Summary
The Mediating Role of Life Goals in the Relationship Between Parent Acceptance/Rejection and Suicide Probability

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Sixteen out of every 100.000 people take their own lives and there are many more people who attempt suicide (WHO, 2014). Suicide rates increase in our country, from 4.02 per hundred thousand in 2010 to 4.29 per hundred thousand in 2012. Those aged between 15-24 are 23.96 % of all cases (TÜİK, 2013).

A significant body of research has found that quality of parent-child relationship is associated with adolescent suicidal behavior. Parental acceptance/rejection theory (PARTheory) explains the effects of perceived childhood parental acceptance/rejection on psychological adjustment in adulthood (Rohner, 1975; 1986). While parental acceptance refers to the warmth, care and love that children can experience from their parents, parental rejection is defined by the absence of these feelings or behaviors (Rohner, 1975).

The effects of perceived parental acceptance/rejection on suicidal behavior has been researched (Wagner & Cohen 1994; Ehnvall, Parker, Hadzi-Pavlovic, & Malhi, 2008; Wong, de Mann, & Leung, 2002). Females who perceived themselves as rejected or neglected in childhood by their parents have greater risk of attempting suicide (Ehnvall et al., 2008). Fergusson and Lynsky (1995) found that adolescents who recalled their mothers as less accepting and emotionally unavailable have also greater risk of attempting suicide.

People plan their lives through setting goals. The goals direct their plans and they organize their lives around those goals (Eryılmaz, 2012). Besides, goals have crucial role to protect physical and psychological health (Nair, 2003).

Kasser and Ryan (1993) have divided goals into two: intrinsic goals and extrinsic goals. Studies in various cultures have shown that those who internalize extrinsic goals have reported lower well-being and greater stress (Sheldon & Kasser, 1995; Kasser & Ahuvia, 2002; Ryan, Chirkov, & Little et al., 1999; İlhan & Özbay, 2010).

Suicide probability has not been previously discussed in terms of both Rohner's Parental Acceptance/ Rejection and life goals in our country. The mediator role of life goals between suicide probability and parental ac-

ceptance/rejection will be discussed for the first time. Main purpose of the present study is to discuss the mediator role of life goals between suicide probability and parental acceptance/rejection.

Method

Participants
The study sample consists of 396 college students. The age range of total sample is between 18 and 28, with the mean age of 21.44 (SD = 1.66). There were 205 (51.8%) females and 191 (48.2%) males.

Demographic Data Form (DDF). DDF was developed to gather information about the participants including their gender, age, faculty, psychiatric history and parent educational status.

Suicide Probability Scale (SPS). This 4-point Likert-Type scale was developed by Cull and Gill (1988) to evaluate suicide risk in adolescents and adults, has 36 items. Higher points indicate higher risks. It has been shown as valid and reliable in our country by Batıgün and Şahin (2003).

Parental Acceptance/Rejection Scale Adult Form (PARQ Adult). This 4-point Likert-Type scale was developed by Rohner et al. (1978) to evaluate participants' childhood memories about parental acceptance/rejection. The scale has two forms called Mother PARQ and Father PARQ. This 60 items scale has 4 dimensions, namely warmth, aggression, neglect and rejection. It was translated to Turkish by Varan (2003), presenting satisfactory reliability and validity values.

Life Goals Scale (LGS). İlhan (2009) developed LGS, a 7-point Likert-Type scale with 47 items. The scale has two main dimensions called intrinsic goals and extrinsic goals. LGS presents satisfactory reliability and validity values.

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Results

Correlational Analyses

Correlations between SBS score and the other scales' scores were calculated. The correlations between total point of Suicide Probability Scale and the total and subscale points of PARQ Mother, PARQ Father and Life Goals Scale were parallel with our expectations and found to be significant. Besides, the correlations between total and subscale points of PARQ Mother, PARQ Father and Life Goals Scale were also parallel with our expectations and found to be significant.

Mediation Analyses

In order to analyze the mediator role of life goals between suicide probability and parental acceptance/rejection, bootstrapping techniques developed by Preacher and Hayes (2008) was used. In the first phase, relationships between predictor variables, predictor variable and mediator variables analyzed with correlation analysis, and variables that do not relate to each other were excluded from the analysis. However, correlations between 1) mother acceptance/rejection and "relatedness", "physical health", "personal growth", "contribute family", "image/attractiveness" 2) father acceptance/rejection and "relatedness", "physical health", "personal growth", "contribute family", "contribute community", "meaningful life", "image/attractiveness" 3) suicide probability and "relatedness", "physical health", "personal growth", "contribute family", "meaningful life", "image/attractiveness" were significant, therefore the mediator role of these subscales have been analyzed.

Mother acceptance/rejection has a significant effect on suicide probability (β = .13, t = 7.31, p < .001). In addition, mother acceptance/rejection have significant effect on the "relatedness" (β = -.03, t = -2.61, p < .01), "physical health" (β = -.02, t = -2.71, p < .01), "personal growth" (β = -.02, t = -2.89, p < .01), "contribute family" (β = -.04, t = -2.95, p < .01) and "image/attractiveness" (β = -.03, t = -2.47, p < .05). When we consider the effects of mediator variables on suicide probability, "relatedness" (β = -.47, t = -2.97, p < .01) and "physical health" (β = -.62, t = -2.44, p < .05) have significant effects, however the effects of other variables are non-significant. When mother acceptance/rejection and all mediator variables entered into the equation simultaneously, the relationship between mother acceptance/rejection and suicide probability was substantially reduced; despite the reduction in the significance value, it has remained at .001 (β = .15, t = 6.84, p < .001). On the basis of these findings, it has been concluded that mediator variables have "partial mediation" effect on the relationship between mother acceptance/rejection and suicide probability. Besides, the

total model is significant (F_{6-389} = 17.83, p < .001) and 20% of the variance is accounted for.

A bootstrapping sample of 1000 people has been examined so as to find out whether the effects of these variables are significant or not. The total indirect effect of all five variables is significant (with a point estimate of .02 and 95% BCa CI [.0065, .0427]). Furthermore, when each variable is addressed separately, it can be seen that partial mediation effect of "relatedness" (with a point estimate of .01 and 95% BCa CI [.0019, 0348]) and "physical health" (with a point estimate of .01 and 95% BCa CI [.0020, 0282]) is also significant.

Father acceptance/rejection has a significant effect on suicide probability (β = .13, t = 7.31, p < .001). In addition, father acceptance/rejection has a significant effect on the "relatedness" (β = -.03, t = -4.43, p < .001), "physical health" (β = -.02, t = -3.50, p < .001), "contribute family" (β = -.05, t = -4.39, p < .001), "contribute community" (β = -.07, t = -5.19, p < .001), "meaningful life" (β = -.02, t = -3.26, p < .001), and image/attractiveness" (β = -.02, t = -2.24, p < .05). When we consider the effect of mediator variables on suicide probability, "relatedness" (β = -.42, t = -2.40, p < .05) and "physical health" (β = -.57, t = -2.19, p < .05) have significant effects, however the effects of other variables are non-significant. When father acceptance/rejection and all mediator variables entered into the equation simultaneously, the relationship between father acceptance/rejection and suicide probability was substantially reduced; despite the reduction in the significance value, it had remained at .001 (β = .11, t = 5.88, p < .001). On the basis of these findings, it has been concluded that mediator variables have "partial mediation" effect on the relationship between father acceptance/rejection and suicide probability. Besides, the total model is significant (F_{8-387} = 11.96, p < .001) and 18% of the variance is accounted for.

A bootstrapping sample of 1000 people has been examined so as to find out whether the effects of these variables are significant or not. The total indirect effect of all seven variables is significant (with a point estimate of .02 and 95% BCa CI [.0065, .0427]). Furthermore, when each variable is addressed separately, it can be seen that partial mediation effect of "relatedness" (with a point estimate of .03 and 95% BCa CI [.0083, .0415]) and "physical health" (with a point estimate of .01 and %95 BCa CI [.0017, 0236]) are also significant, but the other variables are non-significant.

Discussion

In the present study, the relationship between suicide probability, parental acceptance/rejection and life goals, and the mediator role of life goals have been

researched. It is found that individuals who perceived themselves rejected by their parents have greater risk of committing suicide. This finding is consistent with the the previous research findings (Ehnvall et al., 2008; Fergusson & Lynsky, 1995; Zalsman, Brent, & Weersing, 2006). A study conducted with adolescents has shown that suicide ideation is associated with authoritative parenting, less parental warmth, higher maternal over-protectiveness, more negative child rearing practices and negative family environment (Lai & Chang, 2001).

In mediation analyses, it is found that the subscales of the life goals scale, namely "relatedness" and "physical health", partially mediate the relationship between parental acceptance/rejection and suicide probability. Individuals who perceive themselves as rejected by their parents do not put emphasis on intrinsic goals such as "relatedness" and "physical health". Likewise, according to Kasser and Ryan (1993) when individuals receive support and acceptance by their environment, their needs of autonomy and being close to others are satisfied. Satisfaction of those needs allow individuals to express themselves and to establish close relationships with other people. For this reason, providing warm and democratic parenting help children to ensure that their needs of autonomy and relationship will be met. The satisfaction of those needs allows children to put more emphasis on "intrinsic values".

The items of "relatedness" subscale, such as "establish healthy relationships", "increase the number of my friendships", "having reliable friends around me" were the ones that were marked by individuals whose needs of relationship were met by their parents and who give importance to intrinsic goals. Thereby, it can be thought that individuals who perceived themselves as rejected did not give any importance to intrinsic goals which had negative effects on their well-being. This may

increase their suicide probability. Lekes et al. (2010) state that adolescents whose parents are autonomous and supportive prioritize intrinsic goals rather than extrinsic goals. While adolescents whose parents are cold and controlling prioritize extrinsic goals, adolescents whose parents are warm and democratic prioritize intrinsic goals (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Kasser, Ryan, Zax, & Sameroff, 1995; Kasser et al., 2002).

In the literature, the studies generally focus on the relationship between psychological well-being and life goals. Studies state that having intrinsic goals increases well-being (İlhan & Özbay, 2010), and individuals that do not give importance to intrinsic goals have lower psychological well-being (Kasser & Ahuvia, 2002; Ryan et al., 1999).

To sum up, when all statistical findings about suicide probability, parental acceptance/rejection and life goals are taken into account, individuals who perceived themselves as rejected in their childhood do not prioritize intrinsic goals such as relationship or physical health due to perceived rejection; so, it can be said that those life goals predict suicide probability.

These findings can be used in understanding and preventing suicide attempts. Especially, during the counseling service for individuals that apply with suicide probability or attempt, it would be useful to analyze the perception of parental acceptance/rejection and to determine life goals. Suicide probability of the individuals who perceived rejection by their parents were affected by their life goals. Therefore, it would be useful to help them in adopting intrinsic goals. In order to assist them to reduce suicidal thoughts, therapists may emphasize the importance of relationships and physical health.

Conducting the research among the university students in Ankara and collecting the data with self-report scales are the constraints of the current study.