



## THE ROLE OF PARENTAL ATTITUDES, IRRATIONAL BELIEFS, NEED FOR SOCIAL APPROVAL AND SELF-ESTEEM IN SPEECH ANXIETY<sup>i</sup>

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### Abstract:

In this study, the effects of parental attitudes, self-esteem, need for social approval and irrational beliefs were examined on the speech anxiety of university in Turkey. Correlational survey model was employed in the study, and the participants were 615 Turkish university students. The relationships between the variables were analysed by establishing a structural regression model. Irrational Beliefs Scale, Need for Social Approval Scale, Speech Anxiety Scale for Teacher Candidates, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and Parental Attitudes Scale were employed to collect data in this study. The analyses showed that the model had a good fit to the research data [ $\chi^2=463.806$ ,  $sd=201$ ,  $\chi^2/sd=2.307$ ,  $CFI=.961$ ,  $TLI=.951$ ,  $IFI=.961$ ,  $RFI=.916$ ,  $NFI=.933$ ,  $AGFI=.912$ ,  $GFI=.936$ ,  $RMSEA$  (%95 GA)= .046,  $SRMR=.058$ ]. Irrational beliefs, self-esteem, and need for social approval were found to have a full mediator role in the relationship between parental attitudes and speech anxiety. In order to reduce speech anxiety, individuals' self-esteem should be improved, while reducing their need for social approval and eliminating their irrational beliefs. However, family-oriented projects should be carried out considering the effect of parental attitudes associated with these variables.

**Keywords:** speech anxiety; parental attitudes; self-esteem; irrational beliefs; need for social approval

<sup>i</sup> KONUŞMA KAYGISI ÜZERİNDE ANNE BABA TUTUMLARI, AKILCI OLMAYAN İNANÇLAR, SOSYAL ONAY İHTİYACI VE BENLİK SAYGISININ ROLÜ

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### Özet:

Bu araştırmada, eğitim fakültesi öğrencilerinin konuşma kaygısı üzerinde anne baba tutumları, benlik saygısı, sosyal onay ihtiyacı ve akılcı olmayan inançların etkisi araştırılmıştır. Araştırma, ilişkisel tarama modelinde bir araştırma olup, araştırmada 615 üniversite öğrenci yer almaktadır. Değişkenler arasındaki ilişkiler yapısal regresyon modeli kurularak analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmada Akılcı Olmayan İnanç Ölçeği, Sosyal Onay İhtiyacı Ölçeği, Öğretmen Adaylarına Yönelik Konuşma Kaygısı Ölçeği, Rosenberg Benlik Saygısı Ölçeği ve Anne Baba Tutumları Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Yapılan analizler sonucunda modele ilişkin uyum iyiliği değerleri modelin mükemmel uyum sağladığını göstermektedir [ $\chi^2=463.806$ ,  $sd=201$ ,  $\chi^2/sd=2.307$ , CFI=.961, TLI=.951, IFI=.961, RFI=.916, NFI=.933, AGFI=.912, GFI=.936, RMSEA (%95 GA)= .046, SRMR=.058]. Anne baba tutumları ile konuşma kaygısı arasında akılcı olmayan inançların, benlik saygısının ve sosyal onay ihtiyacının aracılık rolü bulunmaktadır. Konuşma kaygısını azaltmak için bireylerin benlik saygılarının artırılması, sosyal onay ihtiyacının ve akılcı olmayan inançlarının azaltılması gerekmektedir. Ancak bu değişkenlerle ilişkili olan anne baba tutumlarının etkisine yönelik aile temelli çalışmalar yapılması gerekmektedir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** konuşma kaygısı; anne baba tutumları; benlik saygısı; akılcı olmayan inançlar; sosyal onay ihtiyacı

### 1. Introduction

The most basic responsibility of parents for their children is to provide them a safe environment that they need. In many families, even if this environment is provided physically, the explicit or implicit messages conveyed by parents can make their children feel incompetent. Family relationship plays an important role in individuals' self-development (Rosenberg, 1965). Negative and problematic relationships within the family can cause children to have negative perceptions of themselves and others. Dysfunctional beliefs individuals have about themselves and others can prevent them from seeing the facts as they are and from being objective. From perspective, there is a significant relationship between parental attitudes, and developing irrational beliefs towards one's self and others, low self-esteem and anxiety disorders (Burnett, 1995; Grieger & Boyd, 2006).

Irrational beliefs are acquired early in life and last long with repetitive experience in individuals' lives. Considering that parents are the first individuals with whom babies interact with and they raise their children in line with their beliefs about how to raise a child, it is inevitable that these beliefs affect the child-parent relationship, which in turn has an influence on the child's self-esteem (Ellis, 2005). According to Ellis (2005), self-esteem is based on the wrong and inconsistent evaluation of the self mostly based on individuals' comparison of themselves to other people. Therefore, in his theory, Ellis mentions the notion of unconditional self-acceptance instead of self-esteem. Unconditional acceptance here refers to one's complete acceptance of his/herself without

any conditions, whether other people approve or disapprove it, respect it or not, like it or not. This acceptance shows a permanent characteristic despite the uncertainties and changes encountered in life. Individuals who have this unconditional self-acceptance evaluate themselves and their behaviours in a way that is unrealistic, and need the approval of others.

According to Rosenberg (1962) and Coopersmith (1967), self-esteem refers to individuals' making judgements about their own worth and competence. In this evaluation, people evaluate themselves in line with their past, others' performance of others and various social view, and reach a decision about their own self (Branden, 1969). Individuals with low self-esteem tend to see themselves as worthless, incompetent and incomplete human beings (Rosenberg & Rosenberg 1978). How individuals see themselves affect their behaviours, thoughts, feelings and goals (Branden, 1969). There is a relationship between low self-esteem and irrational beliefs, and many psychological disorders and dysfunctional attitudes (Ellis, 1962, 1974). People have irrational beliefs of varying degrees and intensity (Ellis, 1976). However, depending on the intensity of these beliefs, people have more difficulty adapting to both their inner world and their environment (Kuiper & Dance, 1994). They tend to define their lives and themselves with these beliefs. These beliefs last for a lifetime if they are not questioned and examine (Dryden, 1994).

Individuals are social entities that are affected by, and also have an influence on, the environment starting with birth. Unconditional acceptance of their existence, especially by those who are important to them, is vital not only for their physical but also spiritual integrity. All individuals need to be accepted, liked, praised and admired by others as a social being. These needs, which are defined as the need for social approval, may be too high to disrupt the lives of some individuals (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960; Karaşar & Ögmiş, 2016b). The self-esteem of those who need social approval varies depending on whether they are accepted or approved by others. They usually exhibit compliance behaviours since they involve fewer threats to their selves, and tend to avoid behaviours in which they will discover themselves (Şahan & Akbaş, 2017). They experience anxiety when they are exposed to a situation where they can be evaluated by others (Chiba et al., 2009; Ellis, 1998).

All stages of an individual's development are interrelated. A failure in a stage of development affects other stages negatively. Human is a social being and speaking is surely one of the most important means for socialisation. Children who think that they are not accepted unconditionally by their parents live through fear and anxiety disorders (Foxman, 2004; Van Gastel, Legerstee & Ferdinand, 2009). Speech anxiety is one of these disorders. Speech anxiety is a concept that is associated with different variables such as lack of self-confidence, shyness, perfectionism, avoiding speaking, being negatively evaluated by others, introversion and shyness (Bums, 1980; Clark & Beck, 2010; Froste & Marten, 1990; Hamarta & Demirtaş, 2009; Richmond et al., 2008; Wells, 1997). Ellis (1984) states that all these variables arise due to irrational beliefs and that these beliefs lead to neurosis. Most people who experience anxiety think that it is not possible to control this

condition (Benight & Bandura, 2004; Hofmann, 2005). Individuals, who seek approval by others, aim to achieve excellence in their behaviours and experience negative evaluation anxiety live through social anxiety and discomfort, and they spend most of their energy to be perfect. These attitudes cause them to exhibit timid behaviours in social settings (Frost et al., 1990).

Speaking constitutes an important pillar of interpersonal communication. As in other areas, verbal expression is a crucial means in education. In the Turkish education system, students are enabled to access information mostly through verbal expression. In this sense, it is expected from future teachers to have effective speaking skills because speaking has the role of conveying the content in the classroom. However, speech anxiety prevents the development of effective speaking skills. By means of a structural regression model, this study focused on the effects of parental attitudes, self-esteem, need for social approval and irrational beliefs on the speech anxiety of students studying at an education faculty in Turkey.

The aim of the study was to determine the variables that affect the speech anxiety of students at an education faculty and which of these variables predict this anxiety more strongly based on a model framework. Accordingly, the following hypotheses were tested:

- Speech anxiety is a construct whose relationships with parental attitudes, irrational beliefs, self-esteem, and need for social approval can be explained within the scope of a model.
- Parental attitudes directly affect irrational beliefs, self-esteem, need for social approval and speech anxiety.
- Irrational beliefs directly affect self-esteem, need for social approval and speech anxiety.
- Parental attitudes, irrational beliefs, self-esteem, and need for social approval have a direct effect on speech anxiety.
- Parental attitudes indirectly affect speech anxiety through irrational beliefs, self-esteem and need for social approval. Irrational beliefs, self-esteem and need for social approval have a mediator role in the relationship between parental attitudes and speech anxiety.
- Irrational beliefs directly affect speech anxiety, and also indirectly affect it through self-esteem and need for social approval. Self-esteem and need for social approval have a mediator role in the relationship between irrational beliefs and speech anxiety.

## **2. Methods**

### **2.1 Sample**

In the study, the determinants of speech anxiety in students studying at an education faculty were tested within the framework of a model. For this purpose, scales were administered to first- and fourth-year undergraduate students at an education faculty of

a Turkish state university. The participants were 615 students, 379 female and 232 male. Two hundred and seventy-nine students were in their first year and 336 students in their fourth year. The students who would participate in the study were informed about the project, and the data were collected from those who voluntarily participated in the study.

## 2.2 Instruments

Five scales including the Speech Anxiety Scale for Teacher Candidates, Shortened Form of the Irrational Beliefs Scale, Need for Social Approval Scale, and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale were used in this study. The psychometric characteristics of these scales are elaborated below.

**Speech Anxiety Scale for Teacher Candidates** developed by Sevim (2012), this scale measures the extent to which teacher candidates feel anxious when they communicate with others. High scores on the 5-point Likert type scale indicate a high level of speech anxiety. It consists of 20 items and three sub-dimensions that are speaker-oriented anxiety (e.g. I feel uncomfortable with the idea of an audience looking at and criticising me), environment-oriented anxiety (e.g. I feel anxious when I am suddenly asked to talk about a topic) and psychology of speaking (e.g. I feel shy when I talk to people about personal issues). These three dimensions explain 52% of the variation in the data. The factor loadings of the items range between .40 and .78. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient for the whole scale is .91, whereas the coefficients for the sub-dimensions "speaker-oriented anxiety", "environment-oriented anxiety" and "psychology of speaking" are .89, .82 and .87, respectively. In this study, the second-order goodness-of-fit indices of the scale was obtained as  $\chi^2/sd=2.16$ , RMSEA=.044, NFI=.929, IFI=.960, RFI=.916, CFI=.960, GFI=.946 and AGFI=.930. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the whole scale was found as .92, and for the sub-dimensions, as .88, .83 and .62, respectively.

**Parental Attitudes Scale** developed by Eldeleklioğlu (1996); this 5-point Likert type scale contains 40 items. In the scale, there are items such as "My mother/father takes my opinion on every issue." and "My mother/father has not seen the positive aspects of what I do, but the flaws of my work, and criticised me." that are scored separately for the mother and father. The scale has three sub-dimensions: democratic, authoritative and protective/ demanding attitudes. Cronbach's Alpha internal reliability coefficients for the sub-dimensions "democratic attitudes", "authoritative attitudes" and "protective/demanding attitudes" are .89, .82 and .78, respectively. For this study, the goodness-of-fit indices of the Mothers' Attitudes Scale was obtained as  $\chi^2/sd=1.845$ , RMSEA=.037, NFI=.920, IFI=.962, RFI=.906, CFI=.961, GFI=.949 and AGFI=.935, and those for the Fathers' Attitudes Scale as  $\chi^2/sd=2.112$ , RMSEA=.043, NFI=.907, IFI=.949, RFI=.892, CFI=.948, GFI=.943 and AGFI=.927. The Cronbach's Alpha internal reliability coefficients for mothers' "democratic attitudes", "protective/demanding attitudes" and "authoritative attitudes" were calculated as .79, .85 and .80, respectively, and those for fathers' as .89, .84 and .77, respectively.

**Shortened Form of the Irrational Beliefs Scale** was developed by Türküm (2003) to measure unrealistic, wrongful beliefs that emerge as a result of individual distortions. The 5-point Likert type scale contains 15 items. Sample items of the scale include "Being a favourite person is important for me." and "Promises should always be kept." The scale consists of the sub-dimensions "Need for Approval" that measures irrational beliefs about getting approval, "Interpersonal Relationships" that measures irrational beliefs related to the relationships with other people and "Self" that measures irrational beliefs of individuals about themselves. It explains 42.9% of the variance in the data. The Cronbach's Alpha internal reliability coefficient of the scale is calculated as .75. The three dimensions of the scale explained 45% of the variation in the data. For this study, the second-order goodness-of-fit indices of the scale was obtained as  $\chi^2/sd=2.174$ , RMSEA=.044, NFI=.917, IFI=.953, RFI=.889, CFI=.953, GFI=.965 and AGFI=.947. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the whole scale was .74, and for the sub-dimensions "need for approval" was .73, "interpersonal relationships" was .60, and "self" was .79. The "need for approval" subscale was not used in the study because it contains items similar to the "need for social approval" scale.

**Need for Social Approval Scale** was developed by Karaşar and Öğülmüş (2016a) to determine how important the expectations and wishes of other people are for individuals, and their needs to adapt to these expectations and wishes in order to get acceptance in their relationships with people. It consists of three sub-dimensions: Sensitivity to Others' Judgements, Social Introversion, and Making a Positive Impression. High scores on the scale indicate a higher need for social approval. The scale that contains statements such as "Approval of my views by others is important for me." has 25 items in 5-point Likert type form. The goodness-of-fit indices of the scale shows that the three-dimensional structure has a good fit ( $\chi^2/sd=2.11$ , RMSEA=.06, NNFI=.94, CFI=.95, RMR=.06, NFI=.90, IFI=.95). Cronbach's Alpha internal reliability coefficient for the whole scale is .90, while the coefficients for the sub-dimensions "sensitivity to others' judgements", "social introversion" and "making a positive impression" are .83, .80 and .80, respectively. For this study, the second-order goodness-of-fit indices of the scale was obtained as  $\chi^2/sd=2.400$ , RMSEA=.048, NFI=.926, IFI=.955, RFI=.909, CFI=.955, GFI=.955 and AGFI=.937. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the whole scale was .90, and for the sub-dimensions "sensitivity to others' judgements", "social introversion" and "making a positive impression" were .88, .81 and .84, respectively.

**Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale** was adapted to Turkish by Çuhadaroğlu (1986) has 10 items. It has items such as "I can't find much to feel proud of myself". High scores on the scale indicate a high level of self-esteem. The scale has a 4-point Likert type structure. The validity coefficient of the scale is .71, and its reliability coefficient is .75. The goodness-of-fit indices of the scale was obtained as  $\chi^2/sd=1.92$ , RMSEA=.039, NFI=.985, IFI=.993, RFI=.974, CFI=.993, GFI=.986 and AGFI=.969, the Cronbach's Alpha internal reliability coefficient was calculated as .86 in the present study.

### 2.3 Analysis

Correlational survey model was employed in this study. Structural regression model, a structural equation model, and the maximum likelihood estimation method were used to determine the relationships between the variables. This technique was employed to reveal the complex relationships in the study. It makes it possible to work not only with observed variables, but also with implicit variables. In addition, the bootstrap analysis method was used to determine the statistical significance of the indirect effects of the variables in the structural equation model. The number of bootstrap repetitions was determined as 1000 in this study. The data were analysed using SPSS 20 and AMOS 20.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1 Correlation and Descriptive Statistics

The suitability of the data for analysis was tested before moving on to the structural equation modelling. First, missing data were examined, and the scale forms that were marked incompletely or in a certain pattern were removed from the dataset. All scores were converted into standard scores, Mahalanobis distances between the scores were determined, and the dataset was analysed in terms of uni- and multi-directional extreme values. Normality assumptions, directionality and homogeneity of variances, and multicollinearity were checked. The data were concluded to meet the normal distribution assumptions. According to Kline (1998), a sample size of more than 200 is sufficient in SEM studies. The dataset obtained from 615 participants was sufficient for this study. The correlation coefficients, means and standard deviations regarding the variables are presented in Table 1.

As the correlation values in the table shows, there were significant relationships between speech anxiety, and irrational beliefs ( $r = .24, p < .01$ ), need for social approval ( $r = .34, p < .01$ ), self-esteem ( $r = -.45, p < .01$ ), mothers' attitudes (democratic  $r = -.21, p < .01$ ; protective  $r = .24, p < .01$ ; authoritarian  $r = .2, p < .01$ ) and fathers' attitudes (democratic  $r = -.21, p < .01$ ; protective  $r = .23, p < .01$ ; authoritarian  $r = .25, p < .01$ ).

### 3.2 Measurement Model

In the model formed after an analysis of the literature, it was assumed that the attitudes of parents are influential on the formation of irrational beliefs and that anxiety-inducing thoughts starts to develop in individuals depending on these attitudes. In the model, it was also assumed that these beliefs also affect the self-esteem of individuals and that they will experience speech anxiety due to low self-esteem and need for social approval. Before the structural equation model was tested, it was examined whether the structure validity of all scales fit the data set. The measurement model that was observed and defined by means of latent variables was then tested. Although the measurement model had acceptable goodness-of-fit indices [ $\chi^2 = 685.436, sd = 230, \chi^2/sd = 2.980, CFI = .934, TLI = .921, IFI = .934, RFI = .885, NFI = .904, AGFI = .885, GFI = .911, RMSEA$  (%95 GA) = .057; SRMR = .07], the factor loading value of "need for approval", one of the sub-dimensions of the

Irrational Beliefs Scale, was low and not significant. The measurement model was re-tested after this variable was excluded from the model, and improved goodness-of-fit indices were obtained [ $\chi^2=606.733$ ,  $sd=210$ ,  $\chi^2/sd=2.889$  CFI=.941, TLI=.929, IFI=.941, RFI=.895, NFI=.913, AGFI=.892, GFI=.918, RMSEA (%95 GA)= .055, SRMR=.06]. The factor loading values in the model varied significantly ( $p <.001$ ) between .368 and .913. These values show that the observed variables represented the latent variables.

### 3.3 Structural Model

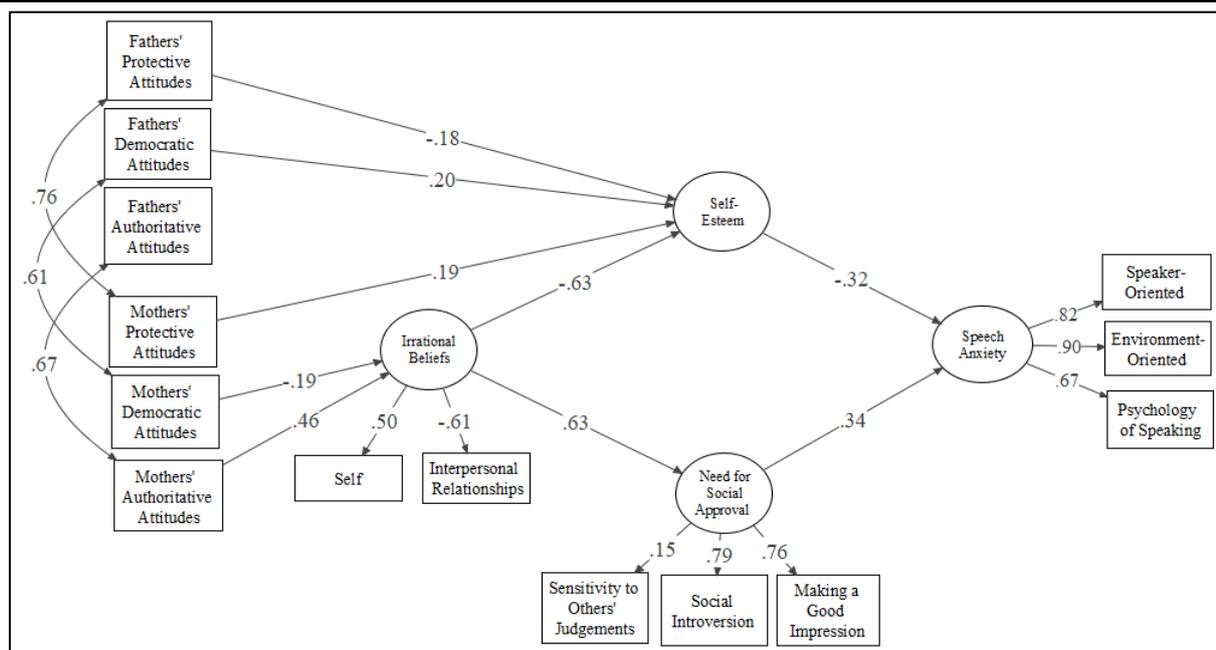
In the following stage of the study, the structural equation model was established, and the variables that predicted speech anxiety were determined. After the structural equation model was established, the paths that were not significant were removed one by one and the model was re-tested. The goodness-of-fit indices showed that the model had a good fit, and that the variables predicted speech anxiety with high significance [ $\chi^2=463.806$ ,  $sd=201$ ,  $\chi^2/sd=2.307$ , CFI=.961, TLI=.951, IFI=.961, RFI=.916, NFI=.933, AGFI=.912, GFI=.936, RMSEA (%95 GA)= .046, SRMR=.058]. The standardised estimate values of the model that emerged after the removal of the non-significant paths are as shown in Figure 1.

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**Table 1:** Coefficients of correlation between the variables (N=615)

	1	1a.	1b.	1c.	2.	2a.	2b.	2c.	3.	3a.	3b.	3c.	4.	5a.	5b.	5c.	6a.	6b.	6c.
1. Speech Anxiety (Total)	1	.94**	.90**	.70**	.24**	.19**	-.13**	.41**	.34**	.13**	.32**	.41**	-.45**	-.21**	.24**	.26**	-.17**	.23**	.25**
1a. Speaker-Oriented Anxiety		1	.74**	.50**	.23**	.18**	-.12**	.39**	.33**	.13**	.32**	.40**	-.43**	-.18**	.23**	.23**	-.15**	.22**	.23**
1b. Environment-Oriented Anxiety			1	.62**	.21**	.18**	-.11**	.34**	.29**	.11**	.27**	.36**	-.40**	-.20**	.21**	.23**	-.15**	.19**	.22**
1c. Psychology of Speaking				1	.18**	.15**	-.10*	.30**	.23**	.10*	.20**	.28**	-.32**	-.17**	.19**	.22**	-.16**	.18**	.19**
2. Irrational Beliefs (Total)					1	.80**	.56**	.69**	.19**	.12**	.17**	.17**	-.03	.09*	.20**	.27**	.11*	.16**	.24**
2a. Need for Approval						1	.22**	.37**	.27**	.21**	.26**	.20**	-.02	.04	.18**	.09*	.08	.12**	.04
2b. Interpersonal Relationships							1	.01	-.16**	-.00	-.27**	-.18**	.39**	.32**	-.36**	.32**	.27**	-.29**	-.24**
2c. Self								1	.24**	.04	.32**	.30**	-.35**	-.14**	.31**	.27**	-.10*	.27**	.24**
3. Need for Social Approval (Total)									1	.81**	.74**	.84**	-.22**	-.10*	.22**	.25**	-.07	.17**	.17**
3a. Sensitivity to Others' Judgements										1	.36**	.43**	-.01	.07	.08	.01	.07	.06	-.04
3b. Social Introversion											1	.60**	-.27**	-.18**	.29**	.38**	-.14**	.21**	.30**
3c. Making a Good Impression												1	-.30**	-.19**	.21**	.31**	-.14**	.16**	.24**
4. Self-Esteem													1	.34**	-.35**	-.35**	.33**	-.35**	-.35**
5a. Mothers' Democratic Attitudes														1	-.53**	-.57**	.61**	-.38**	-.39**
5b. Mothers' Protective Attitudes															1	.68**	-.19**	.76**	.54**
5c. Mothers' Authoritative Attitudes																1	-.40**	.53**	.68**
6a. Fathers' Democratic Attitudes																	1	.58**	-.60**
6b. Fathers' Protective Attitudes																		1	.67**
6c. Fathers' Authoritative Attitudes																			1
Mean	47.11	26.23	14.09	6.79	54.15	16.97	21.93	15.24	66.50	26.62	19.46	20.42	30.15	59.86	56.84	19.76	56.06	57.17	21.14
SD	13.18	7.71	4.69	2.44	7.37	3.81	3.29	3.61	14.18	7.57	4.93	5.26	5.32	10.85	16.51	7.13	11.71	16.09	6.95

\*p<.05; \*\*p<.01



**Figure 1:** Standardised factor loading values for the final structural model

In order to test whether the direct and indirect effects of the variables in the model are significant in predicting the speech anxiety of the teacher candidates, the bootstrap procedure was performed with 10000 re-samples. The findings regarding the direct relationships are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Parameter estimates of the direct relationships between the variables

Model pathways	Coefficients	Standard Error	95 CI	
			Lower	Upper
Mothers' Authoritative Attitudes → Irrational Beliefs	.460***	.052	.357	.561
Mothers' Democratic Attitudes → Irrational Beliefs	-.194***	.055	-.301	-.086
Mothers' Protective Attitudes → Self-Esteem	.192**	.062	.071	.318
Fathers' Protective Attitudes → Self-Esteem	-.175**	.062	-.297	-.056
Fathers' Democratic Attitudes → Self-Esteem	.196***	.047	.104	.289
Irrational Beliefs → Self-Esteem	-.627***	.053	-.728	-.519
Irrational Beliefs → Need for Social Approval	.628***	.045	.538	.714
Self-Esteem → Speech Anxiety	-.322***	.054	-.427	-.216
Need for Social Approval → Speech Anxiety	.337***	.061	.213	.452

BC interval: Error corrected 95% confidence interval  
 p<.001\*\*\*, p<.01\*\*, p<.05\*

Prior to testing the mediator effect of the variables on the relationship between parental attitudes and speech anxiety, direct relationships among all the variables included in the study were presented. As is seen in Table 2, irrational beliefs were significantly predicted by mothers' authoritative attitudes ( $\beta=.46$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and their democratic attitudes ( $\beta=-.19$ ,  $p<.001$ ). As mothers' authoritarian attitudes increased, irrational beliefs tended to increase, but as mothers' democratic attitudes increased, irrational beliefs tended to decrease. The participants' self-esteem was significantly predicted by mothers' protective attitudes ( $\beta=.19$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and fathers' democratic attitudes ( $\beta=.21$ ,  $p<.001$ ) through positive relationships, but by fathers' protective attitudes ( $\beta=-.18$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and irrational beliefs ( $\beta=-.63$ ,  $p<.001$ ) by means of negative relationships. Self-esteem went up with mothers' protective attitudes and fathers' democratic attitudes, but it tended to go down as fathers' protective attitudes and irrational beliefs increased. The need for social approval was significantly predicted by only irrational beliefs ( $\beta=.63$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The participants' need for social approval tended to increase with their irrational beliefs. Lastly, speech anxiety was positively predicted by the need for social approval ( $\beta=.34$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and negatively predicted by self-esteem ( $\beta=-.32$ ,  $p<.001$ ) at significant levels. Speech anxiety mounted up with the need for social approval, but was reduced as self-esteem increased.

**Table 3:** Direct, indirect, and total effects in the final model

	Total Effect	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect
Mothers' Authoritative Attitudes → Self-Esteem	-.289	-	-.289***
Mothers' Authoritative Attitudes → Need for Social Approval	.289	-	.289***
Mothers' Authoritative Attitudes → Speech Anxiety	.190	-	.190***
Mothers' Democratic Attitudes → Self-Esteem	.122	-	.122***
Mothers' Democratic Attitudes → Need for Social Approval	-.122	-	-.122***
Mothers' Democratic Attitudes → Speech Anxiety	-.080	-	-.080***
Mothers' Protective Attitudes → Speech Anxiety	-.062	-	-.062**
Fathers' Protective Attitudes → Speech Anxiety	.056	-	.056**
Fathers' Democratic Attitudes → Speech Anxiety	-.063	-	-.063***
Irrational Beliefs → Speech Anxiety	.413	-	.413***

BC interval: Error corrected 95% confidence interval

$p<.05$ ;  $p<.01$ \*\*;  $p<.001$ \*\*\*

Lastly, direct, indirect and total effect values were compared to test the mediation effect between the variables. As is seen in Table 3, the results of the path analysis showed that irrational beliefs had a full mediator role in the relationships between mothers'

authoritative attitudes, and self-esteem and need for social approval. In the relationship between mothers' authoritative attitudes and speech anxiety, irrational beliefs, self-esteem and need for social approval together had a full mediator role. Likewise, irrational beliefs had a mediator role in the relationships between mothers' democratic attitudes, and self-esteem and need for social approval. In addition, irrational beliefs, self-esteem and need for social approval together had a full mediator role in the relationship between mothers' democratic attitudes and speech anxiety. On the other hand, self-esteem played a full mediator role in the relationship between mothers' protective attitudes, fathers' protective and democratic attitudes and speech anxiety. Moreover, self-esteem and need for social approval were observed to have a full mediator role in the relationship between irrational beliefs and speech anxiety. To what extent the external variables were explained by the internal and mediator variables was examined by calculating the squared multiple correlation coefficients ( $R^2$ ). According to the final model, the mediator variables and external variables explained 31% of the variation in speech anxiety. This value indicates a moderate effect in terms of effect size (Cohen, 1988).

#### 4. Discussion

This study set out to investigate to what extent the variables of parental attitudes, self-esteem, irrational beliefs and need for social approval predict speech anxiety, and whether these variables have a mediator effect between parental attitudes and speech anxiety. The results showed linear relationships between variables, and all internal variables had a full mediator role in the relationship between parental attitudes and speech anxiety. This is consistent with the findings of studies in the literature investigating the relationship between parental attitudes, self-esteem, irrational beliefs, need for social approval and anxiety (Ersoy & Uğur, 2015; Güler & Çakır, 2013; Malouf et al., 1992; Thergaonkar & Wadkar, 2007; Türk et al., 2017).

According to the results of the study, mothers' democratic and authoritative attitudes directly predicted irrational beliefs, while indirectly predicting self-esteem, need for social approval and speech anxiety. The foundations of irrational beliefs are laid early in life. Behavioural patterns frequently repeated by adults' cause children to create a long-lasting perception of themselves and life after a while. As is argued in the attachment theory, the experiences of the child with his/her caregiver during infancy are cognitively and emotionally coded, processed and stored by the child (Bowlby, 1980, Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). These codes involve information related to real memories including individuals' interactions with the attachment figure, beliefs about themselves and others with whom they are in a relationship, how to regulate their feelings, and how to act in their relationships. This process that is described as the internal working model or the mental model of attachment directs the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals in later stages of life (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Child makes inferences by interpreting the behaviours and intentions of their caregivers. This affects the way they evaluate themselves and others (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). The first person a child

is attached to is his/her mother and the first interaction is usually with the mother as the primary caregiver. Especially in a patriarchal society like Turkey, it is often the mother that is seen as primarily responsible for children. These duties and responsibilities are regarded as those of the mother by both women and men (Turkey Statistical Institute TÜİK, 2014). The fact that the only variable predicting irrational beliefs among the findings of the study is mothers' attitudes is thought to be related to this context. Furthermore, mothers' authoritarian attitudes were found to be positively related to irrational beliefs. In other words, as mothers had more authoritative attitudes, their children tended to have more irrational beliefs. Adults' irrational beliefs about parenting affect their communication with their children when these adults have non-democratic parental attitudes. In their study, Türk et al. (2017) concluded that mothers' prescriptive attitudes and fathers' pessimistic/anxious attitudes were significant predictors of irrational beliefs. Parental behaviours with a safe, consistent and sharing attitude, in other words, a democratic attitude, are influential on children's development of rational beliefs. These parental behaviours play a supportive role for children to develop rational beliefs. Irrational beliefs that develop with negative parental attitudes bring about low self-esteem, the desire for approval by other people, and anxiety problems. In the present study, irrational beliefs, protective parental attitudes, and fathers' democratic attitudes were found to be direct predictors of self-esteem. However, mothers' protective attitudes affected self-esteem positively, whereas fathers' protective attitudes did the opposite. In studies investigating the effects of fathers' involvement in children's life and displaying a democratic attitude on their children's behaviour and emotional development (Aquilino, 2006; Doğruyol & Yetim, 2019; Flouri & Buchanan, 2003), it is concluded that the acceptance, love and approval of fathers positively affect children's self-confidence. Those studies that investigate how parental attitudes affect the psycho-social life of individuals at university level show that individuals raised by parents with democratic attitudes have higher psychological well-being, and internal and external adaptation (Çakır & Aydın, 2006; Eldeleklioğlu, 2007). Contrary to mothers' protective attitudes, the fact that fathers' protective attitudes have a negative effect on self-esteem indicates that there is a culture-specific aspect to this finding. Although there have been significant changes in family structures recently, mothers are attributed the role of protecting and caring for the child in the traditional Turkish family structure, while the role of providing authority at home and meeting economic needs is attributed to fathers. While mothers' restricting or preventing their children from doing something with potential harm is perceived as a sign of love, fathers' attempt to stop children to protect them pushes behind the authoritative, distant, assertive, and brave roles attributed to men (Onur, 2012). This seems to reflect negatively on individuals' self-esteem by suppressing their assertive side in childhood due to fathers' protective attitudes.

Individuals with irrational beliefs have problems in unconditional self-acceptance (Davies, 2007; Ellis, 2005). This is supported by the finding in this study that the need for social approval tended to increase with irrational beliefs. Children who are not accepted unconditionally by their parents in the family environment to which they are dependent

are expected to do what their parents want and live with their approval to go on with their lives. The pressure that parents feel on themselves towards bringing up children can negatively affect children's self-esteem (Çekiç, Akbaş & Hamamcı, 2016). Hauck (1967, as cited in Joyce, 2006 ) states that certain parental attitudes negatively affect both parents themselves and their children and lead to destructive emotions and self-sabotaging behaviours (Kaya et al., 2017). Anxiety disorders, substance abuse and self-esteem problems are related to parental attitudes (Karadayı, 1992; Yılmaz, 2001).

Another finding revealed in the study is that the need for social approval and self-esteem were direct predictors of speech anxiety while protective parental attitudes, fathers' democratic attitudes, and irrational beliefs were indirect predictors of speech anxiety. Although there has been a recent change in parents' expectations from their children towards them acting more independently with increasing levels of education in Turkey, those expectations of parents who have a traditional family structure and poor education mostly involve children being easy-going, peaceful and obedient (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2000; Mocan-Aydın, 2000; Yağmurlu et al., 2009). For individuals with relational self-perception, what others think becomes important (Tanhan & Mukba, 2014; Twenge & Im, 2007) and they tend to exhibit behaviours accepted by the society (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). The need for social approval is also a reflection of social acceptance. Behaviours compliant with social norms for acceptance encourage people to exhibit more perfectionist behaviours (Karaşar & Öğmiş, 2016b). They suffer from anxiety as reflections of their thoughts about being valued, liked and approved by others.

Ellis (1984) states that people would be disturbed not by things, but by their thoughts about those things. People can reach new and effective behavioural results and philosophical answers only when they question these irrational beliefs and maintain their rational beliefs (Ellis, 2005). There are studies showing that practices based on cognitive behavioural approach conducted with the participation of individuals from different age groups increase self-esteem and decrease irrational beliefs and anxiety (Bozanoğlu, 2005; Çivitci, 2005; Hamamcı, 2003; Keshavarz et al., 2012; Türküm, 2007; Yıkılmaz & Hamamcı, 2011). Clients are usually directed to realise their positive characteristics for the development of self-esteem (Verleur et al., 1986). One of the most important variables in individuals' psycho-social development and forming a balanced personality is parental attitudes. In the early stages of life, parents pass on their values, beliefs and attitudes to their children. Parental attitudes acquired in childhood are effective in individuals' forming perceptions towards themselves and others (Young et al., 2003). However, since interventions are not possible as these experiences occur, their reflections in the child's life manifest themselves later in his/her life. Moreover, the negative effects of these beliefs that become established in individuals' lives due to similar behaviours of family members will continue their existence unless they are questioned. Parents' behaviours have a significant effect on children and how their lives are shaped. In this context, adjusting unhealthy parental attitudes is of utmost importance before children reach adolescence or adulthood. At this point, psychological counsellors working in schools have important responsibilities. In early childhood education, it is necessary to support parents to

participate in their children's school life, increase the interaction between the home and school, and highlight the significance of family education. In cases where support cannot be provided in the early period, individuals can be supported especially with therapeutic approaches such as cognitive behavioural therapy and systemic family approaches to help clients change their thoughts and perspectives and reduce these anxieties, at least in the later stages of life, and by emphasising their positive characteristics.

The present study has its limitations as in all scientific endeavours. The data used in this study were collected from students studying at a university in Eastern Turkey. Different family structures are present across the country. In fact, each family has its own unique family structure. However, it is inevitable for people to be affected by the culture they live in since they are social beings. In different cultures, the roles of parents and the roles attributed to women and men differ. In this respect, varying levels of relationships can be reported between parental attitudes, and self-esteem, irrational beliefs, social approval and anxiety in a different study. Moreover, the finding that mothers' protective attitudes positively predict self-esteem, but fathers' same attitudes negatively predict this variable, suggests a possible effect of culture. Such issues can be addressed in different studies employing qualitative or mixed-method designs.

### **Acknowledgement**

This paper was presented as an oral presentation at the 16<sup>th</sup> International Primary Teacher Education Symposium in May 8-11, 2017.

### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

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