in the Mc Master Model. The model identifies dimensions on which families may or may not function efficiently and provides information on the family being healthy or unhealthy. It provides a broad range of information because various dimensions are assessed and the combination of various dimensions can be found to be healthy or unhealthy. Hence it gives idea on the overall functioning of the family; as healthy or unhealthy.

In our country, adolescent self construal is an under researched area. In this study on hand it was aimed to focus on the interactions and the organization of the family as different system dimensions are being included and on the other hand high school students were at the focus. Studies conducted in Turkey mostly underline university students (Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, 2004; Türküm, Kızıldaş, Bıyık, & Yemenici, 2005).

The present study can inspire further researchers to conduct studies on adolescent self construal development and on family functioning. Additionally the findings may enlighten parents in recognizing the importance of providing a healthy family environment. Such awareness is important in that it has a preventive role; adolescents can have the chance of avoiding possible psychological problems. Also educators and counselors can use the results of this study in handling problems

related to family functioning and self construal. In schools required help can be better provided to students in decision making, goal setting or assertiveness if their autonomy or relatedness development is realized. Clients in counseling can be evaluated and treated from the point of view of self construal development and family functioning. The dimensions that their families are healthy or unhealthy can be assessed and accordingly a more effective treatment plan that takes the results into account can be followed. Parents can be informed on healthy self-construal development along with family functioning dimensions and healthy family functioning by the possible seminars organized in school settings.

Taking everything into consideration, it is not feasible for an individual to act free from the culture he is living in. Reflection of cultural factors in thoughts and emotions is a common experience among the people within a society. In the many different environments that people attend, they reflect cultural factors. In the present study differences in the self construals which carry the elements of culture was tried to be captured by its relation with family functioning.

#### **1.4. Definition of the Terms**

*Self Construal:* According to Singelis (1994, pp. 581) self construal is the sum of the individual's thoughts, feelings and acts on his interpersonal relations and his unique self.

*Family Functioning:* It implies the tasks that the family members should carry out within healthy unity and togetherness (Bulut, 1993). They are the functional

characteristics that contribute to the healthy development of the family members. These are problem-solving, communication, affective involvement, affective responsiveness, roles, behavioral control and general functioning (Epstein et al., 1983).

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **2.1. Individualism and Collectivism**

In order to get a better understanding on the construct self construal; its point of origin and the cultural dimensions that led the way for it to develop which are Individualism and Collectivism will be examined first.

To grasp the effect of culture on different constructs related to the individual, its dimensions should be defined clearly. One of the major dimensions used to explain behaviour in cross-cultural studies is individualism-collectivism dimension (Çukur, Guzman, & Carlo, 2004; Dahkli, 2009; Hamamura, 2011). The dimension of individualism-collectivism has been widely used in cross-cultural psychology to define and predict differences of cognition, behaviours, values and concepts in relation with the self (Fernandez, Paez, & Gonzalez, 2005; Matsumoto, 1999; Shulruf et al., 2011; Voronov & Singer, 2002). According to Oyserman, Coon, & Kimmelmeimer (2002) approximately 170 studies have been conducted concerning the dimensions individualism and collectivism.

The constructs of individualism and collectivism enabled researchers with an opportunity to work on the construct “culture” in an objective manner (Ercan, 2008). The most fundamental and substantial explanations on the I-C dimension has



been employed by Hofstede (1980). The high side of this dimension, called individualism, can be defined as a preference for a tight social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only. Its opposite, collectivism, signifies a preference for a tightly bounded society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular in-group to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty (Hofstede, 2012). So these constructs mainly focus on whether individual interests should be coordinated with group interests or should be appreciated (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005).

Typical attributes related to individualism are independence, autonomy, self-reliance, uniqueness, achievement orientation and competition. Collectivism on the contrary is related to a sense of duty toward one's group, interdependence with others, desire for social harmony and conformity with group norms (Gündoğdu, 2007).

Countries that can be provided as examples of collectivist cultures can be noted as mostly Asian societies and examples of individualistic cultures can be noted generally as Western societies such as USA and Britain (Hofstede & Bond, 1988). The comprehensive study of Oyserman et al. (2002) has evidenced that participants from America had higher scores compared to participants from Japan and Hong Kong on the scale measuring individualism. So it was realized that there were differences among countries in terms of their place on the individualism-collectivism dimension.

Generally collectivism and individualism have been recognized as extremes of a single dimension but a more feasible point of view can be that they are

independent dimensions. It is not very realistic to expect from individuals to show all the features of their culture; individualistic or collectivistic. It is a lot more functional to state that individuals may show features of both dimensions, with their own culture influencing them much more. Hence there is variability within cultures as suggested by İmamoğlu (2007). It can provide better perspectives if cultures are studied within themselves for more meaningful data. When the studies conducted are examined, evidence to within culture variability is set forth (Göregenli, 1997; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2007). Furthermore the work of Green, DesChamps and Paez (2005) presented another evidence to this. According to their findings, even in a highly homogeneous sample within country variation was present. Yet again in a study conducted by Özdikmenli-Demir and Sayıl (2009), the coexistence of individualism and collectivism was confirmed.

According to Gudykunst et al. (1996) Individualism-Collectivism had a direct influence on behaviour but it also influences behaviour indirectly through self construals that individual members learn when being socialized into the culture. In other words self construal has a mediating role in explaining the impact of culture on behaviour which is also suggested by Markus and Kitayama (1991) as independent and dependent self. It has also been agreed that self-construal can be sufficient to explain the connection between culture and the individual (Özdemir & Çok, 2011). Given these facts, collectivism and individualism can be used to account for the differences between cultures but in order to explain the differences between individuals, self-construal of the individual is a better indicator.

## **2.2. Self Construal**

As the above findings suggest, individualism and collectivism are among the most researched areas in cross-cultural studies however there also emerges a need to relate the findings at hand to the individual in the first place. With the previous dimensions, the emphasis was not on the individual but rather on the culture; however self-construal is thought of as an individual-level cultural orientation and is considered to mediate and account for the effects of culture on a wide range of social behaviors (Levine et al., 2003).

Self construal refers to the ways individuals perceive themselves in relation to others (Constantine, 2001). The socio-cultural values that the self involves are defined as “self construal” (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). According to Singelis, self construal is “constellation of thoughts, feelings, and actions concerning one’s relationship to others, and the self as distinct from others” (Singelis, 1994, p. 581). His scale gave results on the dimensions of independent and interdependent self construals. Most researchers have depended on this two factor structured scale.

According to Markus and Kitayama (1991) too, there are differences in the self construals of individuals as independent and interdependent as a result of their cultures. It can be concluded that people of individualist societies show features of independent self construals whereas people of collectivist societies show features of interdependent self construals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Furthermore to set an example the country being Asian or the United States creates a difference in self construals. On the whole, Euro-Americans tend to have higher values in independence compared to Asian-Americans (Singelis, 1994).

In a study conducted by Constantine (2001) on counselor trainees, it was revealed that trainees with higher levels of interdependent self construals were better in considering and integrating cultural differences. So the type of self construal was revealed to have an impact on the way the counselor sees the helping relationship.

The first type of self construal, independent which was frequently associated with concepts like individualist, autonomous and agentic are mostly attributed to men and the second type of self construal, interdependent that is frequently associated with concepts like relational and is mostly attributed to women (Kashima et al., 1995; Triandis, 1994). More studies presents evidence to variations of self construal between males and females.

According to Kashima et al. (1995), scores of females on relatedness self construal were higher compared to males. Fernandez et al. (2005) confirmed that males do not have higher independent self construal scores and simply females do not have higher interdependent self construal scores. When the additional results obtained from the study of Fernandez et al (2005) is examined, it is put forward that cultural values are more important than socio-cultural factors in order to explain interdependence. Feminine cultures stress relations with others and social support and masculine cultures emphasize independence. This situation is expected to create a difference in self construals of two gender groups. In some studies there were significant differences among gender (Cross & Madson, 1997), whereas in some there were minor differences (Çelen, Çok, Bosma, & Djurre 2006) or no significant differences were found (Özdemir & Çok 2011).

According to Bronfenbrenner (1986), as culture has great impact on attitudes and behaviours of individuals, there are differences between different socio-economic groups with the same culture. In that sense, to get a good grasp of the findings of the study the sample was selected from schools of different income levels.

It has been suggested in the literature that Turkey has been experiencing a rapid social change from traditionalism towards individualism starting from 1980s and considering the self-descriptions of Turkish people there are signs of shifts in values, understandings, and world-views. (Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, 2004; Imamoğlu, 1998). Karakitapoğlu-Aygün (2004) demonstrates that “tendencies toward individualism in urban Turkey tend to be replaced traditional social forms resulting in dissatisfaction with the traditional outlook especially among younger generations from middle-upper SES segments”.

In Turkey concepts such as family, neighbors and other social groups are of great significance for individuals (İmamoğlu & Küller, 1993). Nevertheless with the inevitable effect of globalization, there have been shifts in Turkey as well towards individualistic features in definitions related to the self which is reflected by values, attitudes and behaviours (Göregenli, 1997; Karakitapoğlu-Aygün & İmamoğlu, 2002).

Hence to reveal the situation in Turkey in terms of developing a better understanding of self construals representatives of different income groups have been selected as participants.

### **2.3. Kağıtbaşı's Model of Self Construal**

A great deal of psychological theorizing on the self, self-other relations and family dynamics reflect the Western individualistic values (Kağıtbaşı, 2009). The fact that individuals living in Western societies tend to acquire individualistic or autonomous self construals have been confirmed by many studies as suggested by Markus and Kitayama (1991) and Singelis (1994). Moreover it has also been asserted that autonomous and related self construals can coexist within the same culture. Autonomy and relatedness are thought to point to independence and interdependence respectively. In related self construal the basic concepts are conformity and dependence as they are uniqueness and individuality in autonomous self construal (Özdemir, 2011). Studies carried out in Turkey provide evidence for the existence of both individual and group related concerns. (İmamoğlu & Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, 1999). In a study by Kaya and Kağıtbaşı (2011) autonomy and relatedness were found to mediate the association between parenting and positive development in adolescence.

The coexistence of both self construals has been supported by many other theorists as well. In Self Determination Theory proposed by Ryan and Deci (2000), it was noted that autonomy and relatedness facilitated better functioning. According to the theory, preserving the close ties with the family and the dynamics between family members that do not rely on control or manipulation, support autonomy. Furthermore Guisinger and Blatt (1994) suggested that healthy personality development involved equal and complementary emphasis on individuality and relatedness for both men and women.

The world's population is fast becoming less rural and more urban. As a result of this, what used to be adaptive in rural context may not be adaptive in urban life. Increasing urbanization, education and affluence bring about the need to define new concepts regarding the self. (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007b). To set an example, Kağıtçıbaşı recommends that in sociocultural contexts such as USA, being autonomous and separate is cherished but may not be in other contexts where being connected is valued and that does not mean lack of autonomy (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005).

Kağıtçıbaşı (2000) has proposed that as the industrialization and becoming more urban, there will be changes in the value systems and that this situation will result in a new model of self; autonomous-related self; not to pure individuality or autonomy. As a result of such a model, autonomy and relatedness can coexist in the family environment. With the increasing urbanization and education, in especially the upper SES groups, there seems to be inclinations towards autonomy more but without a significant decline in relatedness (İmamoğlu & Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, 2004). Within the model used in the present study; the autonomous-related self construal develops in family environments where dependencies decrease but mutual emotional bonds do not disappear (Morsünbül, 2012).

The construal of relatedness was seen as incompatible with autonomy or separation from others is seen as necessary for autonomy (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2009). So the model of Kağıtçıbaşı focuses on the relationship between autonomy and relatedness and the possible existence of autonomy in collectivistic cultures as well. Despite the consensual agreement that autonomy and relatedness are basic needs, this self construal has not been readily recognized in psychology, even in cross-cultural

psychology. Yet, this model promises to be a healthy integration (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007a).

So it can be concluded that Autonomy has been prioritized in the Western World and in Psychology which was reflected in an emphasis on individual independence, agency and privacy - often at the expense of interpersonal relatedness (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007b). The new family model suggested by Kağıtçıbaşı (2007b) reflects a global pattern of urbanization and socioeconomic development in the Majority World. In this model, closeness and warmth is underlined. Along with this there is also the recognition of autonomy in the process of childrearing. So closely knit self-other relations that allows for autonomy rather than being oriented towards obedience result in the self which is autonomous-related. A study by Westerik (2006) constitutes additional evidence to the validity of the construct autonomous-related self.

A critical aspect for the choice of this model for the present study was that this model, different from other models developed in Turkey, evaluates self construal from the context of family in the first place. So it was expected that more meaningful results could be achieved. Moreover the more healthy self construal type; autonomous-related self construal was expected to have a relationship with healthy family functioning due to the common expressions in both variables.

#### **2.4. Studies on Self Construal**

In a study by Cirhinlioğlu (2006), the main focus was on shame proneness, religious orientations and self construals and the sample was selected among



university students in Ankara. With the scale used, self construals were revealed in two categories; independent and interdependent. Results revealed a significant difference in self construals between males and females; females were found to have higher scores in independent self-construal. In addition the interdependent self construal scores of first year students were higher compared to last year students. The predictive feature of self construal on depression, anxiety and negative self-impression was put forward.

Köse (2009) asserted that low level of related individuation self construal was related to having high characteristics of schema domains. In addition the possible effect of self construal on well-being was examined. Sample consisted of approximately 500 individuals between the ages 18-50. Köse (2009) revealed that people with self construals of related-patterning and related-individuation had less depression level than those having separated-individuation and separated patterning. It was also found that, people having separated-individuation reported lower levels of depression than those having separated-patterning.

Özdemir (2012) derived important information from the study he conducted on adolescents from urban and rural areas. Totally 352 adolescents participated in the study. Results showed that while adolescents' relational self construal did not vary with their rural or urban backgrounds, autonomous and autonomous-relational self construal was found to be higher among adolescents from urban areas. It was also observed that autonomous self construal scores did not vary with the gender of adolescents, but relational and autonomous-relational self construal scores of girls higher than males. In another study by Özdemir (2010), it was found that

adolescents' self construal varies according to the parenting styles. authoritarian parents' adolescent children's related self construal scores; authoritarian and authoritative parents' adolescent children's autonomous-related self construal scores were higher than adolescents' scores whose parents permissive neglecting and permissive indulgent.

Beydoğan (2008) based her study on the previous literature finding that autonomy orientation predicted satisfaction at work and employee well being as well. Totally 383 people working in various public and private sector positions participated in the study. According to the results it was argued that satisfaction and psychological well-being were predicted by relational and individuational self-orientations and that satisfaction was directly predicted by relational orientation.

Yalçındağ (2009) aimed to investigate the differences in self construals in courage. It was asserted that individuation led the way to autonomy. It was revealed that individuation along with relatedness were predictors of courage. Intrapersonal development was emphasized meaning satisfying the development of both individuation and relatedness needs for higher scores of courage. It was suggested that individuation may take the way to courage.

The results of Kulaksız (2011) demonstrated that there was the mediating role of the autonomous related self in the relation of parental control with positive youth development. The study has included 294 adolescents from two different socio-economical backgrounds. Relatedness and autonomous-relatedness were found to have an impact on the positive youth development. Additional findings

were that parental control influenced autonomy development and that parental warmth had an effect on both autonomy and relatedness.

Küçüktepe (2007) pointed to the importance of the relationships among the kinds of self construal, perception of vocational efficacy and preferred teaching styles of elementary school teachers. Totally 1600 teachers working in different public and private schools in Istanbul participated in the study. (The Self Construal Scale developed by Singelis (2004) was utilized in data gathering). Evidence from the study showed that there was a meaningful relationship between teaching styles and self construals. It was suggested that self construal type has an effect on the strategies, methods and materials teachers use. Furthermore it was set forth that individualistic teachers tend to be more original and exploratory.

Taking the studies conducted into account, the emphasis on gender and socioeconomical background were recognized once more. The correspondence of the family environment and parents was seen to be an important dynamic underlying self construal development. The focus was mostly on university student and on adults. Along with this, major personal characteristics were revealed to be associated with self construal as well. Viewing self construal as independent and interpersonal is a common practice. However studying the family interactions from the perspective of autonomous-related self that captures the features of both independent and interdependent self is of curiosity in the present study.

## **2.5. Family**

### **2.6. The Self in Family Context**

A number of studies have examined the family environment and various family dynamics in relation with the individual factors. Relationships between the family members are one of the most fundamental aspects of the adolescents' life. The family creates a prior reality for children and adolescents as they are being exposed to their family's culture (Bell & Bell, 2009). The impact of the family context on different personal features of each family member is clearly inevitable.

Researchers have tried to display the relationship of self-concept development with family many times. According to Arslan (2008), healthy family functions were parallel with higher self-concept scores.

Self-esteem is a concept that is very much studied along with family variables in the literature. In a study conducted by Kahyaoğlu (2010), it was revealed that self-esteem is highly affected from support from family. Also the results of the study show that family attitudes influence the perceived self-esteem. Self-esteem is seemed to be impressed by the structure of the family; if the parents are divorced or not (Kuyucu, 2007). In line with this, (Elfhag, Tynelius & Rasmussen, 2010) suggested that environmental influence in the family context contributed to the formation of self-esteem and that family members show similar levels of self-esteem. There are additional studies which reveals that self-esteem is closely connected to perceived family support (Sharaf, Thomson, & Walsch, 2009; Kahyaoğlu, 2010).

Self-acceptance means an individual's acceptance of all his positive and negative sides and it is an important indicator of mental health (Ceyhan & Ceyhan, 2011). In a study conducted by Başer (2006) it was revealed that perceived support from the family has influence on the self-acceptance levels of university students. According to self-acceptance is very much influenced by a healthy family life cycle (Mitchell, 1963). Family connection which was measured in adolescence was also found to be associated with self-acceptance along with positive relationships at midlife (Bell & Bell, 2009).

The ability of families to survive changes suggests that families are flexible and that their flexibility is aided by how family members communicate (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997). Xiao, Li and Stanton (2011) concluded that openness of the family communication was related to adolescent psychological adjustment. Parent-child relationship was found to be associated with adolescent life satisfaction (Levin & Currie, 2010).

A family environment that is capable of meeting the needs of the adolescent should tried to be reached by parents in the first place. Adolescents are found to be happier when there is open communication in the family where they can disclose themselves (Eryilmaz, 2010). The critical importance of the family environment on the psychological development of adolescents is a cherished research area (Dumlao & Botta, 2000; McKinney & Renk, 2011).

The relationship of adolescents with their significant others in the family has attracted researchers for a long time. In a study by Smart, Sanson and Toumboruou,

(2008) it was recognized that teenagers with the highest-quality relationships were found to be progressing better than all other groups, while those with the poorest-quality relationships constituted the most problematic group. It was also observed that academic success and problem behaviors were in connection with the relationships within the family (Moore, Guzman, Hair, Lippman, & Garrett, 2004).

Accordingly the family environment and the relationships between the family members plays a central role on the life quality of the adolescent.

## **2.7. Family Functioning**

Family has been a significant support system for all its members and whether the family functions well or not has a profound effect on the development of the child. Accordingly capturing the dynamics within the family and understanding the level it operates healthily provides valuable information on the nature of the relationships between its member and the development of the adolescent. The unique characteristics of the family can be revealed and changes can be done if desired.

A full understanding of family functioning must consider that men and women experience family life differently in their families of origin. Men and women grow up with different role expectations, attitudes and goals (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1990). So gender differences should not be ignored.

Theories of family functioning have shown interest in the relationships and development of adolescents. The definition of family functioning has been constituted in different ways in the literature. Family cohesion, communication and

flexibility are three basic signs of a family functioning (Olson & Gorrall, 2003). From the perspective of Beavers, there are two dimensions of family functioning which are family competence and family style. Bulut (1990) considered family functioning as a sign of the quality of relationship between family members and stated further that family functioning reflected the contribution of family members to life quality. McMaster Approach utilizes a general systems theory approach in an attempt to describe the structure, organization, and transactional patterns of the family unit (Miller et al., 2000). It allows examination of families along the total spectrum ranging from healthy to severely pathological in their functioning.

In all conceptualizations, the main goal is to understand how well the family functions and to gain information on the dimensions that are the fundamentals of the family functioning construct.

Understanding the structural and organizational properties of the family and the patterns of transactions among family members have been found to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy families (Epstein et al., 1983). In healthy families, adults show affection openly, members live in the present and use common sense, members send messages clearly (Textor, 1989). According to Zeynab (2012) in healthy families decisions are taken together. Healthy families communicate directly, distribute appropriate roles and members are interested in each other. (Sahin, Nalbone, & Wetchler, 2010). In a study by McCreary and Dancy (2004) it turned out that emotional nurturing, communicating, doing things together, helping each other and parenting children appropriately are characteristics of effectively functioning families. Hence for the purpose of this study, the characteristics of a

well functioning family are determined with the light of the related literature as ideal communication, together decision-making and problem-solving, interest and affection basically.

An effective and healthy family functioning creates the necessary environment for the adolescent to develop positively. (Henderson, Dakof, Schwartz, Liddle, 2006; Lian & Yussoof, 2009; Schumacher & Camp, 2010). Khodarahimi (2011) suggested that there was a positive relationship between extraversion and family functioning and a negative relationship between family functioning and neuroticism and between family functioning and depression. Zainah, Khauridin, & Shahrazad (2011) noted that the higher the family functioning, the adolescent experienced in his or her family environment, the higher was their self-concept. In a survey study conducted by Hassan, Yusooff, & Alavri (2012), the significant influence of parenting skills along with family functioning on the psychological well-being of parents and children was put forward.

In family studies, sibling number, sibling density or family size turned out to be an important variable associated with healthy family functioning. In a study by Fallon and Bowles (1997), sibling density turned out to be influential predictor of family functioning. Additionally, according to Scheck and Emerick (1976), when number of siblings increased in the family, children perceived their parents as less loving and more rejecting. The perception of reduction in parental affect by the children as the sibling number increases was another finding in the family literature (Kitamura, Sugawara, Shima, & Toda, 1998). Accordingly it was observed that as sibling number increases, children benefit less from the resources of the parents and



the family. Thus, healthy functioning was expected to be related to less sibling number by the researcher.

According to Adler birth order, one's position in the family and sibling rivalry has influence on how adults interact in the world. He pointed to five different birth positions: only, oldest, second of only two, middle and oldest. These positions are considered as important points for the child to perceive the world. Actually the child gives the meaning to his or her position. Hence birth positions are uniquely defined for every individual (Bitter, 2008).

### **2.7.1. The Beavers System Model of Family Functioning**

In the research of family studies and in assessing families, a wide range of approaches to measuring family functioning have been utilized. Different instruments and research models have used a self-report or a questionnaire format, capturing the perspectives of family members ("insiders") in their perceptions of family structure or their function, while others have focused on the ratings of observers ("outsiders"). Hence in many studies it was found that the association between self-report measures and behavioral or observational ratings was low. But from the perspective of the Beavers Systems Model, self-report measures and observational ratings can relate well to each other. (Hampson, Beavers, & Hulgus 1989). Very few studies have examined the relationship between self-report and observational ratings, either within or across theoretical models of assessment (Hampson et al., 1989). So this is an important feature of the model. To set evidence, research with instruments from the Beavers Systems Model, that uses

both observational and self-report methods, indicates a relatively high degree of convergence of family constructs regarding the methods (Hampson, Hulgus, & Beavers, 1991).

The Beavers Systems Model provided a cross-sectional point of view on family functioning (Beavers & Hampson, 2000). According to this model there are two dimensions of family functioning which are family competence and family style.

Family competence focuses on the structure, available information and adaptive flexibility of the system. The more flexible and adaptive the family is, the more the family can negotiate, function and also deal effectively with stressful situations. When a family is bound to rigid behaviour patterns, there is not much freedom to evolve and change (Beavers & Hampson, 2000).

Family style is about the quality of family interaction. There are two different basic definitions regarding family style. According to *centripetal families* relationship satisfactions come from within the family rather than from the outside world. On the other hand according to *centrifugal families* the outside world holds the most promise of satisfaction and the family holds the least. Competent families change and adapt in various ways between centripetal and centrifugal ends to meet individual members' needs. Better functioning families view their families as more competent. (Hampson et al., 1991). When categories of families are examined within the Beavers Model, healthy functioning families are defined as optimal families. There are different family groupings according to their positions along the

dimensions competence and style. These family groupings are optimal, adequate, mid-range, borderline and severely dysfunctional (Beavers & Hampson, 2000).

As families begin to improve in functioning, the next higher step is on rigid control and assignment of authority. The Beavers Systems Model recognized this step from rigidity towards eventual egalitarian leadership as a directional continuum. (Hampson et al., 1991).

### **2.7.2. Mc Master Approach to Families**

Mc Master approach to family functioning has been developed to be used in assessment and treatment. Previous work has indicated that family functioning is much more related to transactional and systematic properties of the family system than to intraphysic characteristics of individual family members (Epstein et al., 1983)

This comprehensive approach to families integrate: 1) a multi-dimensional theory of family functioning, 2) assessment instruments to assess these constructs, and 3) a well-defined method of family treatment (Miller et al., 2000).

The McMaster Model is based on a systems theory. Basic assumptions of the model are as follows:

1. All parts of the family are interrelated.
2. One part of the family can not be understood in isolation from the rest of the family system.

3. Family functioning cannot be fully understood by simply understanding each of the individual family members or subgroups.
4. A family's structure and organization are important factors that strongly influence and determine the behaviour of family members.
5. The transactional patterns of the family system strongly shape the behaviour of family members (Miller et al., 2000).

The McMaster Model of Family Functioning that is proposed by the work of Nathan Epstein and his colleagues is an extension of the General System Theory. This model puts forward different dimensions that examines if the family is healthy functioning or not.

The McMaster Model does not cover all aspects of family functioning but for each dimension it includes, the family is being evaluated and its functioning for each dimension is determined. To understand the family structures, organization and transactional patterns associated with family difficulties, the McMaster Model focuses on assessing and formulating six dimensions of family life: problem-solving, communication, roles, affective responsiveness, affective involvement and behaviour control. The dimensions are conceptualized and operationalized in a way that allows them to be easily understood and utilized in research (Miller et al., 2000) and they can be defined as follows;

“Problem-solving: Family's ability to resolve problems at a level that maintains effective family functioning. A family problem is seen as an issue for which the

family has trouble finding a solution, and the presence of which threatens the integrity and functional capacity of the family.”

“Communication: It is defined as how information is exchanged within the family and the focus is on verbal exchange. Is the communication direct or indirect? Is the message clear or is it camouflaged?”

“Roles: The repeated patterns of behaviour such as cooking or taking out the garbage that are displayed to fulfill family functions and to maintain healthy functioning.”

“Affective Responsiveness: The ability of the family to respond to various stimuli with the appropriate quality and quantity of feelings. Responding with the full spectrum of feelings experienced in human life and the degree of response are emphasized.”

“Affective Involvement: The degree to which the family as a whole values and shows interest in the activities and interests of individual family members. This dimension focuses on the degree of involvement among the family members.”

“Behaviour Control: The patterns that the family applies to handle behaviours in situations such as physically dangerous situations, situations that involve meeting and expressing psychobiological needs or drives like eating and situations involving interpersonal socializing behaviour.”

“General Functioning: This dimension focused on the overall health/pathology of the family.”

According to the McMaster Model, in healthy families closeness is underlined and is of optimum level and the control of behaviour is flexible. Emotions are expressed at an appropriate level and problem-solving is efficient. So individuality and autonomy are emphasized and at the same time adolescents tend to take the support and love that they need. (Kocayörük, 2007). From this perspective healthy family functioning may be related to autonomous-related self construal in that it underlines the necessities of autonomy and relatedness in the family environment.

The present study McMaster Model of Family Functioning, has been utilized; it tend to be more straightforward. It helps reveal on which dimensions families may or may not function healthily thus dimensions that need improvement can be determined. So it is beneficial in helping the counselor or the educator understand in which dimensions the family needs help or on what can be improved.

## **2.8. Studies on Family Functioning**

When the related literature in Turkey is scanned it is clearly seen that family functioning has been studied with demographic variables as well as with problem behaviours and personality traits. In studies concerning family functioning, as demographic variables such as gender, age, number of siblings, birth order, socio-economic status and education levels of parents have been under consideration.

Nadir (2010) examined the roles of family functioning, coping styles and basic personality characteristics on depression and anxiety symptoms of mothers. It

was put forth that problems in general functioning of the family is associated with depression levels of mothers. The study presents significant differences for socioeconomic status of the families. Mothers of lower socioeconomic levels have more problems of communication and affective responsiveness compared to higher socioeconomic levels. Also general functioning of families with lower income levels is seen to be unhealthy and they reported more problems. Concerning number of children in the family, it is deduced from this study that three and more number of children signifies problems in communication.

Doğan (2006) investigated the relationship between locus of control and family functioning among high school students. Additional research goals were achieved by gathering data on demographic variables such as gender, grade, birth order and parent education level. Statistical analyses revealed that family functioning varies according to gender, birth order and education level of father. A major finding of the study is that affective involvement dimension predicts locus of control in both genders. Moreover the study suggested that there was a significant relationship between locus of control and general functioning of the family along with affective involvement, communication and roles sub dimensions.

A study by Kalyencioğlu (2007) addresses the relationship between adjustment skill and family functioning among adolescents. The sample of the study consisted of 275 high school students. The adjustment level of students perceived as unhealthy the family function are low and the adjustment level of students perceived as healthy the family function are high. So accordingly, the findings of the study

suggest that low adjustment skill can be explained by unhealthy family functioning among high school students.

Evirgen (2010) explored the association of social competence and family relationships. The study answers the question whether children who have positive and negative representations with respect to their family differ in their family functioning perceptions. The sample of the study was composed of 95 children that are between 60 months old and 80 months old and their mothers. Children who reported negative perceptions towards their family were found to perceive their family as not functioning well. Also the results indicated that general functioning and affective responsiveness dimension predicted the ability of the children having positive relationships with peers and teachers.

In a study by Çakıcı (2006), the main goal was to determine the family functioning levels of families with 6 year old children and the effect of family functioning on mother-child relationships. Different socio-economic levels have been considered. The results suggested a significant correlation between mother-child relationships and family functioning perceptions.

In the study conducted by Bahçivan-Saydam & Gençöz (2005), the main aim was to present the relationship of adolescents' self-rated problem behaviours with family functioning, parental attitudes and self-esteem. The sample included 153 adolescents whose ages were between 14 and 17. Deficits in general functioning, affective responsiveness, problem-solving and roles were found to be associated with adolescents' behaviour problems. Adolescents who reported unhealthy family functioning in general functioning, communication and affective responsiveness are



likely to have internalizing behaviour problems such as anxiety, depression and social introversion. It is suggested that family members who do not express their feelings and thoughts in a qualified environment of communication have problems. Especially when members don't express their joy, sadness or anger, who avoid discussing expectations tend to direct their angers toward themselves and somatic dysfunctions like depression are more likely to occur.

Türküm (2005) concentrated on the university students' perceptions on family functioning in terms of sources of problems in their daily lives and their related problems. 1745 students filled out the Family Assessment Device. The results of the study showed that there is a difference among gender; females perceive their family functioning healthier compared to male students. The evidence indicated that students who perceive their families as unhealthy have problems with their family members friends of opposite sex, boy and girl friends, sexual life, academic and economic restrictions. Additionally it is observed that students who perceive their family functioning as healthy tend to seolve problem by focusing on the solution of problems. So students differed in terms of how they behave when they encounter a problem. Some dysfunctional behaviour problems that students who perceive their family as unhealthy are irregular eating, drinking alcohol, using internet irregularly, and cry unnecessarily.

Coşkun (2005) conducted a study to determine the relationship between learned resourcefulness and family functioning of high school students. students from 10 and 11<sup>th</sup> grades attended the study. The findings signified a significant association between learned resourcefulness levels of high school students and their

psychological relation patterns with their families. As the students perceive their family as healthy, their learned resourcefulness level increases. It is proposed that when parents both work, the quality and quantity of the time they spend with their children decrease. As a result the children lack good role models who produce solutions to problems and this can be associated with their unhealthy perception of their families.

Karakoyun (2011) conducted a study to further examine the relationship between levels of assertiveness and family functioning among 8th graders in terms of socio-demographic variables. Personal information form has been used for socio-demographic variables. Some of these variables were gender, number of siblings, birth order, parent education level and socio-economic status. With the results it was suggested that unhealthy functioning in the sub dimensions communication, roles and the general functioning causes students to have lower levels of assertiveness. Students from lower socio-economic status have unhealthy family functioning in all dimensions compared to students from middle and high socio-economic status. When number of siblings increased negative outcomes in family functioning took place.

Avcı (2006) investigated families of violent and nonviolent adolescents in terms of family functioning, trait anger and anger expression. The sample consisted of adolescents from violent and nonviolent families whose age ranged between 14 and 18. The results suggest that families of violent adolescents had more deficits and conflicts in problem solving, communication, role assignment, affective responsiveness, affective involvement, behavior control and general functioning

when compared to the families of nonviolent adolescents. It has been indicated that adolescents of violent families have more deficits in problem-solving. This finding is parallel with the previous researches which indicate that adolescents of violent families tend to be insufficient in the problem-solving skills.

Eşkisü (2009) examined the association of bullying, family functions and perceived social support. Additionally the study tried to answer the question whether family functions and perceived social support predict bullying in high school students. Examining family functioning in terms of demographic variables such as gender, age, number of siblings, socio-economic level and parents' education level was also in the scope of this study. According to the results, it was found out that the sub dimensions affective involvement and behaviour control explained the bullying behaviour among adolescents.

The studies conducted in Turkey on family functioning indicated that the adolescent group was commonly included in family functioning researches along with other age groups as well. The demographic variables of birth order, gender, number of children and grade were underlined in most of the studies. Critical psychological constructs were examined in these studies and family functioning was observed to be studied both with its predictors and its impacts. It was detected that sometimes the sub dimensions of family functioning was of concern whereas sometimes the concentration was on the General Functioning dimension only which provides information the general health of the family. In the present study the research question was constituted and tried to be answered taking into account the relevant information gathered from the literature.

In conclusion, the previous literature points out to the healthy self construal model that included both autonomy and relatedness. As also stated by Dollinger, Preston, O'Brien and DiLalla (1996), the togetherness of independence and relatedness is the best combination for a healthy human development. The functional family supports the healthy development of the adolescent. In the healthy family functioning model of Epstein et al. (1983), problems are solved together, the attention of members in each other do not prevent them from being free and independent. Accordingly healthy family functioning is expected to have a possible relationship between autonomous-related self construal. In addition, the gender differences mentioned in the literature for both variables and the relationship of family size as sibling number also show itself among the expected relationships. Taking these into consideration, the previous research suggest that there may be a possible relationship between self construal, family functioning and sibling number in terms of gender.

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

This chapter is devoted to the overall design of the study. Research design, research questions, participants, data collection procedure, instruments and data analysis procedures will be presented.

#### **3.1. Research Design**

The whole design of the study was of quantitative nature. The study was an associational research and the relationship between self construal development and family functioning was mainly under investigation. The relationship of the variables; self construal, general functioning and sibling number was examined in terms of gender. In associational research, relationships among two or more variables are investigated without manipulating variables. Moreover, the possibility of relationships are examined. (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2005). Correlation coefficients were used which express quantitative data on the extent variables of the study are related to each other (Runyon & Haber, 1976).

Two instruments, named, Autonomous-Related Self in the Family Scale (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007a), Family Assessment Device (Epstein et al., 1983) and a demographic questionnaire developed by the researcher were used to collect data. Data were collected from 529 high school students who volunteered to participate in

the study. All data were gathered by the researcher. Necessary permissions to administer the instruments were taken from the METU Human Subjects Ethics Committee and Ministry of National Education in Ankara. Data were collected in May and June of 2012.

### **3.2. Research Questions**

Is there any significant relationship among self construals, family functioning and sibling number in terms of gender in high schools students?

The sub questions under investigation were;

What are the sub dimensions that families are healthy and unhealthy functioning?

Is there any significant difference between males and females in terms of self construal and family functioning?

### **3.3. Participants**

The target population was the public high school students in two different districts of Ankara: Çankaya and Altındağ. Purposeful sampling was used in order to make sure students from low, middle and high income levels were reached. According to the relevant literature, socioeconomic status is related with self construal thus, students from various backgrounds were aimed to be involved. Data were collected from seven different public high schools. Three of them were from high income level, two of them from middle income level and finally two of them were from low income level. These districts were chosen considering their income

levels based on the data from TUIK (TUIK, 2011). In the selection of the schools again information from TUIK was utilized. Additionally convenient sampling was used. The schools were selected according to their convenience to the researcher. Convenient sample is the group of people that are conveniently available to the researcher (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2005).

The Family Assessment Device used in the present study consists of items on family relations and family structure. Most of the university students live away from their families so it was considered healthier to gather data from students who are involved in the family environment in the first place. In that sense high school students were thought to be an appropriate choice.

Totally, 529 high schools students participated in the study. 56.11% of the participants were female and 43.7% of them were male. When the socio economic status of the schools were considered; 36.4% of the participants were from high SES area, 30.6% of the participants were from middle SES area and 32.8% of them were from low SES area.

Participants' ages ranged from 15 to 19 with a mean of 16.52. Among them 9.6% were 15 years old, 39.1% were 16 years old, 40.6% were 17 years old, 9.1% were 18 years old and .9% were 19 years old. Students were selected from 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades. When the grade levels are considered, 9.8% (n = 52) were in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 50.5% (n = 267) were in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, 39.5% (n = 209) were in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Students from grade 12 were mostly absent in the school due to their preparation for university entrance exam hence they were not included in the data collection.

According to the sibling number of the sample, 10.6% were the only child of the family, 47.3% were two siblings, 29.1% were three siblings, 5.6% were 4 siblings and 3.2% were five siblings or more. Additionally when the birth order of the students are examined it is found that 14.6% of them were the only child of the family, 33.6% of them were the first born child among their siblings, 32.9% of them were the second born, 14.4% were the third born and 4.3% of them were the fourth child or more.

When the education level of the mother is considered, 2.7% never went to school, 46.0 % had elementary level of education, 33.5% were graduates of high schools, 16.9% were university graduates and 1.0 % had graduate level education. Additionally according to the statistics of the education level of fathers, 2 % never went to school, 33.3% had elementary level of education, 37.3% were graduates of high schools, 26.4% were university graduates and 2.9% had graduate level education.

The percentage of the ones with a family income of 1000 TL and below were 14.7% (n = 78), 34.6% (n = 183) had a family income between 1001 TL and 2000 TL, 25.3% (n = 134) of them had a family income between 2001 TL and 3000 TL and finally 22.3% (n = 118) of them had a family income of 3000 TL and above.

### **3.4. Data Collection Instruments**

Three instruments were used in the present study to collect data. A questionnaire about demographic variables; Autonomous-Relational Self in the Family Scale to investigate the self construal development of the participants, and



the Family Assessment Device which was used to determine the perceptions of the participants' on the functioning of their families.

#### **3.4.1. Personal Information Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was developed to gather data on the demographic information of the participants. There were two types of variables in the questionnaire; nearly all categorical and one continuous variable. The categorical variables were gender, grade level of students (the grade levels were 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>), education level of mother (levels were never been to school, elementary level, secondary level, high school level, university graduate and higher education), education level of father (levels were never been to school, elementary level, secondary level, high school level, university graduate and higher education), parents' status (levels were living together, mother not alive, father not alive, step mother, step father, living separately and divorced), number of siblings including the self (levels were only child, 2 siblings, three siblings, four siblings and five and more), birth order (levels were only child, second child, third child, fourth and more) and montly income of the family (levels were 1000 TL and below, between 1001 TL and 2000 TL, between 2001 TL and 3000 TL and above 3000 TL). Date of birth was the continuous variable.

#### **3.4.2. Autonomous-Relational Self in the Family Scale**

Autonomous-Related Self in the Family Scale was developed by Kağıtçıbaşı (2007a) in order to gain information on the self construals of individuals. There are

totally three subscales which are autonomous self, related self and autonomous-related self. There are nine items in the first two subscales and 4 items in the remaining autonomous-related self subscale. There are totally 22 items and participants rate each item within a range of 1 to 5. The statements that the numbers correspond to are “totally disagree”, “disagree”, “undecided”, “agree” and “totally agree”. The reverse items are 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 15.

The autonomous self scale measured the degree of agency in the relationships between the individual and those to whom the individual is close to. The related self scale assessed the degree of individual’s interdependent relationships with those to whom the individual is close to. Finally, the autonomous-related self scale assessed the degree of autonomy and relatedness orientation of the individuals in his/her relations with people close to his/her.

The reliability and validity study of the scale has been performed by Kağıtçıbaşı (2007a) with university students. According to the results obtained the internal consistency scores for the subscales related self, autonomous self and autonomous-related self are .84, .84 and .77 respectively.

The reliability and validity study of the scale for high schools students has been carried out by Özdemir (2011). Results of his study showed that the scale had a three-factor construct and was comprised and also confirmatory factor analyses confirmed the these three factor structure of the scale that is autonomous self, related self and autonomous-related self in family. A second critical finding was that the internal consistency of the autonomous self (.69), related self (.77) and autonomous-related self (.73) in family scales was acceptable. Additionally results

of explanatory and confirmatory factor analyses showed that autonomous-related self in family scales was a valid and reliable measure of the three different dimensions of self construal for Turkish adolescents. Autonomous-related self in family scales also was proved useful in assessing gender differences in self construal dimensions.

### **3.4.3. Family Assessment Device**

Family Assessment Device (FAD) was developed by Epstein et al. (1983) and is a 4-point 60 items Likert-type scale. Its main aim is to analyze family functioning within different sub dimensions and determine if the family is healthy functioning or not. Possible responses to items are “I totally agree”, “I agree to a great extent”, “I agree a little” and “I don’t agree at all”. Problem solving, communication, roles, affective responsiveness, affective involvement, behavior control and general functions are the seven subscales of the scale. Items belonging to the subscales are distributed nonorderly and 60 items are obtained. Totally 35 items were reversed for the proper calculations. High scores in each subscale indicate an unhealthy functioning in the area of each subscale. 2 is a limit in scores obtained for each scale and scores that are above 2 are considered as unhealthy in the relevant subscale. The subscales General Functioning can be used separate from other subscales and in the present study the General Functioning subscale was used in the Inferential Statistics part which gives information on the overall functioning of the family.

Cronbach's alpha for the original form ranged from .72 to .92, and test-retest reliability coefficients of the original form ranged from .66 (problem solving) to .76 (affective responsiveness) (Epstein et al., 1983). The construct validity of FAD has been indicated by the comparison of normal families and families having a member with psychiatric illness, and results turned out that families having a member with psychiatric illness had higher scores than normal families (Epstein et al., 1983).

The scale was adapted to Turkish by Bulut (1990). Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each subscale. Cronbach's alpha were found as .80 for the problem solving subscale, .71 for the communication subscale, .42 for the roles subscale, .59 for the affective responsiveness subscale, .38 for the affective involvement subscale, .52 for the behavioral control subscale and .86 for the general functioning subscale (Bulut, 1993).

Additionally test - retest reliability coefficients were calculated for each subscale. Test-retest reliability was found to be .90 for the problem solving subscale, .84 for the communication subscale, .82 for the roles subscale, .78 for the affective responsiveness subscale, .62 for the affective involvement subscale, .80 for the behavior control subscale, and .89 for the general functioning subscale (Bulut, 1993).

### **3.5. Limitations of the Study**

To begin with, the sample was chosen from two districts of the city Ankara, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally students were chosen from public schools only, private schools or different types of high schools

were not included. The participants were selected by purposeful and convenient sampling and therefore this situation put restrictions on the generalizability of the findings.

The instruments themselves may be considered as a limitation. The results were based on the data collected by the two scales; Autonomous-Relational Self in the Family Scale and Family Assessment Device. So these self-report measures hold a limitation. An additional and important threat may be social desirability.

Correlation research was used in this study; therefore, no causal relationship can be made between the research variables. Furthermore there may be other variables related to self construal development and perception of family functioning.

Only the subscale “General Functioning” of FAD has been used in order to detect a relationship with self construals. Involving the other subscales in the analysis could provide better information on the family functioning dynamics.

Finally, sources such as observation reports, interview reports, or peer evaluation were not used, data collection procedure relies only on quantitative measures.

### **3.6. Data Collection Procedure**

All necessary documents were handled to METU Human Subjects Ethics Committee and to Ministry of National Education in order to have the permission to carry out the study. After the permissions are taken 7 different public schools were visited by the researcher and the students filled out the questionnaires. It took approximately 20 minutes to complete the questionnaires and the students

completed them within their class hours. Before the students began to fill out the questionnaires, the researcher introduced herself and talked a little about the topic and the importance of the study. Students were reminded about confidentiality rules and they were asked to be honest while answering the questions and items. It was tried to be made sure that the students completed the questionnaires independently, so the appropriate environment was tried to be established.

### **3.7. Data Analysis Procedure**

To begin with, data were screened to check for missing values and for incorrect data entry if any existed. The data were analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0). Firstly to prepare the data for analysis, the negative items of the scales were reversed. There were some critical points considered right before the data analysis process. The missing data were carefully examined and the researcher was careful about the assumptions of the statistical techniques. Scores were calculated for each participant summing up the reversed and positive scores gained from the Autonomous-Relational Self in the Family Scale and Family Assessment Device. Different scores for subscales were calculated.

Next, Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha were computed in order to check for internal consistencies of Autonomous-Related Self in the Family Scale and Family Assessment Device. For Autonomous-Related Self in the Family Scale; the Cronbach Alpha's for the three subscales ranged between .65 and .82. For Family Assessment Device, the Cronbach Alpha's for the seven subscales ranged between .59 and .82.

In the present study, in order to analyze the relationships among family functioning and self construals and sibling number in terms of gender, Bivariate Correlation has been applied. To reveal the differences of gender on self construals and family functioning, independent samples t-tests were run

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULTS**

This chapter is devoted to the results obtained from the statistical analysis. Results are presented by first providing descriptive statistics of scale scores (for Autonomous-Relational Self in Family Scale and Family Assessment Device), descriptive statistics for males and females regarding the variables of the study (self construals, family functioning and sibling number) and then finally the analysis findings. Independent samples t-test for gender differences on self construals and family functioning and then Correlation Analysis between the variables self construal, family functioning and sibling number in terms of gender will be introduced.

In this study, the purpose was to explore the relationship between self construals, family functioning and sibling number in terms of gender among high school students. Additionally the dimensions families were healthy and unhealthy functioning and the possible gender differences in terms of self construal and family functioning were explored.

#### **4.1. Results of Descriptive Statistics**

The descriptive characteristics regarding the self construals of the participants; means and standard deviations were reported for Autonomous Related



Self in the Family Scale subscales, namely; Autonomous Self-Construal, Related Self-Construal and Autonomous Related Self-Construal. The mean scores indicate the scores for the average value that were calculated by adding the total scores obtained from each item for each subscale. There were nine items in the subscales Autonomous Self-Construal and Related Self-Construal and there were four items in the Autonomous Related Self-Construal subscale.

Descriptive statistics showed that the mean scores of Autonomous Related Self in the Family Scale subscales were found to be as follows; Autonomous Self-Construal ( $M = 27.38$ ,  $SD = 4.99$ ), Related Self-Construal ( $M = 37.84$ ,  $SD = 6.17$ ) and Autonomous Related Self-Construal ( $M = 17.17$ ,  $SD = 3.17$ ).

The descriptive statistics related to Family Functioning; means and standard deviations, were reported for Family Assessment Device subscales, namely; Problem Solving, Communication, Roles, Affective Responsiveness, Affective Involvement, Behavior Control, and General Functioning. The scale was applied to totally 529 students. The mean scores indicate the average value that were calculated by dividing the total scores obtained from each subscale by the total number of items for these particular measures.

According to the descriptive statistics the mean scores and standard deviations of family functioning subscales were obtained; problem solving ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = .57$ ), communication ( $M = 2.05$ ,  $SD = .51$ ), roles ( $M = 2.05$ ,  $SD = .47$ ), affective responsiveness ( $M = 2.02$ ,  $SD = .60$ ), affective involvement ( $M = 2.20$ ,  $SD = .54$ ), behaviour control ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = .44$ ), and general functioning ( $M = 1.82$ ,

$SD = .53$ ). It was revealed that the scores of the subscales were around the health/unhealthy limit score of “2” and that they were close to each other.

There were totally 231 males who participated in the study. Among them the mean scores of Autonomous Related Self in the Family Scale subscales were found to be as follows; Autonomous Self-Construal ( $M = 28.29, SD = 4.83$ ), Related Self-Construal ( $M = 36.11, SD = 6.51$ ) and Autonomous Related Self-Construal ( $M = 16.21, SD = 3.55$ ). When females are considered, totally 297 females participated in the study. Among them the mean scores of Autonomous Related Self in the Family Scale subscales were found to be as follows; Autonomous Self Construal ( $M = 26.67, SD = 5.03$ ), Related Self-Construal ( $M = 39.19, SD = 5.54$ ) and Autonomous Related Self-Construal ( $M = 17.91, SD = 2.63$ ). Furthermore General Functioning scores of males ( $M = 1.91, SD = .50$ ) were found to be higher than females ( $M = 1.76, SD = .54$ ). Additional results of the descriptive analyses showed that the female participants had more siblings compared to males. Results of descriptive statistics concerning males and females separately are displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1 Results of Descriptive Statistics for males and females**

		Males		Females	
		(n = 231)		(n = 297)	
		M	SD	M	SD
Family	General Functioning	1.91	.50	1.76	.54
Functioning	Autonomous	28.29	4.83	26.67	5.03
	Self Construal				

SelfConstrual	Related	36.11	6.51	39.19	5.54
	Self Construal				
	Autonomous-Related	16.21	3.55	17.91	2.63
	Self Construal				

#### 4.2. Gender Differences on Self Construals

Independent samples t-test was used to understand if there were significant differences among self construals of males and females. Three different groups of scores were obtained as there were three categories of Self Construals; Autonomous Self-Construal, Related Self-construal and Autonomous-Related Self-Construal. Males were composed of 231 students and females were composed of 297 students.

Assumptions related to independent samples t-test which were independent observation, univariate normality and homogeneity of variance (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007) were examined. Independent observation was provided by researchers' full time attendance during the process of data collection.

For the homogeneity of variance to be satisfied the two groups; males and females must have equal variances. This was observed by making use of Levene's Test of Equality. It was revealed that the significance value for only Autonomous Self-Construal was significant. Thus while interpreting the results of the independent samples t-test, for the scales Related Self-construal and Autonomous-Related Self-construal; equal variances were not assumed.

The normal distribution check was done by making use of different methods. Firstly, it was recognized that nearly all skewness and kurtosis values, obtained by were between the values -3 and 3. Hence univariate normality was considered to be provided (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Moreover Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk Tests resulted in significant values for Related Self-Construal and Autonomous-Related Self-Construal. As they are conservative tests in addition to these, histograms with normal curves and q-q plots were examined. These were additional evidences to the normality of the data. In conclusion, it was decided that normality was provided.

The results of the analyses evidenced that there were significant differences between males and females in all three types of self construals. When Autonomous Self-Construal is considered, it was revealed that males ( $M = 28.29$ ,  $SD = 4.83$ ) had significantly higher scores compared to females ( $M = 26.67$ ,  $SD = 5.03$ ), ( $t_{(526)} = 3.73$ ,  $p < .05$ ). When related self-construal is considered the scores of females ( $M = 39.19$ ,  $SD = 5.54$ ) were significantly higher than males ( $M = 36.11$ ,  $SD = 6.51$ ), ( $t_{(526)} = -5.76$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Finally for the autonomous-related self-construal again females ( $M = 17.91$ ,  $SD = 2.63$ ) had significantly higher scores compared to males ( $M = 16.21$ ,  $SD = 3.55$ ), ( $t_{(526)} = -6.08$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

#### **4.3. Gender Differences on General Functioning**

In the present study the subscale General Functioning of Family Assessment Device was used in the inferential statistics section. Independent samples t-test was used to compare the General Functioning scores of two different groups of high

school students according to their gender. Two different groups of scores were obtained as there were two categories of General Functioning; healthy family functioning and unhealthy family functioning. The first group which was males was composed of 231 students and the second group which was females was composed of 297 students. Assumptions related to independent samples t-test which were independent observation, univariate normality and homogeneity of variance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) were examined. Independent observation was provided by researchers' full time attendance during the process of data collection.

For the homogeneity of variance to be satisfied the two groups; males and females must have equal variances. This was observed by making use of Levene's Test of Equality. It was revealed that the significance value was equal to .42 . Since this value was greater than .05; it was concluded that it was not significant. Thus it was displayed that homogeneity of variance was satisfied.

The normal distribution check was done by making use of different methods. Firstly, it was recognized that nearly all skewness and kurtosis values, obtained by were between the values -3 and 3. Hence univariate normality was considered to be provided (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Moreover Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk Tests resulted in significant values which were a sign of non normality. As they are conservative tests in addition to these, histograms with normal curves and q-q plots were examined. These were additional evidences to the normality of the data. Finally, it was decided that normality was provided.

The results of the analyses indicated that there was a significant difference between males ( $M = 1.91, SD = .50$ ) and females ( $M = 1.76, SD = .54$ ) according to

their perceptions of their family functioning ( $t_{(526)} = 3.29, p < .05$ ). The results presented also put forward that the General Functioning scores of females were lower than the scores of males.

#### **4.4. Results of the Correlation Analysis**

In order to investigate the relationships among the variables (i.e. general functioning, self construals and sibling number) a Bivariate Correlation analysis was run. The results were obtained in two separate parts according to gender being male or female. In the first part, the correlation coefficients for males, and in the next part correlation coefficients for females are presented.

Since there were several correlations computed, the researcher made use of the Bonferroni Method to minimize the chances of making a Type I error. Bonferroni correction is a kind of method controlling error rates when several correlations are computed (Field, 2009). Hence using the Bonferroni approach to control for Type I error across the 10 correlations, a  $p$  value of less than .005 ( $.05/10 = .005$ ) was required for significance. This new alpha level was used to determine the significant relationships.

Among males, general functioning had a strong negative correlation with Related Self-construal ( $r = -.457, p < .005$ ). Sibling number was not found to be correlated with General Functioning.

Finally, among females, general functioning had a strong negative correlation with Related Self-Construal ( $r = -.529, p < .005$ ) and medium positive correlation with Autonomous Self-Construal ( $r = .218, p < .005$ ). Moreover sibling

number was found to have a positive and significant correlation with General Functioning ( $r = .173, p < .005$ )

## DISCUSSION

In the present chapter the findings of the study are discussed. Additionally implications for counseling practice and recommendations for future research studies will be provided.

### 5.1. Discussion of the Study Results

The purpose of the study was to understand the relationship between self-construal, family functioning and sibling number in terms of gender. Participants were 529 adolescents selected from seven general public high schools in Ankara. In the study it was assumed that healthy family functioning would have relationships with self construals and differences among genders in both of the variables were expected. Guided by previous researches in the literature, it was intended to explore the relationship among self construals, family functioning and sibling number taking into account the gender differences.

When the findings were taken into consideration, firstly the presence of Autonomous-Relational self in the Turkish culture was confirmed. According to the model of Kağıtçıbaşı independence and self-reliance started to appear as desired features (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). Thus, the emergence of autonomy along with having close and affectionate bonds with the family turned out to be noticed. In the present study this point was emphasized once again. The togetherness of Autonomy and Relatedness was searched in the present study among the participants and it turned



out that the participants developed Autonomous-Related Self-Construal most frequently. Additionally it was revealed that within the Turkish culture. Autonomy alone without being in close relationships with the family was not a very much cherished or appreciated domain.

When gender was considered, males and females had different scores. Females appeared to have higher scores on the dimension Related-Self than males. Additionally males obtained higher scores on the dimension Autonomous-Self. These pointed at the fact that males were inclined to be more autonomous than females and females were more inclined to be more related. The finding was parallel with the findings of Özdemir (2011) and Nocton, Smitley and Wilson (2008) who concluded that males showed increased frequency of autonomy compared with females. Cross and Madson (1997) also found results showing that males were more independent who also suggested that a wide range of behaviours could be explained by differences in self construals. Dost (2006) asserted that females had higher scores on autonomous-related self-construal than males. In the Family Values in Turkey Research (2010), it was revealed that parents in Turkey give importance of the child to build a future and take his or her decisions more in boys compared to girls. This practice can be relevant with the findings of the current research. There are also studies displaying otherwise; to set an example Cirhinlioğlu (2006), it was reported that females tend to be more independent and thus autonomous. But from a general perspective, results of the present study confirmed a frequent finding. This situation may be explained by the gender stereotypes settled down in Turkey. In Turkey, the cultural expectations from girls to be more dependent to the family and males to be

more independent may be related with this. As Öngen (2004) pointed out, on freedom, girls are more limited by the parents compared to boys in the family environment.

The sub dimensions of Family Functioning; Problem Solving, Behaviour Control tended to signify healthy functioning. In addition the sub dimensions that tended to be unhealthy functioning were Communication, Roles, Affective Responsiveness and Affective Involvement. The mean scores were around the limit score of 2, which was not considered high as the unhealthy range was between 2 and 4. Thus families seemed to have problems in Communication, Roles, Affective Responsiveness and Affective Involvement. When the definitions of these sub dimensions are considered, it is realized that they point to some important errors. These are expressing oneself in the family, verbal exchange, responding with feelings and showing interest in each other. Thus families seem to need improvements in these areas.

In the present study, the sub dimension General Functioning was included in the analyses as an indicator of family functioning. This dimension gave information on the general healthy or unhealthy functioning of the family. It was recognized that participants' scores signified healthy functioning. Hence from all this information it was noted that the participants' families were mostly healthy functioning.

The General Functioning scores of females were lower compared to males. This result showed that female students perceive their family functioning healthier than males did. This finding was consistent with the findings of Türküm (2005) and

Avcı (2006). However Karakoyun (2011) and Ekşisu (2009) had found no significant difference in general functioning according to gender.

General functioning was displayed to have significant relations with the three dimensions of Self-Construal in both genders. A major finding of the present study was that for both males and females, general functioning was found to have strong significant negative relationships with Related Self-Construal. This finding meant that healthy family functioning was associated with the self-construal being related. Additionally for females, it was revealed that healthy family functioning was associated with not being close to autonomous self-construal. Hence it was noted that for the participants, in a healthy family, individual's interdependent relationships were of significance. At this point it was also revealed that the healthy functioning was not associated with autonomous-self; however a combination of autonomy and relatedness is more functional for individuals (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007; Oyserman et al., 1998; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Moving from this point, autonomy emerged as a need for adolescents in the present study.

In cultures where the notion autonomy is less emphasized, autonomy development tends to function improperly (McBride-Chang, 2003). Failure in the *autonomy development* task can mark errors in psychological behaviours (Dickey & Deatrick, 2000; Krenke & Pakalniskiene, 2011 ). These findings address the need to focus on the healthy development of autonomy once again.

This finding that reveals the relationship of relational self-construal with healthy family functioning may be explained in different aspects. In the Adolescent Profile in Turkey research by Prime Ministry Directorate General of Family and

Social Research (2010), it was displayed that in Turkey, family relationships were highly positive among members in nuclear family and that there were strong bonds between members. This can be evidence showing the importance of relationships and dependence among members. Another thing to notice can be the findings of the Family Values in Turkey Research (2010) where parents provided some considerable response. According to 50% of the parents the child being independent was critical. However this meant the child earning his or her own money was but the not child being independent and autonomous from the family. Hence a lack of interest in the autonomy of the children was recognized.

Sibling number gave significant correlation results with General Functioning for females only. For females, an increase in sibling number implied unhealthy functioning. This finding was parallel with the findings obtained from the literature. (Doğan, 2006; Nadir, 2010).

The implications of these results are important regarding theory and practice. According to the findings, relatedness was associated with healthy family functioning for both genders. Hence being relational was obviously seen as a part healthy functioning family. This finding is in line with Beydoğan (2008) who noted that satisfaction was predicted by relational orientation. This situation may result in undermining autonomy needs of students. Yet again gender differences were emphasized once more. A common practice of females being more relational and males being more autonomous was demonstrated. Males were recognized to tend be on the autonomous dimension and therefore there stands out a need for males to be more relational. This may be explained by the common gender roles in Turkey. As

Adana et al. (2011) puts forward, nature is what determines gender however social gender is designated by culture.

## **5.2. Implications for Counseling**

It was found in the current study that there was a relationship between the self construal and family functioning perspectives among adolescents. Having this considered, monitoring adolescents psychologically in the adolescence period and creating a healthy family functioning environment that includes the elements of autonomy as well is recognized as significant. An emphasis on autonomy in the family environment has been regarded to be not functioning properly. Thus counseling services can concentrate on the elements that might help adolescents develop autonomous self as well.

Because recognizing the significance of both autonomy and relatedness would signify autonomous-related self as the healthy personality model (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). Emphasis on one of the ends; autonomy or relatedness and leaving out the other would not bring about a healthy development. As a finding of the present study, a lack of emphasis autonomy more turned out to be important yield. According to Matsumoto (1999), a perspective on the coexistence of apparent contradictions is a more accurate reflection of a point of view on self. Thus there should be a concentration on the development of autonomous-related self.

To determine the differences among self-construal in terms of gender may give idea on the social gender roles adolescents are assigned to and thus may help change views and make people more acknowledged on the topic.

According to Williams (2003), self construals affect the counseling processes of assessment, intervention and the building of a counseling relationship; the way clients view the relationship and the dilemmas they face. Therefore the counseling process can benefit from the better understanding of the development of self construals. Counselors may understand clients' needs better and constitute a more effective treatment plan. take role in preventive programs towards a healthier self construal development and healthier family functioning.

School counselors can prepare skills training programs on communication, affective involvement and affective responsiveness. These programs can be designed liked seminars or workshops in school settings that parents can come and attend. The areas that are considered as unhealthy functioning will be entreated and activities can be designed accordingly. This way, families may go towards a healthier functioning in important sub dimensions. School guidance services, guidance, research and counseling services can help parents learn about healthy family functioning and also on gender roles.

Findings of the present study point to improvements towards highlights on autonomy needs and better functioning of families. These findings may provide different perceptions on the balance about how parents should show their children the importance of common family good and at the same time the importance of being independent.

### **5.3. Recommendations for Future Research**

In the present study, the relationship between self construals and family functioning was mainly under investigation. However in addition to this, the possible relationships between self construals and the sub dimensions of family functioning; problem solving, communication, roles, affective involvement, affective responsiveness and behavior control can be examined in the future. Furthermore other family dynamics such as family satisfaction or family routines can be included.

The present study has chosen high school students as the target group nevertheless adolescents from different age groups can be involved as well. Similarly, students attending to different school types in addition to public schools can enrich the results of possible studies.

Longitudinal studies can be conducted that can provide information on the developmental procedure of the self-construal of adolescents. The concept self construal can be understood better and the direction self construal develops towards can be determined more properly within the life course of the individual via observations or interviews conducted at certain times.

Mc Master Family Functioning Assessment Device is also applicable when all members of the family are included. This can give more fruitful and more accurate information on the family functioning perceptions that is being examined. So in a further study, information from both the adolescents and their parents can be collected and analyzed.

Healthy personality development takes place in a healthy family environment. In this aspect, for future studies the sub dimensions that the families are not healthy functioning can be taken into account as research areas.



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## APPENDIX A

### Değerli katılımcı,

Gençlerin benlik kurguları ve aile işleyişleri arasındaki ilişkinin incelendiği bu araştırmada size ait bilgileri içeren bir bilgi formu ve benliğe ilişkin görüşleriniz ile aile algılarınıza yönelik iki ölçek bulunmaktadır.

Sizden istenen her bir ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyarak, sizin için uygun olan seçeneği içtenlikle işaretlemenizdir. Ölçeklerden elde edilecek bilgiler sadece bu araştırma için kullanılacak, başka bir amaçla kullanılmayacağından kimlik bilgileri, numara gibi bilgileri yazmanıza gerek yoktur. Araştırmaya katkılarınız ve ayırdığınız zaman için teşekkür ederim.

Canan Mesutoğlu  
Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi  
Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık Programı

### Kişisel Bilgi Formu

- 1- Cinsiyetiniz: Kız  Erkek
- 2- Doğum yılınız: .....
- 3- Sınıfınız: 9. sınıf  10. sınıf  11. sınıf  12. sınıf
- 4- Anne- babanızın öğrenim düzeyi nedir?
- |                    | <b>Anneniz</b> | <b>Babanız</b> |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Hiç okula gitmemiş | ( )            | ( )            |
| İlkokul mezunu     | ( )            | ( )            |
| Ortaokul mezunu    | ( )            | ( )            |
| Lise mezunu        | ( )            | ( )            |
| Üniversite mezunu  | ( )            | ( )            |
| Lisans üstü        | ( )            | ( )            |
- 5- Anne ve babanız:
- ( ) Birlikte yaşıyorlar ( ) Anne hayatta değil ( ) Anne üvey  
( ) Ayrı yaşıyorlar ( ) Baba hayatta değil ( ) Baba üvey  
( ) Resmi olarak boşandılar ( ) İkisi de hayatta değil
- 6- Kendiniz dahil kaç kardeşiniz?
- ( ) Tek çocuğum ( ) 2 kardeşiz ( ) 3 kardeşiz ( ) 4 kardeşiz ( ) 5 ya da daha fazla
- 6- Ailenizde kaçınıcı çocuksunuz?
- ( ) Tek çocuk ( ) Birinci çocuk ( ) İkinci çocuk  
( ) Üçüncü çocuk ( ) Dört ve daha sonra
- 8- Ailenizin aylık ortalama geliri nedir?
- ( ) 1000 TL ve altı ( ) 2001 TL – 3000 TL  
( ) 1001 TL – 2000 TL ( ) 3001 TL ve üstü

## APPENDIX B

### AİLE BAĞLAMINDA BENLİK ÖLÇEĞİ

Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeleri okuyunuz ve ailenizle olan ilişkinizi göz önüne alarak her bir ifadeye ne kadar katıldığınızı aşağıda yer alan ölçeği kullanarak belirtiniz.

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ortadayım (Biraz katılıyorum/biraz katılmıyorum)	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
1	2	3	4	5

- \_\_\_ 1. Kendimi ailemden bağımsız hissedirim.
- \_\_\_ 2. Genellikle ailemin isteklerine uymaya çalışırım.
- \_\_\_ 3. Ailemin düşündüğü gibi düşünmek zorunda değilim.
- \_\_\_ 4. İnsanlar geleceğe yönelik planları için ailelerinden izin almalıdırlar.
- \_\_\_ 5. Ailemin onaylamayacağı kararlar almaktan kaçınırım.
- \_\_\_ 6. Benimle ilgili bir konuda ailemin aldığı kararlar geçerlidir.
- \_\_\_ 7. Ailemin istemediği bir kişiyle yakın olmazdım.
- \_\_\_ 8. Ailemden bağımsız olarak kendi kararlarımı veremem.
- \_\_\_ 9. Kararlarımı ailemin isteklerine göre kolayca değiştiririm.
- \_\_\_ 10. Ailemle olan ilişkimde mesafeli olmak isterim.
- \_\_\_ 11. Zor zamanlarımda ailemin yanımda olacağını bilmek isterim.
- \_\_\_ 12. Ailemle geçirdiğim zaman benim için çok önemli değildir.
- \_\_\_ 13. Bir kimsenin ailesine çok yakın hissetmesi iyi bir şeydir.
- \_\_\_ 14. Ailem hayatımda en ön sıradadır.
- \_\_\_ 15. Ailemle fazla vakit geçirmekten hoşlanmam.
- \_\_\_ 16. Kendimi aileme gönülden bağlı hissedirim.
- \_\_\_ 17. Ailemle aramdaki bağ, kendimi güven ve huzur içinde hissetmemi sağlıyor.
- \_\_\_ 18. Ailemle iç içeyim.
- \_\_\_ 19. Bir kimse ailesine değer verse de, kişisel fikrini söylemekten çekinmemelidir.
- \_\_\_ 20. Bir kimse hem ailesine çok yakın olup, hem kararlarını kendisi alabilir.
- \_\_\_ 21. Bir kimse kendisini ailesine hem duygusal olarak bağlı, hem de özgür hissedebilir.
- \_\_\_ 22. Bir kimse hem ailesine çok yakın olabilir, hem de fikirleri ayrı olduğunda, fikrine saygı duyulmasını isteyebilir.

**APPENDIX C**  
**AİLE DEĞERLENDİRME ÖLÇEĞİ**

Asağıda aileler hakkında 60 cümle bulunmaktadır. Lütfen her cümleyi dikkatlice okuduktan sonra sizin ailenize ne derecede uyduđuna karar veriniz. Önemli olan sizin ailenizi nasıl gördüğünüzdür. Her cümle için 4 seçenek söz konusudur.

**Aynen katılıyorum:** Eğer cümle sizin ailenize tamamen uyuyorsa işaretleyiniz.

**Büyük ölçüde katılıyorum:** Eğer cümle sizin ailenize çođunlukla uyuyorsa iaretleyiniz.

**Biraz katılıyorum:** Eğer cümle sizin ailenize çođunlukla uymuyorsa isaretleyiniz.

**Hiç katılmıyorum:** Eğer cümle sizin ailenize hiç uymuyorsa isaretleyiniz.

Her cümleinin yanında dört seçenek için ayrı yerler ayrılmıştır. Size uyan seçeneđe çarpı (X) isareti koyunuz. Her cümle için uzun uzun düşünmeyiniz. Mümkün olduđu kadar çabuk ve samimi cevaplar veriniz. Kararsızlıđa düşerseniz, ilk aklınıza gelen dođrultusunda hareket ediniz. Lütfen her cümleyi cevapladıđınızdan emin olunuz.

	Aynen Katılıyorum	Büyük Ölçüde Katılıyorum	Biraz Katılıyorum	Hiç Katılmıyorum
1. Ailece ev dışında program yapmada güçlük çekeriz, çünkü aramızda fikir birliđi sağlayamayız.				
2. Günlük hayatımızdaki sorunların (problemlerin) hemen hepsini aile içinde hallederiz.				
3. Evde biri üzgün ise, diđer aile üyeleri bunun nedenlerini bilir.				
4. Bizim evde, kişiler verilen her görevi düzenli bir şekilde yerine getirmezler.				
5. Evde birinin başı derde girdiğinde, diđerleri de bunu kendilerine fazlasıyla dert ederler.				
6. Bir sıkıntı ve üzüntü ile karşılaştığımızda, birbirimize destek oluruz.				
7. Ailemizde acil bir durum olsa, şaşırıp kalırız.				
8. Bazen evde ihtiyacımız olan şeylerin bittiđinin farkına varmayız.				
9. Birbirimize karşı olan sevgi, şefkat gibi duygularımızı açığa vurmaktan kaçınırız.				
10. Gerektiğinde aile üyelerine görevlerini hatırlatır, kendilerine düşen işi yapmalarını sağlarız.				
11. Evde dertlerimizi üzüntülerimizi birbirimize söylemeyiz.				
12. Sorunlarımızın çözümünde genellikle ailece aldıđımız kararları uygularız.				
13. Bizim evdekiler, ancak onların hoşuna giden şeyler söylediğimizde bizi dinlerler.				
14. Bizim evde bir kişinin söylediklerinden ne hissettiđini anlamak pek kolay deđildir.				

	Aynen Katılıyorum	Büyük Ölçüde Katılıyorum	Biraz Katılıyorum	Hiç Katılmıyorum
15. Ailemizde eşit bir görev dağılımı yoktur.				
16. Ailemizin üyeleri, birbirlerine hoşgörülü davranırlar.				
17. Evde herkes başına buyruktur.				
18. Bizim evde herkes, söylemek istediklerini üstü kapalı değil de doğrudan birbirlerinin yüzüne söyler.				
19. Ailede bazılarımız, duygularımızı belli etmeyiz.				
20. Acil bir durumda ne yapacağımızı biliriz.				
21. Ailecek, korkularımızı ve endişelerimizi birbirimizle tartışmaktan kaçınıyoruz.				
22. Sevgi, şefkat gibi olumlu duygularımızı birbirimize belli etmekte güçlük çekeriz.				
23. Gelirimiz (ücret, maaş) ihtiyaçlarımızı karşılamaya yetmiyor.				
24. Ailemiz, bir problemi çözdükten sonra, bu çözümün işe yarayıp yaramadığını tartışır.				
25. Bizim ailede herkes kendini düşünür.				
26. Duygularımızı birbirimize açıkça söyleyebiliriz.				
27. Evimizde banyo ve tuvalet bir türlü temiz durmaz.				
28. Aile içinde birbirimize sevgimizi göstermeyiz.				
29. Evde herkes her istediğini birbirinin yüzüne söyleyebilir.				
30. Ailemizde, her birimizin belirli görev ve sorumlulukları vardır.				
31. Aile içinde genellikle birbirimizle pek iyi geçinemeyiz.				
32. Ailemizde sert-kötü davranışlar ancak belli durumlarda gösterilir.				
33. Ancak hepimizi ilgilendiren bir durum olduğu zaman birbirimizin işine karışıyoruz.				
34. Aile içinde birbirimizle ilgilenmeye pek zaman bulamıyoruz.				
35. Evde genellikle söylediklerimizle, söylemek istediklerimiz birbirinden farklıdır.				
36. Aile içinde birbirimize hoşgörülü davranıyoruz.				
37. Evde birbirimize, ancak sonunda kişisel bir yarar sağlayacaksa ilgi gösteririz.				
38. Ailemizde bir dert varsa, kendi içimizde hallederiz.				
39. Ailemizde sevgi ve şefkat gibi güzel duygular ikinci plandadır.				

	Aynen Katlıyorum	Büyük Öçüde Katlıyorum	Biraz Katlıyorum	Hiç Katlıyorum
40. Ev işlerinin kimler tarafından yapılacağını hep birlikte konuşarak kararlaştırırız.				
41. Ailemizde herhangi bir şeye karar vermek her zaman sorun olur.				
42. Bizim evdekiler sadece bir çıkarları olduğu zaman birbirlerine ilgi gösterir.				
43. Evde birbirimize karşı açık sözlüydür.				
44. Ailemizde hiçbir kural yoktur.				
45. Evde birinden bir şey yapması istendiğinde mutlaka takip edilmesi ve kendisine hatırlatılması gerekir.				
46. Aile içinde, herhangi bir sorunun (problemin) nasıl çözüleceği hakkında kolayca karar verebiliriz.				
47. Evde kurallara uyulmadığı zaman ne olacağını bilmeyiz.				
47. Bizim evde aklınıza gelen her şey olabilir.				
49. Sevgi, şefkat gibi olumlu duygularımızı birbirimize ifade edebiliriz.				
50. Ailede her türlü problemin üstesinden gelebiliriz.				
51. Evde birbirimizle pek iyi geçinemeyiz.				
52. Sinirlenince birbirimize küseriz.				
53. Ailede bize verilen görevler pek hoşumuza gitmez çünkü genellikle umduğumuz görevler verilmez.				
54. Kötü bir niyetle olmasa da evde birbirimizin hayatına çok karışıyoruz.				
55. Ailemizde kişiler herhangi bir tehlike karşısında (yangın, kaza gibi) ne yapacaklarını bilirler, çünkü böyle durumlarda ne yapılacağı aramızda konuşulmuş ve belirlenmiştir.				
56. Aile içinde birbirimize güvenimiz.				
57. Ağlamak istediğimizde, birbirimizden çekinmeden rahatlıkla ağlayabiliriz.				
58. İşimize (okulumuza) yetişmekte güçlük çekiyoruz.				
59. Aile içinde birisi, hoşlanmadığımız bir şey yaptığında ona bunu açıkça söyleriz.				
60. Problemimizi çözmek için ailecek çeşitli yollar bulmaya çalışırız.				



**TEZ FOTOKOPİ İZİN FORMU**

**ENSTİTÜ**

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

**YAZARIN**

Soyadı : .....

Adı : .....

Bölümü : .....

**TEZİN ADI** (İngilizce) : .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**TEZİN TÜRÜ** : Yüksek Lisans  Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamı dünya çapında erişime açılsın ve kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla tezimin bir kısmı veya tamamının fotokopisi alınsın.
2. Tezimin tamamı yalnızca Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi kullanıcılarının erişimine açılsın. (Bu seçenekle tezinizin fotokopisi ya da elektronik kopyası Kütüphane aracılığı ile ODTÜ dışına dağıtılmayacaktır.)
3. Tezim bir (1) yıl süreyle erişime kapalı olsun. (Bu seçenekle tezinizin fotokopisi ya da elektronik kopyası Kütüphane aracılığı ile ODTÜ dışına dağıtılmayacaktır.)

Yazarın imzası .....

Tarih .....