

*Full Length Research Paper*

# The investigation of the relationship between positive childhood experiences and family values

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This study aims to investigate the relationship between the positive childhood experiences of young people and family values. In the quantitative research design, descriptive and relational screening method was used in the study, and the study group consisted of 753 university students aged 18-25. Data were collected using the Positive Childhood Experiences Scale and the Family Values Scale. T-test, ANAVO, and Pearson Correlation coefficient were used to analyze the data. As a result of the study, it was determined that females and individuals with a higher family income had higher levels of positive childhood experiences. Differences in family values were found according to the participants' gender, family structure, family income status, and whether they had the desire to start a family. It was found that as the participants' positive experiences with children increased, they attributed more importance to the mother in childcare, gave more importance to relatives, had a more positive view of extended family, believed that there should be a strong mother-child connection more, gave more importance to the role of child-rearing in the family, and their emotional attachment to the family increased, the importance they attached to marriage and the institution of marriage increased, they adopted unconventional values more, they evaluated the family as conventional, and their view that the decision-making process in the family should be democratic/participatory increased, justifying violence for "family well-being" and being in favor of more freedom in matters related to sexuality decreased. Some suggestions were developed by discussing the findings in light of the literature.

**Key words:** Family values, positive childhood experiences, family-child relationship, family.

## INTRODUCTION

Individuals' experiences in childhood are well remembered and influence their future behavior and even their entire lives (Burger, 2006; Deniz, 2020). Those who have positive experiences in childhood are more resilient and perceive themselves more positively (Çiçek, 2020).

Emotions such as love, respect, tolerance, and trust experienced during childhood also affect the individual's attitudes and behaviors towards himself/herself and others (Tarhan, 2018). When psychological needs are met by both the family and the environment during

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childhood, children develop by feeding on positive emotions (Demiriz and Ulutaş, 2016).

Positive childhood experiences are those childhood experiences in which positive events and emotions, such as warm and secure relationships, spill over into adult life (Doğan and Aydın, 2020). Within this scope, it is stated that positive experiences in childhood can nurture positive emotions in adulthood (Cohn et al., 2009; Topuz, 2014). Family and friends, who are the main source of a positive childhood experience for individuals, are an important factor in terms of evaluating the experiences as positive or negative.

Positive childhood experiences have been found to strengthen individuals' family ties, make them experience less loneliness, increase their well-being in adulthood and help them become healthier individuals, increase their psychological resilience, self-esteem, and happiness levels (Doğan and Aydın, 2020; Merz and Jak, 2013; Crandall et al., 2019; Doğan and Yavuz, 2020; Luthar, 2006). It was also found that there was a significant positive relationship between self-esteem and happiness, self-efficacy, physical health, self-compassion, and positive childhood experiences, and a significant negative relationship with depression and anxiety, and that negative environmental conditions were effective in reducing the possible negative effects of negative environmental conditions on individuals' lives (Cheng and Furnham, 2004; Bingöl, 2018; Chopik and Edelstein, 2019; Tunca, 2022). Besides, it was also found that juvenile offenders with more positive childhood experiences were lower than those with more negative childhood experiences (Baglivio and Wolff, 2021). When the studies in the literature are examined, it can be said that positive childhood experiences contribute to the individual's entire life evaluated as positive.

Parents are of great importance in childhood experiences and naturally in the formation of basic values. By telling their children what to say and what not to say, what to believe and what not to believe, parents instill values as role models (Arslanoğlu, 2005). Values are most meaningfully classified according to their institutional function, and the values that regulate and guide the family institution are defined as "family values" (Yıldırım, 2013). Family values refer to the importance given to one's family as the source of purpose and meaning in one's life (Burroughs and Rindfleisch, 2002).

Children learn values such as compassion, respect, love, kindness, tolerance, and truthfulness from their parents (Kiziler & Canikli, 2015). The acceptance of social norms and values through this learning process in the family is not limited to infancy and childhood but continues throughout life (Akin, 2019). Family values are the values that keep the family together, ensure that family members live in harmony and maintain order within the family institution, and constitute the general criteria that family members must comply with as an institution (Erdoğan, 2019).

The influence of the family and parents on the child starts from birth and lasts until the child's death (Yavuzer, 2011). Family values are influenced by variables related to the family and naturally to the parents, but can also be influenced by different personal or environmental variables throughout the individual's life (Ekşi et al., 2015; Özyürek et al., 2019; Polat, 2020; Şahin, 2019; Yazıcı, 2019). It was observed that characteristics such as being married at a young age and having a high number of children were effective in maintaining traditional family values (Ekşi et al., 2015). Family values differ according to gender, age, educational level, occupation, and the number of children (Özyürek et al., 2019). A similar situation can be expected in family values, considering that the reactions and behaviors of individuals, who are social beings, differ in the face of events and situations. The family's understanding of childrearing and the psychological climate created within the family may affect the child's psychological well-being in adulthood, causing the child to become a healthy individual or weakening the child's self-confidence, self-esteem, and belief in competence when it could be enriching (Uyanık et al., 2019; Kağıtçıbaşı and Cemalcılar, 2015; Zincirli, 2008).

Studies on family values can contribute to studies on the concept of family and its problems at this stage. Today, there are studies on negative experiences and their effects on individuals' lives, but it is thought that positive experiences and their effects are not emphasized much (Doğan and Yavuz, 2020). For all these reasons, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between positive childhood experiences and family values. Within this scope, answers to the following questions were sought:

- 1) Is there a significant difference between individuals' positive childhood experiences and gender, family structure, family income status, and desire to start a family?
- 2) Is there a significant difference between individuals' family values and gender, family structure, family income status, and desire to start a family?
- 3) Is there a significant relationship between individuals' positive childhood experiences and family values?

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

### Model

The study was designed in quantitative research design and descriptive and relational survey method was utilized. Descriptive surveys aim to present an existing situation as it is. Correlational surveys are conducted to determine whether there is a relationship between at least two different variables (Karasar, 2007).

### Study group

Participants consisted of 753 students studying in different

departments of the university who could be reached through the convenience sampling method. Of the students in the study group, 24.7% were male and 75.3% were female. Of the students, 23.8% are studying child development, 11.6% in medical techniques, 19.5% in elderly care, 15.4% in first emergency aid, 5.2% in dialysis, 19.9% in physiotherapy, and 4.6% in the school of physical education and sports. Of the students, 68% had nuclear families, 23.8% had extended families and 8.2% had single-parent families. Students perceive their family income as low by 18.5%, medium by 75%, and high by 4.1%. While 78% of the students want to start a family, 22% do not.

### Data collection tools

In addition to a "Personal Information Form" in which some personal information about the students was questioned, the "Positive Childhood Experiences Scale" and the "Family Values Scale" were used to collect data.

*The Positive Childhood Experiences Scale (PCES)* was developed by Bethell et al. and adapted into Turkish by Çiçek and Çeri (2021). Intending to measure the positive experiences of individuals before the age of 18, the scale is applied to individuals over the age of 18. The scale is a 5-point Likert type and consists of 7 items; there are no reverse-scored items. A minimum score of 7 and a maximum score of 35 are obtained from the scale and higher scores indicate that individuals had more positive experiences in their childhood. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was determined as 0.76.

*The Family Values Scale* was developed by Ekşi et al. (2015); it consists of 59 items and 13 sub-dimensions. The 5-point Likert-type scale, in which 20 items are reverse scored, consists of sub-dimensions Traditional Family Values (TFV), Attitudes towards Sexuality (ATS), Mother-Child Relationship (MCR), Value of the Child (VoC), Decision-Making Processes (DMP), Attitudes towards Marriage (ATM), Women's Roles (WR), Different Approaches (DA), Socio-Economic Value (SEV), Relative Relationships (RR), Emotional Bond (EB), Loyalty (LOY) and Violence (VIO). A high score is interpreted positively. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was 0.89 for the whole scale and 0.95, 0.95, 0.95, 0.95, 0.94, 0.93, 0.93, 0.92, 0.93, 0.92, 0.92, 0.92, 0.90, 0.89 and 0.99 for the sub-dimensions respectively (Ekşi et al., 2015). For this study, the Family Values Scale was determined as 0.75.

### Data collection and analysis

Ethical approval dated 22/06/2022 and numbered 2022/4 was obtained from the Gümüşhane University ethics committee before data collection. After obtaining the necessary approvals, the data were collected online from students who volunteered to participate in the study. Students were informed in the classroom, the link to the study was shared with them and they were asked to participate. The data obtained were transferred to the SPSS 22.0 program and analyzed. Normality distributions were examined and skewness and kurtosis values were found to be within  $\pm 2$ .

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), the results of the skewness and kurtosis values of the variables between  $\pm 1.5$  and  $\pm 2$  are accepted as a normal distribution. Accordingly, parametric tests were preferred in data analysis. t-Test was used for binary variables, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for three or more variables, and in case of a difference between variables, post-hoc Tukey test was applied to determine the source of the difference, and the significance value was taken as 0.05. Pearson Correlation coefficient was used to compare the two scale scores.

## RESULTS and DISCUSSION

The results and interpretations obtained in line with the sub-problems of the study are given in Tables 1 to 5. In Table 1, the t-test results of the sub-dimension scores of the PCES and Family Values Scale according to gender are shown.

According to Table 1, the difference between gender and PCES scores is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), with females' scores ( $\bar{x} = 3.485$ ) significantly higher than males' scores ( $\bar{x} = 3.299$ ). A significant difference was found between gender and Family Values Scale MCH, ATS, VoC, ATM, SEV, DMP, WR, and VIO scores ( $p < 0.05$ ). Males' scores were significantly higher than females' scores in the subscales of MCR, ATS, VoC, ATM, SEV, and VIO, and females' scores were significantly higher than males' scores in the DMP subscale. Accordingly, it can be said that females have more positive childhood experiences.

In terms of family values, it can be said that males attribute more importance to the mother in terms of childcare, believing that there should be a strong mother-child connection in favor of more freedom in terms of sexuality, attach more importance to the role of raising children, have a more emotional attachment to the family, attach more importance to the institution of marriage, perceive the family more as a social and economic structure, and consider violence more legitimate for "family well-being"; whereas females think that they should be more involved in decision-making processes.

Table 2 shows the ANOVA results of the sub-dimension scores of the PCES and Family Values Scale according to family structure and Table 3 according to family income status.

When Table 2 is examined, there is no significant difference between the family structure and the scores of the PCES ( $p > 0.05$ ). A significant difference was found between family structure and Family Values Scale ATS, VoC, DA, ATM, TFV, DMP, WR, and LOY scores ( $p < 0.05$ ). According to the results of the Tukey Test, the ATS score ( $\bar{x} = 2.316$ ) of individuals with single-parent families is higher than the scores of individuals with nuclear ( $\bar{x} = 1.965$ ) and extended families ( $\bar{x} = 1.878$ ), and the VoC score ( $\bar{x} = 3.298$ ) of individuals with extended families is higher than the scores of individuals with nuclear ( $\bar{x} = 3.101$ ) and single-parent families ( $\bar{x} = 3.003$ ). The ATM score of those with nuclear families ( $\bar{x} = 2.902$ ) was significantly lower than that of those with extended families ( $\bar{x} = 3.023$ ), and the DA scores of those with extended ( $\bar{x} = 2.692$ ) and nuclear ( $\bar{x} = 2.871$ ) families were significantly lower than those of single-parent families ( $\bar{x} = 3.122$ ). The TFV score of those with extended families ( $\bar{x} = 3.870$ ) is significantly higher than the score of those with nuclear families ( $\bar{x} = 3.699$ ), and the DMP score of those with single-parent families ( $\bar{x} = 3.954$ ) is significantly higher than the scores of those with extended ( $\bar{x} = 3.705$ ) and nuclear ( $\bar{x} = 3.699$ ) families. The WR score of those with nuclear families ( $\bar{x} = 2.420$ ) was significantly lower

**Table 1.** T-Test results of the scores of the PCES and family values scale by gender.

<b>Group</b>		<b>N</b>	$\bar{x}$	<b>S</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
Positive childhood experiences scale	Male	186	3.299	0.765	-2.849	0.005*
	Female	567	3.485	0.775		
<b>Family values (FV)</b>						
Mother child relationship (MCR)	Male	186	3.379	0.553	-5.138	0.000*
	Female	567	3.619	0.546		
Relative relations (RR)	Male	186	3.834	0.571	-0.597	0.643
	Female	567	3.861	0.531		
Attitudes towards sexuality (ATS)	Male	186	2.198	0.826	4.780	0.000*
	Female	567	1.899	0.711		
Value of the child (VoC)	Male	186	3.305	0.583	4.105	0.000*
	Female	567	3.086	0.647		
Emotional bond (EB)	Male	186	3.825	0.646	0.345	0.730
	Female	567	3.808	0.564		
Attitudes towards marriage (ATM)	Male	186	3.164	0.653	6.806	0.000*
	Female	567	2.848	0.511		
Socio-economic value (SEV)	Male	186	2.749	0.539	4.545	0.000*
	Female	567	2.545	0.528		
Different approaches (DA)	Male	186	2.802	0.699	-1.060	0.289
	Female	567	2.865	0.711		
Traditional family values (TFV)	Male	186	3.792	0.670	1.303	0.193
	Female	567	3.717	0.680		
Decision-making processes (DMP)	Male	186	3.482	0.551	-10.20	0.000*
	Female	567	3.958	0.551		
Women's roles (WR)	Male	186	2.922	0.636	12.358	0.000*
	Female	567	2.322	0.552		
Loyalty (LOY)	Male	186	3.374	0.753	-1.802	0.072
	Female	567	3.482	0.689		
Violence (VIO)	Male	186	1.774	0.903	7.421	0.000*
	Female	567	1.343	0.600		

\*p&lt;0.05.

Source:Author

than that of those with extended families ( $\bar{x}$ =2.602), while the LOY score ( $\bar{x}$ =3.512) was significantly higher than that of those with extended families ( $\bar{x}$ =3.353) and single-parent families ( $\bar{x}$ =1.406). Based on this, it can be said that positive childhood experiences do not differ according to the family structure variable. In terms of family values, it can be said that individuals with extended families

attach more importance to the role of raising children, the institution of marriage, and traditional family values and evaluate females from a conventional perspective. It can be said that individuals with single-parent families adopt unconventional values more, attach importance to democratic participation in decision-making processes, and favor freedom in matters related to sexuality. It can

**Table 2.** ANOVA results of the scores of the PCES and family values scale by family structure.

Family structure		N	$\bar{X}$	S	F	p
Positive childhood experiences	Nuclear family	512	3.453	0.762	7.989	0.443
	Extended family	179	3.441	0.809		
	Single parent family	62	3.320	0.803		
<b>Family Values (FV)</b>						
Mother child relationship (MCR)	Nuclear family	512	3.570	0.526	0.424	0.654
	Extended family	179	3.547	0.617		
	Single parent family	62	3.506	0.626		
Relative relations (RR)	Nuclear family	512	3.865	0.528	0.903	0.406
	Extended family	179	3.854	0.558		
	Single parent family	62	3.767	0.594		
Attitudes towards sexuality (ATS)	Nuclear family	512	1.965	0.731	8.049	0.000*
	Extended family	179	1.878	0.725		
	Single parent family	62	2.316	0.896		
Value of the child (VoC)	Nuclear family	512	3.101	0.646	7.989	<b>0.000*</b>
	Extended family	179	3.298	0.597		
	Single parent family	62	3.003	0.618		
Emotional bond (EB)	Nuclear family	512	3.825	0.571	0.827	0.438
	Extended family	179	3.804	0.595		
	Single parent family	62	3.725	0.666		
Attitudes towards marriage (ATM)	Nuclear family	512	2.902	0.564	3.797	0.023*
	Extended family	179	3.023	0.563		
	Single parent family	62	2.841	0.562		
Socio-economic value (SEV)	Nuclear family	512	2.578	0.547	1.016	0.363
	Extended family	179	2.644	0.507		
	Single parent family	62	2.600	0.546		
Different approaches (DA)	Nuclear family	512	2.871	0.710	9.454	0.000*
	Extended family	179	2.692	0.649		
	Single parent family	62	3.122	0.754		
Traditional family values (TFV)	Nuclear family	512	3.699	0.661	4.779	0.009*
	Extended family	179	3.870	0.654		
	Single parent family	62	3.651	0.828		
Decision-making processes (DMP)	Nuclear family	512	3.699	0.575	6.890	0.001*
	Extended family	179	3.705	0.575		
	Single parent family	62	3.954	0.666		
Women's roles (WR)	Nuclear family	512	2.420	0.610	5.735	0.003*
	Extended family	179	2.602	0.668		
	Single parent family	62	2.509	0.621		
Loyalty (LOY)	Nuclear family	512	3.512	0.684	5.492	0.004*
	Extended family	179	3.353	0.736		
	Single parent family	62	3.279	0.754		
Violence (VIO)	Nuclear family	512	1.406	0.681	0.903	0.051
	Extended family	179	1.544	0.751		
	Single parent family	62	1.532	0.809		

\*p&lt;0.05.

Source: Author

be said that individuals with nuclear families attach more importance to fidelity between spouses.

When Table 3 is examined, there is a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the family income status of the individuals and their PCEa scores and Family Values Scale MCR, ATS, and DMP scores. According to the results of Tukey's test, individuals with low family income level ( $\bar{x} = 3.128$ ) had lower PCES scores than those with medium ( $\bar{x} = 3.495$ ) and high family income ( $\bar{x} = 3.783$ ), and their PCES scores increased as the family income level increased. Those with low family income had lower scores in MCP ( $\bar{x} = 3.423$ ) and TFV ( $\bar{x} = 3.638$ ) than those with medium family income ( $\bar{x} = 3.593$ ;  $\bar{x} = 3.768$ ). The ATS score of those with low family income ( $\bar{x} = 2.076$ ) is higher than the score of those with medium family income ( $\bar{x} = 1.934$ ). Hence, it can be said that individuals' positive childhood experiences increase with the increase in family income. In terms of family values, it can be said that low-income individuals favor more freedom in matters related to sexuality and care more about strong mother-child connections and traditional family values.

In Table 4, the t-test results of the sub-dimension scores of the PCES and Family Values Scale according to participants' desire to start a family are shown.

When Table 4 is examined, there is a significant difference between the individuals' desire to start a family and the scores of the PCES and Family Values Scale subscales of MCR, RR, ATS, VoC, EB, ATM, TFV, and VIO ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Those who wanted to start a family had higher scores on the PCES ( $\bar{x} = 3.513$ ) and Family Values Scale MCP ( $\bar{x} = 3.606$ ), RR ( $\bar{x} = 3.894$ ), VoC ( $\bar{x} = 3.174$ ), EB ( $\bar{x} = 3.809$ ), ATM ( $\bar{x} = 2.969$ ) and TFV ( $\bar{x} = 3.767$ ), while the ATS score ( $\bar{x} = 1.944$ ) was significantly lower than those who did not want to start a family. Accordingly, it can be said that individuals with a desire to start a family have more positive childhood experiences. In terms of family values, it can be said that individuals who want to start a family attribute more importance to the mother in terms of childcare have a more positive view of relative relations and extended family, attach more importance to the role of raising children in the family, attach more importance to emotional attachment to the family and the institution of marriage, have more traditional family values and do not favor freedom in matters related to sexuality. In Table 5, the results of Pearson Correlation analysis of the scores of the PCES and Family Values Scale are shown.

According to Table 5, there is a positive correlation between the scores of the individuals on the PCES and the Family Values Scale MCP, RR, VoC, EB, ATM, TFV, and DMP sub-scores, and a weakly significant negative correlation between the scores on the ATS and VIO sub-scales ( $p < 0.05$ ). As PCES scores increased, Family Values Scale MCP, RR, VoC, EB, ATM, TFV, and DMP scores increased, whereas ATS and VIO scores decreased. Accordingly, it can be said that as the individuals' positive experiences with children increased,

they attributed more importance to the mother in childcare in terms of family values, gave more importance to relatives, and had a more positive view of extended family, believed that there should be a strong mother-child connection more, gave more importance to the role of child-rearing in the family, and their emotional attachment to the family increased, the importance they attached to marriage and the institution of marriage increased, they adopted unconventional values more, they evaluated the family as conventional, and their view that the decision-making process in the family should be democratic/participatory increased, justifying violence for "family well-being" and being in favor of more freedom in matters related to sexuality decreased.

In the studies conducted in the literature, Bilgin et al. (2021) found that gender did not make a difference in the positive childhood experiences of adults, while Doğan and Yavuz (2020) concluded that males had more positive childhood experiences (Dönmezer, 1999). In this study, the reason why females' positive childhood experiences differed from those of males, unlike the studies in the literature, suggests that other personal or family-related variables are also effective in addition to gender. For example, it is known that individuals who grow up in a democratic environment in childhood have more positive childhood experiences. It has been shown that adults who have positive memories of their parents in childhood have better physical health, less depression, and a lower risk of developing chronic diseases (Chopik and Edelstein, 2019). Still, high family income may have contributed to a more positive childhood experience for individuals as it is an effective factor in improving living conditions. Higher socioeconomic status parents are less concerned with authority and more supportive of independence, curiosity, problem-solving, and creativity. Positive childhood experiences are expected to have an impact on individuals' desire to start a family. It can be said that it is an expected result that individuals who witness a positive environment in family relations have a high desire to start a family.

Individual, familial, environmental, and social factors are known to be effective in family values. In the study conducted by Özyürek et al. (2019) similarly, it was concluded that females had higher decision-making processes than males and males had higher mother-child relationship scores than females (Özyürek et al., 2019). Considering that females assume more responsibility for the home and children than males, it is natural for females to be more active in decision-making processes. In the study conducted by Şahin, it was found that the sub-dimension scores of the mother-child relationship, view of marriage, traditional family values, and roles of women, decision-making processes, different approaches, and violence showed significant differences according to gender (Şahin, 2019). In the study conducted by Polat (2020), it was reported that the sub-dimension scores of attitudes towards sexuality, attitudes towards marriage,

**Table 3.** ANOVA results of the scores of the PCES and family values scale by family income.

Family income		N	$\bar{x}$	S	F	p
Positive childhood experiences scale	Low	139	3.128	0.817	16.333	0.000*
	Medium	583	3.495	0.746		
	High	31	3.783	0.778		
<b>Family values (FV)</b>						
Mother child relationship (MCR)	Low	139	3.423	0.550	5.319	0.005*
	Medium	583	3.593	0.543		
	High	31	3.541	0.757		
Relative relations (RR)	Low	139	3.837	0.570	1.332	0.265
	Medium	583	3.866	0.536		
	High	31	3.709	0.492		
Attitudes towards sexuality (ATS)	Low	139	2.076	0.791	4.139	0.016*
	Medium	583	1.934	0.734		
	High	31	2.245	0.827		
Value of the child (VoC)	Low	139	3.116	0.650	0.265	0.767
	Medium	583	3.142	0.622		
	High	31	3.206	0.875		
Emotional bond (EB)	Low	139	3.832	0.644	0.148	0.863
	Medium	583	3.806	0.572		
	High	31	3.838	0.564		
Attitudes towards marriage (ATM)	Low	139	2.889	0.589	0.507	0.603
	Medium	583	2.932	0.562		
	High	31	2.987	0.538		
Socio-economic value (SEV)	Low	139	2.608	0.577	0.326	0.722
	Medium	583	2.596	0.529		
	High	31	2.522	0.540		
Different approaches (DA)	Low	139	2.900	0.784	0.450	0.638
	Medium	583	2.837	0.689		
	High	31	2.858	0.706		
Traditional family values (TFV)	Low	139	3.638	0.777	3.064	0.047*
	Medium	583	3.768	0.648		
	High	31	3.567	0.704		
Decision-making processes (DMP)	Low	139	3.794	0.667	0.567	0.567
	Medium	583	3.852	0.555		
	High	31	3.825	0.786		
Women's roles (WR)	Low	139	2.492	0.679	0.163	0.850
	Medium	583	2.468	0.612		
	High	31	2.425	0.726		
Loyalty (LOY)	Low	139	3.494	0.714	0.253	0.776
	Medium	583	3.447	0.698		
	High	31	3.440	0.831		
Violence (VIO)	Low	139	1.500	0.789	0.943	0.390
	Medium	583	1.431	0.678		
	High	31	1.564	0.928		

\*p&lt;0.05.

Source: Author

**Table 4.** T-Test results of the scores of the pces and family values scale by participants' desire to start a family.

<b>Desire to start a family</b>		<b>N</b>	<b><math>\bar{x}</math></b>	<b>S</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
Positive childhood experiences	Yes	587	3.513	0.739	4.956	0.000*
	No	166	3.179	0.851		
Family values						
Mother child relationship (MCR)	Yes	587	3.606	0.534	4.393	0.000*
	No	166	3.394	0.606		
Relative relations (RR)	Yes	587	3.894	0.529	3.821	0.000*
	No	166	3.714	0.560		
Attitudes towards sexuality (ATS)	Yes	587	1.944	0.746	-2.015	0.044*
	No	166	2.077	0.764		
Value of the child (VoC)	Yes	587	3.174	0.654	2.803	0.005*
	No	166	3.018	0.566		
Emotional bond (EB)	Yes	587	3.859	0.579	4.155	0.000*
	No	166	3.647	0.576		
Attitudes towards marriage (ATM)	Yes	587	2.969	0.562	3.917	0.000*
	No	166	2.775	0.553		
Socio-economic value (SEV)	Yes	587	2.597	0.523	0.146	0.884
	No	166	2.590	0.589		
Different approaches (DA)	Yes	587	2.833	0.713	-1.206	0.228
	No	166	2.908	0.688		
Traditional family values (TFV)	Yes	587	3.767	0.677	2.369	0.018*
	No	166	3.626	0.672		
Decision-making processes (DMP)	Yes	587	3.848	0.584	0.686	0.493
	No	166	3.813	0.600		
Women's roles (WR)	Yes	587	2.452	0.626	-1.485	0.138
	No	166	2.534	0.638		
Loyalty (LOY)	Yes	587	3.481	0.710	1.862	0.063
	No	166	3.365	0.687		
Violence (VIO)	Yes	587	1.402	0.680	-3.404	0.001*
	No	166	1.614	0.793		

\*p&lt;0.05.

Source: Author

socioeconomic values, decision-making processes, and female roles showed significant differences according to gender (Polat, 2020). Yazıcı (2019), concluded that males are significantly higher than females in power, hedonism, and adaptation values among family values (Yazıcı, 2019). It was concluded that the findings

obtained in this study have similar and different aspects from the findings obtained in the literature. The process of the rapid transformation of the family has become even more evident in recent years. Although recent increases in divorce rate, single-parent families, extramarital relationships, and decreases in marriage rates, new



**Table 5.** Results of the correlation analysis of the scores of the pces and family values scale.

		PCES
Mother child relationship (MCR)	r	0.256
	p	0.000*
Relative relations (RR)	r	0.276
	p	0.000*
Attitudes towards sexuality (ATS)	r	-0.189
	p	0.000*
Value of the child (VoC)	r	0.157
	p	0.000*
Emotional bond (EB)	r	0.240
	p	0.000*
Attitudes towards marriage (ATM)	r	0.087
	p	0.017*
Socio-economic value (SEV)	r	-0.059
	p	0.107
Different approaches (DA)	r	-0.105
	p	0.004*
Traditional family values (TFV)	r	0.296
	p	0.000*
Decision-making processes (DMP)	r	0.079
	p	0.030*
Women's roles (WR)	r	-0.054
	p	0.141
Loyalty (LOY)	r	-0.015
	p	0.687
Violence (VIO)	r	-0.171
	p	0.000*

\*p&lt;0.05.

Source: Author

family types, stepfamilies, and remarriages have not changed the function of the family, they have brought about structural changes in the family institution (Oktik and Reşitoğlu, 2018). Changes in both family structure and family values can be expected in the course of changing times.

There have been major changes in the family and family structure in recent years. The support provided

especially to single-parent families and the new family structure emerging with the entry of females into the workforce are transforming the social structure of the family. While single parents work more, have more economic problems, experience more stress and depression, and receive less emotional support to fulfill their parenting roles (Barrett and Turner, 2005). Relationships between family members in extended family

settings may be different than in nuclear and single-parent families, and therefore there may be differences in family values.

In the study conducted by Yazıcı (2019), it was found that the value scores of individuals with higher-income groups were significantly lower than the value scores of individuals with lower and middle-income groups (Yazıcı, 2019). Polat (2020), on the other hand, found that the scores of the sub-dimension of kin relations and the value of the child differed significantly according to the perceived income status (Polat, 2020). It can be said that family values differ according to family income status and are an effective factor in both intra-family and kinship relations.

In the literature, it is stated that even starting a family is optional. In the study investigating whether the family values scale scores differed significantly according to the way the marriage decision was taken, it was determined that the sub-dimension scores of relative relations, view of sexuality, traditional family values, female roles, and violence showed significant differences according to the way the marriage decision was taken (Şahin, 2019). The relationship between the attitudes towards sexuality, different approaches, and socioeconomic value sub-dimensions of the family values scale and family integrity was found to be negative and significant, whereas a positive and significant relationship was found with the other sub-dimensions. Values are the fundamental force that guides human behavior (Yaylacı and Beldağ, 2018). In this sense, the perspective on family and intra-family relationships will have a significant effect on individuals' desire to start a family.

Positive childhood experiences are positively associated with self-esteem and happiness and negatively associated with depression and anxiety (Cheng and Furnham, 2004; Gilbert et al., 2008). As positive childhood experiences increase, psychological resilience increases (Doğan and Aydın, 2020). The findings obtained from this study can be said to be supported by both the literature and similar studies. Considering that the first and most important experiences are acquired during childhood, having positive childhood experiences will have positive effects on individuals' acquisition of family values. In this respect, it can be said that the importance of family relations in transferring the value given to the family from generation to generation has once again emerged.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In this study, in which positive childhood experiences and family values of young people were examined, 753 university students between the ages of 18-25 were reached. The results and recommendations obtained in line with the sub-problems of the study are mentioned. This study found that females had more positive childhood experiences than males, positive childhood experiences increased as the family income of individuals

increased, positive childhood experiences of individuals did not differ according to the family structure variable, and positive childhood experiences of individuals who wanted to start a family were more positive.

In terms of family values, it was observed that males attribute more importance to the mother in terms of childcare, believe that there should be a strong mother-child connection, are in favor of more freedom in terms of sexuality, attach more importance to the role of raising children, have a more emotional attachment to the family, attach more importance to the institution of marriage, perceive the family more as a social and economic structure, and consider violence more legitimate for "family well-being"; whereas females think that they should be more involved in decision-making processes. It was concluded that individuals with extended families attach more importance to the role of raising children, the institution of marriage, and traditional family values and evaluate females from a conventional perspective; individuals with single-parent families adopt unconventional values more, attach importance to democratic participation in decision-making processes and favor freedom in matters related to sexuality; and individuals with nuclear families attach more importance to fidelity between spouses.

As a result of the study, in terms of family values, it can be said that low-income individuals favor more freedom in matters related to sexuality and care more about strong mother-child connections and traditional family values.

In this study, in terms of family values, it was determined that individuals who want to start a family attribute more importance to the mother in terms of childcare, have a more positive view of relative relations and extended family, attach more importance to the role of raising children in the family, attach more importance to emotional attachment to the family and the institution of marriage, have more traditional family values, and do not favor freedom in matters related to sexuality.

When the relationship between positive childhood experiences and family values is analyzed, it was observed that as the individuals' positive experiences with children increased, they attributed more importance to the mother in childcare in terms of family values, gave more importance to relatives, and had a more positive view of extended family, believed that there should be a strong mother-child connection more, gave more importance to the role of child-rearing in the family, and their emotional attachment to the family increased, the importance they attached to marriage and the institution of marriage increased, they adopted unconventional values more, they evaluated the family as conventional, and their view that the decision-making process in the family should be democratic/participatory increased, justifying violence for "family well-being" and being in favor of more freedom in matters related to sexuality decreased.

Since the period of childhood is a period in which individuals acquire experiences that will affect their entire

lives, parents should exhibit attitudes and behaviors in raising children by taking this situation into account. There is growing recognition of the importance of protecting family values, and there is a growing view that society's values are degenerating. Without forgetting that a child's possession of family values is also a part of the continuation of family values in society, parents should raise their children in a supportive and reassuring environment. School-age also covers a certain period of childhood. For this reason, educators need to give importance to children's value acquisition and contribute to their value acquisition through various activities. The study was conducted with university students and this can be considered a limitation of the study. The relationship between positive childhood experiences and family values can be examined in similar studies by including a wider age group from childhood to old age. Educational and experimental studies can be conducted to contribute to individuals' value acquisitions. In addition to quantitative data, the findings of the study can be supported by qualitative data.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflicts of interests.

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