

Developing and Evaluating the Marriage Education Program: The Example of the Turkish Cypriot Community

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Abstract

In this study, the marriage education needs of individuals living in Northern Cyprus were determined, a marriage education program (EEP) was developed in line with the identified needs, and the effectiveness of the program was evaluated. In the study, a single-group quasi-experimental design was used in the implementation and evaluation of the program. The developed program was implemented as in-service training for the employees of the Nicosia Turkish Municipality. Participants of the trainings are 20 volunteers. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the EEP. Qualitative data were analyzed with the "Coding Comparison Query" method available in the NVivo R1 program. Independent sample t-test was used to determine the attitudes and beliefs of the participants about marriage before and after the EEP. The findings of the research are as follows; EEP significantly improved the marriage attitudes and beliefs of married individuals. The qualitative and quantitative data obtained from the subjects supported each other. It has been concluded that EEP is effective. Considering the findings obtained from this study, EEP in Northern Cyprus can be organized by the Ministry of National Education and Culture (MEKB) for parents in schools in the context of adult education. EEP within formal education can be given by MEKB in the form of courses in accordance with the development levels of the students. In addition, EEP can be given to citizens by municipalities and non-governmental organizations as public education.

Keywords: Marriage, Marriage Relationship, Marriage Education Program (Curriculum) Development.

1. Introduction

The fact that technology is a part of our lives with the information age, and the values that have changed accordingly, have caused family life to change as well. The understanding of family relations and interaction, emotional and integrity has also left its place to the concept of individual rights and freedom. Since individual rights and freedoms are dominant in society apart from the family, there has been a conflict between contemporary demands and lifestyles and traditional family life theories and concepts. These conflicts first affect individuals and then family relationships, leading to unrest and

conflicts in the family (Ozgüven, 2009).

Conflicts in the family have led to an increase in divorces. With divorces, broken families, family children growing up without a father and mother have become the family phenomenon of daily life. With divorces, the social structure and social system are affected, divorces trigger each other, and the social status of the couples changes. With divorces, individuals who cannot communicate during and after the divorce reflect this situation to the child, manipulate the children and alienate them from the other parent, so the children of broken families stay between two parents (Nuhoğlu, 2019).

According to Bilen (1983), the ability of individuals to establish a successful marriage depends, first of all, on having an education that prepares them for marriage. Thus, the divorce rate decreases and relationships can be established more healthily (Aslan and Nazlı, 2021). According to Ina Fritsch (1985), parents are first and foremost victims of their ignorance. No one teaches them what problems they will face in marriage, how to overcome them, when to compromise, and how to keep mutual love alive. Every divorce is an indication that a learning process has ended poorly (Fritsch, 1985). Çavuşoğlu (2007) emphasized lifelong education in Marriage and Young People Open Session, that there are many basic information that young people should know and learn among the elements that make up marriage, that young people should receive education about marriage before and after marriage, and the society should support and facilitate this education. stated that it is necessary (Family Research Presidency, 1991).

Lifelong learning is known by educators, governing bodies, accreditation bodies, certification boards, employers, third parties and the public as one of the most important competencies that people should have (Collins, 2009). Lifelong learning should promote effective educational opportunities in the many learning environments that people move through, including at home, school, work and the wider political community. According to the lifelong learning theory, new frameworks for innovations in the educational process and necessary learning should be explored due to the change in daily life and professional skills (Fischer, 2000). Lifelong learning should be defined as “all activities aiming at the individual, social or professional development of an individual's knowledge, skills and competences throughout his/her life” (European Commission, 2002). The scope of lifelong learning includes formal learning, non-formal learning, vocational education, technical education, in-service and out-of-service education and training. It is seen that one of the most important adult education studies carried out in the context of lifelong learning in Turkey recently is family education courses. Parent education programs, parents' perspectives on education and their approach to their children are extremely important for the upbringing of children and the development of society.

Literature Review

Canel, (2007), in his research, aimed to develop problem-solving skills in the family and to increase the satisfaction obtained from marriage. For this purpose, a group consisting of 10 married individuals who have been married for at least 5 years and have children was formed to increase marital satisfaction by improving their problem solving skills. The study is an experimental model. The Problem Solving Inventory (PSI) and the Scale of Coping with Stress (SBPÖ) scales and a questionnaire were applied to the control and experimental groups as pretest and posttest, together with the Marriage Satisfaction Scale (EDS). In the experimental group, two days a week, 8 weeks and 16 sessions in the form of problem

solving, improving the marital relationship and accordingly increasing marital satisfaction were applied. The scores obtained from the experimental and control groups before and after the study were evaluated with the Mann-Whitney U Test. The significance of the statistical results obtained was tested at the 0.05 level.

Kalkan and Ersanlı (2008), the aim of their research is to develop a marriage education program and to investigate the effects of married individuals on marital adjustment levels. The program to be developed was developed based on the cognitive behavioral approach. The study was carried out with 30 married individuals. 15 experiments were divided into 15 control groups. The Marriage Adjustment Scale was used as a pre-test and post-test for the control and experimental groups. Pretest and posttest score results were analyzed using Mann-Whitney U test and Wilcoxon Signed Ranking test, and a significant difference was found. It has been concluded that the marriage education program is effective on individuals. Marriage education program can be used to increase marital adjustment.

There is a wide variety of programs on "Relationship and Marriage Education" in the USA (Ponzetti, 2016). Relationship and Marriage Education Programs can be found in mental health centers, hospitals, public aid offices, churches or universities, etc. are made available to the public, such as Training venues vary according to their programme, learning format and target audience. Marriage education programs generally include communication, conflict resolution skills and family economics (DeMaria, 2005). Marriage Education programs appeal to individuals (for example, young people, fathers, mothers), couples (for example, premarital, married) and many groups for families (Ponzetti, 2016).

In the research of Neumann et al. (2018), marriage and relationship education programs are trainings that can improve better marriage quality and conflict management between spouses. The marriage and relationship education program "Living as a Partner: Turning Challenges into Opportunities" aims to encourage couples to learn conflict resolution strategies and to a more qualified level in the relationship. This study evaluates the capacity of this program to produce results regarding marital quality and three dimensions of couple conflict: frequency, intensity, and resolution strategies. Data from 41 couples were analyzed before and after the program, and a follow-up 5 months later (n= 33 couples) was also performed (single group, pretest, posttest, and follow-up quasi-experimental design). The results show that the program improves marital quality and adjustment strategy.

In the study of Alipour et al. (2020), the literature showed that decreased marital satisfaction and increased risk of depression and anxiety are mutually related. Therefore, this study was conducted to evaluate the effect of bifocal communication skills training on marital satisfaction and psychological symptoms in pregnant women. The results showed that marital satisfaction levels increased after the intervention compared to the pre-intervention period, while depression and anxiety levels decreased significantly in the experimental group ($p < 0.05$). Comparison of the groups revealed significant differences in marital satisfaction, depression and anxiety scores at one month and three month intervals after the intervention in the experimental and control groups ($p < 0.05$). The results showed that a communication skills training program based on a bifocal approach and emphasizing the needs of pregnant women during pregnancy can improve marital satisfaction and psychological health of pregnant women.

Aslan and Nazlı (2021), the aim of their study is to examine the effect of Pre-Marriage Psycho-education Program on the levels of dysfunctional belief in marriage. Semi-experimental design was used in the research. In the study, data were

collected with the Marriage Relationship Beliefs Scale (EiİÖ), Session Evaluation Form and Psycho-education Evaluation Form developed by the researcher. As a result of the research, it was observed that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the individuals in the experimental group.

In the study of Zarean et al. (2022), a training program was developed to improve individuals' self-healing, psychological well-being and marital satisfaction. Repeated measures ANOVA and SPSS-26 were used to analyze the data. It was concluded that self-healing training improved psychological well-being and marital satisfaction ($p < 0.01$).

Salman et al (2022). His research is a needs analysis to develop a marriage education program to be held in the TRNC. The aim of the research is to compare the views of married and divorced individuals about marriage education and to determine their needs for marriage education. For this purpose, it has been determined in which subjects they see themselves as sufficient or inadequate, in which subjects they are willing to participate in the training and in which subjects they are unwilling. In this study, embedded design, one of the mixed research methods in which qualitative and quantitative methods are used together, was used. The findings are as follows; In both quantitative and qualitative dimensions, the majority of the participants think that if marriage education is given, they can have a healthier and happier marriage.

The Problem of Research

Divorces in the Turkish Republic of Cyprus have been increasing over the years. The rapid increase in divorce in the country and the fact that it has become a social problem reveals that the sensitivity of the society on this issue should be increased (Canel, 2012).

When the number of marriages and divorces in the Turkish Republic of Cyprus is analyzed by years, there were 1246 marriages and 523 divorces in 2006. In 2007, there were 1440 marriages and 548 divorces. In 2008, there were 1422 marriages and 571 divorces. There were 1261 marriages and 669 divorces in 2009. In 2010, there were 1354 marriages and 706 divorces. In 2011, there were 1344 marriages and 739 divorces. In 2012, there were 1238 marriages and 803 divorces. There were 1175 marriages and 818 divorces in 2013. In 2014, there were 1316 marriages and 829 divorces. There were 1254 marriages and 798 divorces in 2015. In 2016, 1204 marriages and 841 divorces were made. There were 1205 marriages and 864 divorces in 2017. There were 1144 marriages and 937 divorces in 2018. In 2019, there were 1151 marriages and 897 divorces. In 2020, there were 951 marriages and 841 divorces. In 2021, 1234 marriages and 895 divorces were made (TRNC High Court Activity Reports, 2021).

According to the TRNC Courts Annual Report for 2020, the total number of marriages in 2020 is 951, while the total number of divorces is 841. Divorce rate according to marriages is 88.4%. Worldwide, marriage is becoming less and less popular, and divorces are on the rise. Every year, organizations such as the United Nations announce global divorce rates. According to the data, divorces have increased by 252% in the global context since 1960. The world's highest divorce rate (87%) is in Luxembourg (<https://ungo.com.tr/2020/12/ulkelere-gore-bosanma-oranlari/>). Considering these statistics, if the TRNC could enter the world statistics as a recognized country, it would be the country with the highest

divorce rate in the world. The healthiest way to prevent divorce is through marriage education (Sürerbiçer, 2008; Oztürk et al., 2014; Yusof et al., 2017; Ponzetti, 2016; DeMaria, 2005; Duncan et al., 1996; Martin et al., 2003; Silliman et al., 1992; Silliman and Schumm, 2004; Canel, 2012).

Protecting the family is possible primarily by creating and maintaining a healthy family structure. Growing up in a healthy environment enables both them and the society to become stronger. Treatment and counseling activities are aimed at preventing divorces and solving problems. In preventive and improving activities aimed at helping the family to be established and maintained in a healthy way from the beginning, the main purpose is to prevent situations that cause divorce, and education gains importance in these activities (Canel, 2012). The philosophy underlying the educational programs is related to the concept of health. The concept of health here refers to the state of physical, mental and social well-being (social health), not the absence of disease or infirmity, in line with the definition of the World Health Organization. Social health, on the other hand, is closely related to the family environment, because the family forms the basis of social health. (Guran, 1983). Based on this situation, the problem sentence of the research is "What is the effectiveness of the Marriage Education Program?" poses a question.

The aim of this research is to develop a marriage education program based on the constructivist approach. For this purpose, the program development process was followed. A needs analysis was conducted to determine the marital education needs of adults. In line with the needs reached, a marriage education program was developed. The developed program was implemented and its effectiveness was evaluated. "What is the effectiveness of the Marriage Education Program?" The question is the aim of the research. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought in the study.

1. Is there a significant difference between the subjects' İnönü Marriage Attitude Scale (İETÖ) pretest scores and posttest attitude scores?
2. Is there a significant difference between the pretest scores and posttest attitude scores of the subjects on the Marriage Relationship Beliefs Scale (EİİÖ)?
3. What are the opinions of the participants about the effectiveness of the EEP?

Importance of Research

This research was carried out in order to implement and evaluate the marriage education program developed as a result of the marriage education needs analysis in order to prevent divorces and help marriages become healthier in the Turkish Cypriot Community, which is at the forefront of divorce rates in the world. No research has been found on the needs of marriage education or the marriage education program in the Turkish Cypriot Community. It is thought that the study designed for this purpose can serve to make the family institution healthier, individuals to be happier and more peaceful in the family, thus serve a healthier society structure, help psychological counselors and experts working in the field, and be beneficial for projects such as Marriage and Family School.

2. Methodology

In this research, an EEP was developed in line with the marriage education needs of individuals living in Northern Cyprus. Semi-experimental design was used in the implementation and evaluation stages of the developed program. Like the experimental design, the semi-experimental design is for the same purpose (Ekiz, 2003; Karasar, 2014). In the quasi-experimental design, pretest and posttest are applied on a single group before and after the experiment. The difference between the pretest and posttest results is evaluated in order to evaluate the change due to the education applied. For this reason, it was thought that it would be more appropriate to use a single-group quasi-experimental design in the study (Gay et al., 2005; Karasar, 2014). In the research, a single-group, quasi-experimental design with pre-test-post-test applied was used.

Sample

A single group of 20 people was formed for the application program. In this study, easily accessible sampling variety, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used. Nicosia Municipality employees who participated in the trainings participated voluntarily. In order to measure the effect of the intervention, data were collected from the group members twice, with the same scales, before and after the training. Accordingly, the effects of the independent variable on the group are examined by comparing the scores obtained as a result of the pretest and posttest (Kincal, 2020). In this model, the independent variable is EEP developed by the researchers, and the dependent variables are attitudes, beliefs and opinions about marriage (Büyüköztürk, 2016).

Data Collection Agents

In order to test the effectiveness of the EEP, the İnönü Marriage Attitude Scale (İETÖ) developed by Bayoğlu and Atlı (2014) and the Marriage Relationship Beliefs Scale (EİİÖ) developed by Kızıl and Nazlı (2018) were used as data collection tools.

In addition, a semi-structured interview form was prepared by the researchers as a qualitative data collection tool. A total of 15 questions were determined in order to evaluate their views on communication, infidelity, readiness for marriage and choosing the right spouse, coping with stress, violence in marriage, economy and sexuality, which were explained in marriage education. The 15 questions determined were sent to 2 clinical psychologists, family therapists and program development specialists for their opinions, and the final form consisted of 10 questions in total.

Analysis of Data

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the EEP, the interviews made through the semi-structured interview form were listened to and transcribed using the Microsoft Word program. A separate transcript was prepared for the interviews with 20 participants. A data set was obtained from these. The answers given by the participants were coded according to the word-for-word and Nvivo coding strategies for each question (Charmaz, 2006). The coding process was done separately

and systematically for each interview transcript. Among the codes obtained from the interview transcripts, those with similar characteristics were grouped to reach the themes. In qualitative content analysis, the stages of coding the data, organizing and defining the data according to codes and themes, and interpreting the findings follow each other (Yıldırım and Şimşek 2011). During the data analysis, the audio recordings were listened again and the necessary controls were made when deemed necessary and needed. In order to avoid possible inconsistencies, all three researchers listened to all the recordings together and grouped them in this way. In the formation of all codes and themes, three different coders, two of whom are researchers in the field of marriage counseling and one of whom is an assessment and evaluation expert experienced in the qualitative research process, worked separately and the codes were created. Different codes were evaluated among the coders and a consensus was achieved. The codes obtained were calculated according to the formula developed by Miles and Huberman (1994), and the agreement between coders was found to be 94%. According to Miles and Huberman's formula, it can be said that the analyzes made in studies with a consensus percentage of 80 and above are consistent. The data set obtained in the second stage was analyzed with the help of "Coding Comparison Query" available in NVivo R1 program. Reliability was calculated with the percentage of agreement between the codes and themes obtained by the researchers by coding separately and the coder, and Cohen's Kappa coefficient.

In the quantitative dimension of the evaluation of EEP, the researchers first determined the hypothesis tests that will be used to compare the pretest and posttest scores of the İnönü Marriage Attitude Scale (İETÖ) and the Marriage Relationship Beliefs Scale (EİİÖ), Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Shapiro Wilk test. The skewness/kurtosis coefficients of the results ($p > .005$) were examined and it was determined that they fit the normal distribution. For this reason, the t-test for paired samples was used to compare the pretest and posttest scores of the participants and was analyzed at the .05 significance level.

Ethical Process and Procedure

Before the research, an application was made to the Near East University Scientific Research Ethics Committee and ethical permission was obtained. The Ethics Committee Permission was approved by the ethics committee on 04.11.2021 as the project numbered NEU/EB/2021/738. In this section, first the needs analysis, then the ethical process and procedure with the marriage education program are explained.

Before the marriage training program was implemented, each of the participants who worked in Nicosia Municipality and who wanted to participate voluntarily were interviewed face-to-face, and a letter stating the purpose of the study was given, and those who volunteered to participate in the training were asked to read the consent form and sign their consent. It was stated that care would be taken to share revealing information to them, and a code would be given to each participant to ensure anonymity. The participants were given codes as K1, K2, K3, etc.. Then, the participants were met at the determined day and time, they were interviewed one by one, and the pre-tests of the scales to be used in the study were applied.

The Process of Implementation of the Marriage Education Program

The research is an EEP consisting of 10 sessions. Lesson times are 90 minutes. The program is a program to improve the marital relationship. The trainings were held between July and August 2022. A total of 20 participants, 15 women and 5 men, attended the sessions. All of the participants are married. Pretest applications were made before the sessions started. Semi-structured interview questions, İnönü Marriage Attitude Scale (İETÖ), Marriage Relationship Beliefs Scale (EİİÖ) were used as pretests. In the posttest application, the same data collection tools were applied again after the sessions were over and the differences between the results were evaluated.

3. Findings

In this section, following the order of the sub-problems of the research, qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed and the findings were explained.

1. Findings Related to Sub-Problem

In Table 1 below, the results of the analysis performed to determine whether the pretest and posttest scores of the İETÖ are in accordance with the normal distribution are presented.

Table 1. The normality test results of the subjects' İETÖ pre-test and post-test scores						
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov (a)			Skewness	Kurtosis
		Statistic	df	Sig.		
İnönü Evlilik Tutum Ölçeği	Pre-Test	0,179	20	0,094	-0,87	1,84
	Final-Test	0,092	20	0,200	0,09	-0,16

As can be seen in Table 1, the compliance with the normal distribution of the pretest and posttest scores of the İETÖ Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Shapiro Wilk test results ($p>.005$) and the skewness/kurtosis coefficients were examined and it was determined that they showed a normal distribution.

Findings related to the first sub-problem of the study, "Is there a significant difference between the subjects' pre-test scores on İETÖ and their posttest attitude scores?"

In Table 2 below, the independent sample t-test results of the comparison of the participants' İETÖ pre-test and post-test scores are given.

Table 2. Comparison of the subjects'İETÖ pre-test and post-test scores						
Scale	Measurement	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
İnönü Evlilik Tutum Ölçeği	Pre-Test	20	45,95	6,64	-11,139	0,000*
	Final-Test	20	65,90	3,57		

* $p < 0,05$

As can be seen in Table 2, the differences between the participants' FETS pre-test and post-test scores were found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). It was determined that the scores of the participants in the İETÖ post-test were significantly higher than the pre-test. The fact that the posttest results of İETÖ are significantly high indicates that the participants developed a positive attitude towards marriage as a result of the trainings.

2. Findings Related to Sub-Problem

Findings related to the second sub-problem of the study, "Is there a significant difference between the subjects' marital relationship beliefs scale (EİİÖ) pretest scores and posttest attitude scores?"

In Table 3 below, the results of the analysis carried out to determine whether the pretest and posttest scores of the EİİÖ are in accordance with the normal distribution are presented.

Table 3. Normality test results of the subjects' EİİÖ pre-test and post-test scores

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov (a)			Skewness	Kurtosis
		Statistic	df	Sig.		
Evlilik ilişkisi inançları Ölçeği	Pre-Test	0,186	20	0,067	-0,91	0,38
	Final-Test	0,132	20	0,200	-0,02	-1,07

As can be seen in Table 3 above, the compatibility of the pretest and posttest scores of the EİİÖ to the normal distribution, Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Shapiro Wilk test results ($p > .005$) and the skewness/kurtosis coefficients were examined and it was determined that they were in accordance with the normal distribution.

In Table 4 below, the independent sample t-test results of the comparison of the participants' EİİÖ pre-test and post-test scores are given.

Table 4. Comparison of the subjects' EPIS pre-test and post-test scores

Scale	Measurement	n	x	s	t	p
Dependency on root family	Pre-Test	20	22,20	2,63	10,534	0,000*
	Final-Test	20	13,40	1,98		
I we balance	Pre-Test	20	13,60	1,57	11,036	0,000*
	Final-Test	20	8,60	1,85		
Sexual life	Pre-Test	20	10,60	1,64	6,525	0,000*
	Final-Test	20	6,90	1,55		
Emotion management	Pre-Test	20	11,00	1,62	10,582	0,000*
Marriage Relationship	Final-Test	20	7,05	1,23		
Beliefs Scale	Pre-Test	20	57,40	6,58	12,106	0,000*
	Final-Test	20	35,95	4,21		

* $p < 0,05$

As can be seen in Table 4 above, the difference between the participants' EİİÖ pre-test and post-test scores was found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). It was determined that the post-test scores of the participants from the EİİÖ were lower than the pre-test. Examining the sub-dimensions in the EİİÖ it is seen that there is a decrease in the pretest and test scores of dependency on the root family, I-we balance, sexual life and emotion management. The fact that the posttest results in the EİİÖ were significantly lower indicates that the participants' negative beliefs about marriage have changed. In the light of these findings, it was concluded that EEP was effective.

3. Findings Related to Sub-Problem

The third sub-problem, "What are the opinions of the participants about the effectiveness of the marriage education program?" related findings.

The themes and sub-themes for the research model that emerged as a result of the analysis of the data set obtained from the participants are explained below.

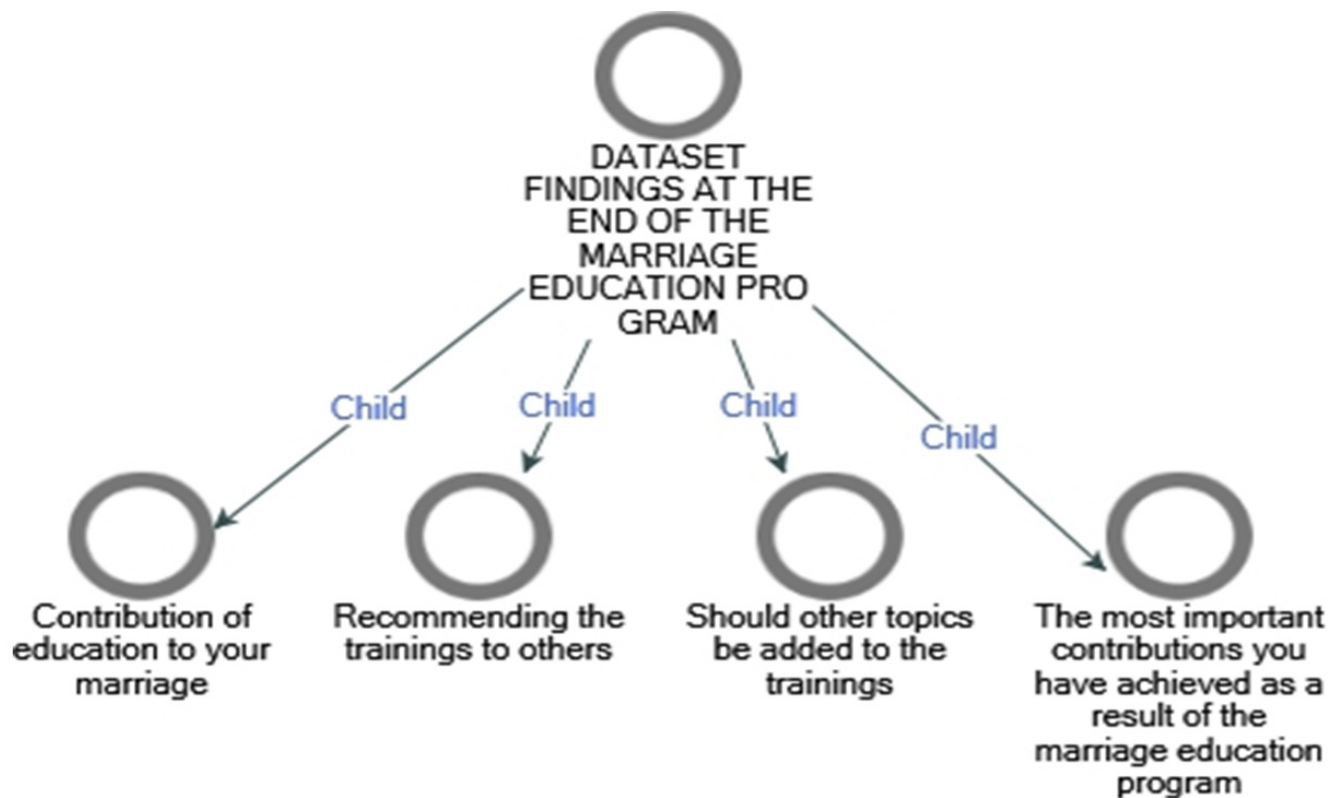


Figure 1. Theme and Sub-Theme Distribution Map (Maps Project) Nvivo R1 Data for Views on the Research Model Resulting from the Analysis of Data in Qualitative Research

According to the participants' views in the qualitative research, the problem sentence named "evaluation of the participant's views on the training given at the end of the marriage training program" and the Themes and Sub-Themes specified in the Research Model in Figure 1. Sub-themes and detailed findings in the light of these themes are presented in the following figures and tables.

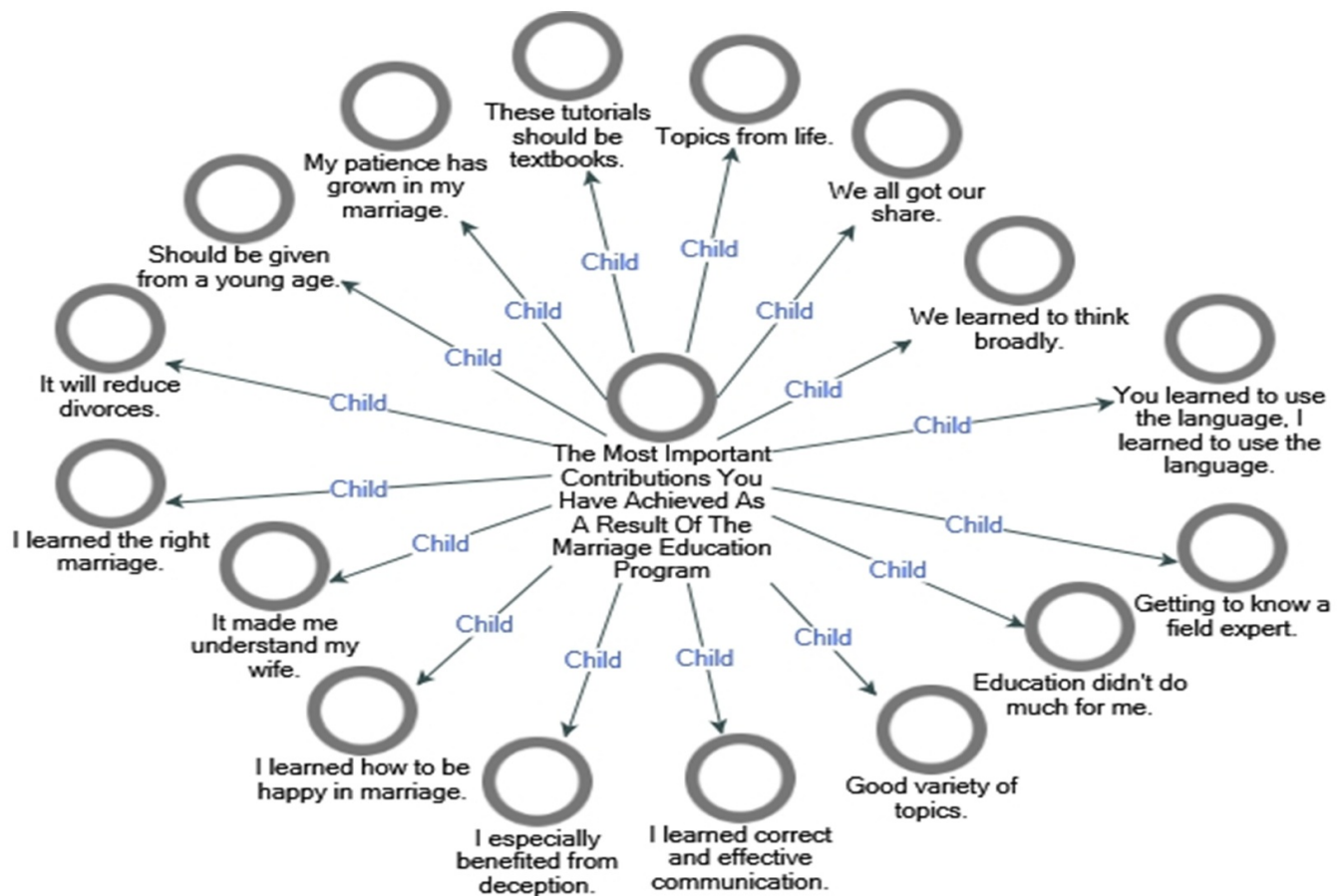


Figure 2. Theme and Sub-Themes Distribution Map (Maps Project) Nvivo R1 Data for the views on the Most Important Contributions You Have Made as a Result of the Marriage Education Program

Table 5. The Most Important Contributions You Have Achieved As A Result Of The Marriage Education Program

THEME	F
Topics from life.	5
We all got our share.	3
Getting to know a field expert.	2
We learned to think broadly.	7
I learned correct and effective communication.	9
Good variety of topics.	1
You learned to use the language, I learned to use the language.	1
It will reduce divorces.	3
I learned the right marriage.	1
My patience has grown in my marriage.	1
These tutorials should be textbooks.	2
Should be given from a young age.	1
It made me understand my wife.	3
I learned how to be happy in marriage.	1
I especially benefited from deception.	1
Education didn't do much for me.	1

As seen in Figure 2 and Table 5, when we analyze the answers in depth according to the opinions of the individuals, in summary, the majority of the participants; It can be said that there are opinions in the direction of 'I learned correct and effective communication' and 'I learned to think broadly'.

The detailed answers of some of the participants who stated that they found the marriage education program effective or not effective after the Marriage Education Program are presented below:

“What are the important contributions of this program to you?” Some of the detailed answers to the question

“...Education has been an education for us, where we all have a share in life. In my marriage, they usually wait to be understood. Let my wife understand me, let my children understand me. Thanks to this training, I realized that in order to be understood, I must first understand. And I saw the importance of saying the right words to help others understand me. For example, when I said you did this... you were like that... I didn't really understand.” K8

“... The trainings I received have contributed a lot to me. For example, I have seen other women experience what I am experiencing. For example, because my wife is angry, I can feel that many people experience what I am experiencing. Calm myself down, this is just a temporary flame, you taught us what to do in front of the flame and showed us the way. I came to the trainings with pleasure and I learned with pleasure.” K7

“...We learned the right method of communication. One can tell anyone anything. Just get it right. We learned how to overcome this problem when we had conflicts with our spouse and children.” K1

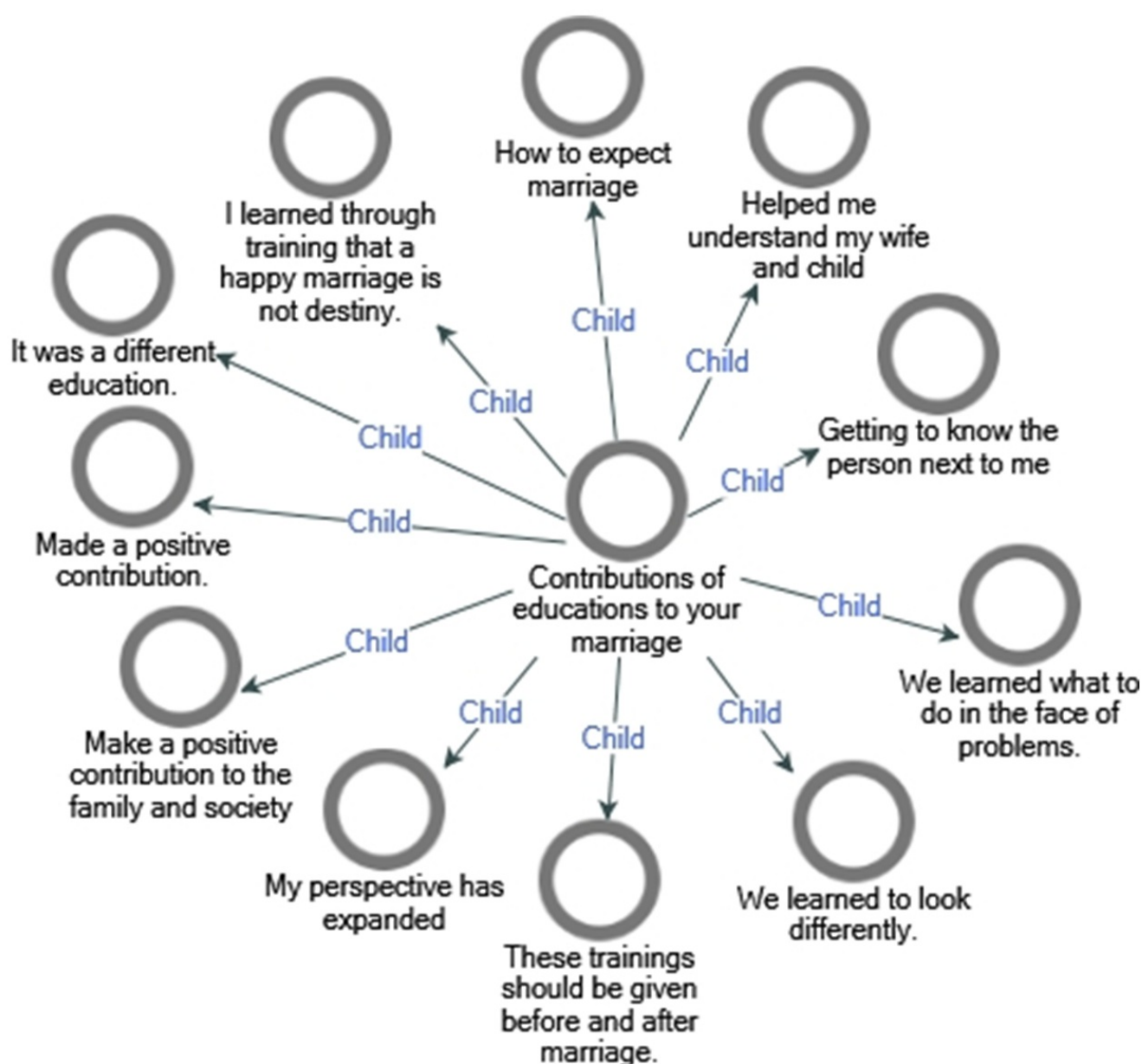


Figure 3. Theme and Sub-Themes Distribution Map (Maps Project) Nvivo R1 Data for opinions about the contributions of the trainings to your marriage

Table 6. Contributions of educations to your marriage

THEME	F
We learned what to do in the face of problems.	4
Made a positive contribution.	17
How to expect marriage	3
Getting to know the person next to me	1
My perspective has expanded	5
We learned to look differently.	7
Helped me understand my wife and child	5
These trainings should be given before and after marriage.	2
Make a positive contribution to the family and society	2
I learned through training that a happy marriage is not destiny.	1
It was a different education.	2

As seen in Figure 3 and Table 6, when we analyzed the answers given by the researchers according to the opinions of the individuals in depth, it can be said that the EEP contributed positively to the participants, we learned to look at the cases differently, it helped me understand my wife and child, and my perspective expanded.

“Do you think the trainings received will contribute positively to your marriage?” Some of the detailed answers to the question:

“... So it was a different education that we had not seen before. Nobody told us how to get along better with our spouse. He didn't tell us how to choose the right mate. There is no such education in schools and universities. It was said that there are abroad. I think it might actually. Such different trainings can also be provided.” K2

“... It will really contribute a lot. With these trainings, I will be able to act more consciously in my marriage. I studied psychology. Despite my psychologist, it has been a great benefit for me to receive these trainings from someone who is more knowledgeable than yourself and especially an expert in marriage. The examples from daily events given in the trainings opened our horizons to the subjects from our lives. We saw where our problems came from. In my opinion, these trainings should be given continuously. Because marriage is a long journey. While fighting for life, we sometimes break and hurt our most precious ones. We actually hold a mirror up to ourselves through trainings, and I think people need to mirror themselves regularly.” K3

“... Yes, such trainings are self-conscious and I think it is very useful because it makes me question what marriage is like, where did I come from at this point, where should I stand, what kind of person am I, I think it should be spread more broadly, socially. I have benefited greatly.” K4

“... This education should be given when a person is young and not yet married. I learned a little different thing while listening and in practice. It made me evaluate things a little differently. But after being married to the same

person for years, it is difficult for us to change once our behavior is settled. I think these trainings should be given when we are young, either when we choose our spouse or without choosing them.” K16

“Is there anything else you would like to add to the marriage education program?” All participants in the program said that the subjects were sufficient. Generally, the answers given were those that ended with a sentence such as no need for another topic, it is enough. There was only one answer detailed:

“... I think the topics were very sufficient. There were very good and very broad topics in education. I liked it very much myself. You have described almost all the problems that can be experienced in marriage. I think this education should be given absolutely everywhere. If a person is not happy in his marriage, he carries it everywhere. I think this training is very necessary to look at things more broadly in order to get along well with our spouse.” K8

“... I definitely recommend it. In my opinion, these trainings should be disseminated by the state to the whole society”P12

“... Absolutely everyone should take these trainings. In fact, these trainings should be taken from childhood so that children become more conscious. Thus, a conscious society can grow. If taken from childhood, these trainings are prevented without experiencing problems. I think these trainings should be in schools. As children learn mathematics, they should also know how to understand their spouse in the future and how to explain themselves to their spouses. Because the foundation of everything is family” K1

4. Discussion

The developed Marriage Education Program was applied to a group of 20 married people. After the applied program, it was observed that the subjects developed a positive attitude towards marriage, while there was a decrease in their negative beliefs about marriage. The reason for this is "basic elements of family communication", "cheating in marriage", "choice of the right spouse and expectations from the spouse", "violence and anger control in the family", "constructivist approach" given to married individuals based on the Philosophy of Progression and Constructivist Approach of the Marriage Education Program prepared. It is thought that it is a result of the participants being informed and raising awareness, together with the issues of economic problems, compatibility with the spouse, and "healthy sexual life in marriage". In the light of the findings obtained from the research, answers were given to the questions sought in the sub-objectives of the research. It was found to be effective according to the data obtained from the pretest-posttest findings of the Marriage Education Program that was developed and evaluated. The findings obtained in the study are also consistent with the studies conducted in the literature (Dargahi et al., 2017; Chitsazzadeh & Sanai, 2017; Aslan & Nazlı, 2021; Tahan et al., 2020; Atan & Discovery, 2019, Canel, 2007).

In this study, it was concluded that the EEP developed and applied positively improves the marriage attitudes and beliefs of married individuals. It was determined that the participants' İETÖ post-test scores increased significantly compared to

their pre-test scores.

It was also examined whether there was a statistically significant difference between the EİİÖ pretest and posttest scores, and it was determined that EEP significantly reduced the participants' negative beliefs about marriage. Accordingly, while the participants developed a positive attitude towards marriage in the training in which the EEP was applied, a decrease was found in their negative beliefs about marriage. According to the participants' opinions, it was determined that EEP was effective in a positive way. In the study, it was determined that the qualitative and quantitative data support each other. The reason for this is "basic elements of family communication", "cheating in marriage", "choice of the right spouse and expectations from the spouse", "violence and anger control in the family", "economic problems", which are given to married individuals based on the philosophy of progressivism and the constructivist approach of the EEP. It is thought that the participants should be informed and gain awareness, together with the topics of "harmony, harmony with the spouse", "healthy sexual life in marriage".

This finding obtained from the research is in line with the findings of Dargahi et al. (2017). In particular, Dargahi et al. (2017) provided Marriage and Relationship Training to save Karaj municipality employees from high job stress and low quality of marital relationship. As a result, it was determined that marriage and relationship education significantly reduced work stress. This study was also conducted with Nicosia Turkish Municipality employees and the similarity of the results is in line with the findings of Dargahi et al. (2017). In the study of Chitsazzadeh and Sanai (2017), they evaluated the effect of the Practical Practice of Close Relationship Skills in couples program on couples' marital commitment. The results showed that the applied marriage program had a positive effect on marital commitment and the results are in line with the findings of this study.

Aslan and Nazlı (2021) examined the effect of Premarital Psycho-education Program on the level of dysfunctional beliefs about marriage. The scale used in this study is the EİİÖ, which is used to measure the effectiveness of EEP. As a result of the research, it was observed that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the individuals in the experimental group. The findings of Aslan and Nazlı (2021) show parallelism with the findings of this study.

The qualitative findings obtained in the study show that there are positive changes in the feelings, thoughts and behaviors of the participants in the experimental group towards marriage.

In the study of Tahan et al. (2020), the effectiveness of a psycho-education program on the sexual function and marital satisfaction of Iranian couples is evaluated. In the experimental group, a significant difference was found between the pre-test and post-test, between the amount of sexual function and marital satisfaction. Results showed that Psycho-educational Group Therapy improved sexual performance and improved marital satisfaction. The findings support the findings of this study. After the necessity of sexual education was seen in the findings in the needs analysis stage of the research, the subject of healthy sexual life in marriage was included in the program.

As a result of the application, it was determined that the results of the marriage attitude of the married individuals who participated in the research increased at a positive level in the answers they gave to the İETÖ. There were positive

differences in the opinions of married individuals who participated in the research before and after the EEP about their marriage. Findings obtained from interviews with married individuals after the experiment revealed that there were changes in the attitudes, behavior and perceptions of marriage. They stated that they understood their spouses better. The participants stated that they were happy with the education, that it had a positive effect on their married life, and that they understood their spouses better.

In a similar study, Atan and Bulus (2019) evaluated the effect of the Family Communication Skills Psycho-education Program on the marital satisfaction of the spouses. Family Communication Skills Psycho-education Program was applied once a week for 8 weeks. According to the results of the research, it is seen that the marital satisfaction of the participants in the experimental group increased as a result of the trainings. There was no difference in the control group. The findings of the study support our research as they show similarities with this research. The main purpose of this research is to determine the effectiveness of the Marriage Education Program. In the research, firstly, for the need analysis of the applied marriage education program, it was determined on which subjects married and divorced individuals needed marriage education by qualitative and quantitative methods. After determining the marriage education needs of married and divorced individuals, a marriage education program was developed in the light of these needs.

The developed Marriage Education Program was applied to a group of 20 married people. After the applied program, it was observed that the subjects developed a positive attitude towards marriage, while there was a decrease in their negative beliefs about marriage. The reason for this is "basic elements of family communication", "cheating in marriage", "choice of the right spouse and expectations from the spouse", "violence and anger control in the family", "control of violence and anger in the family", which are given to married individuals based on the Philosophy of Progression and Constructivist Approach of the Marriage Education Program prepared. It is thought that it is a result of the participants being informed and raising awareness, together with the topics of economic problems, compatibility with the spouse", "healthy sexual life in marriage". In the light of the findings obtained from the research, answers were given to the questions sought in the sub-objectives of the research. It was found to be effective according to the data obtained from the pretest-posttest findings of the Marriage Education Program that was developed and evaluated. The findings obtained in the study are also consistent with the studies conducted in the literature (Dargahi et al., 2017; Chitsazzadeh & Sanai, 2017; Aslan & Nazlı, 2021; Tahan et al., 2020; Atan & Bulus, 2019, Canel, 2007).

5. Recommendation

As a result, it was seen that the marriage education program improved the marriage attitudes of married individuals in a positive way, decreased their negative beliefs about marriage positively, and the program was found to be effective by the subjects in detailed interviews. In the light of the results obtained from the research, the following recommendations can be made.

Suggestions for new work to be done:

- It is obvious that marriage education is of great importance in an age where divorce is a globalizing problem not only in

the TRNC but all over the world. It has been demonstrated by experimental research that the marriage education program is effective. It has been observed that there are no marriage education programs in Northern Cyprus. It is recommended to implement these marriage education programs developed to prevent divorces and increase healthier marriages.

- The results to be obtained by conducting both qualitative and quantitative research with different participants on the same subject can be compared with the results of this research.
- In addition, it can be recommended to researchers with the thought that different results can be obtained by including spouses in marriage education programs to be prepared and increasing the number of samples.

Suggestions for practice:

- Considering the findings obtained from this study, this marriage education program, which was prepared in the TRNC, can be organized by the Ministry of National Education and Culture for parents and teachers in schools in the context of adult education.
- By the Ministry of National Education and Culture, issues such as self-knowledge, choosing a spouse, being a spouse, being a parent, expectations from marriage can be applied to children in formal education by programming them in accordance with the age of the children.
- In addition, the prepared marriage education program can be given in the context of public education by municipalities and non-governmental organizations (trade unions, associations and political parties) in the form of public education.
- It can be suggested that marriage education programs be implemented and disseminated by family and marriage counselors and psychologists.

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