



## An Investigation of Consanguineous Marriages in Turkey Based on Research on Family Structure in Turkey 2006 and 2011 Data

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### ABSTRACT

This article is based on the 2006 and 2011 Research on Family Structure in Türkiye of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. The purpose is to investigate certain factors in consanguineous marriages and to compare consanguineous and non-consanguineous marriages to identify the perceived advantages that keep consanguineous marriages sustainable. The 2006 data includes 4412 individuals in consanguineous marriages, which constitutes 22% of the participants. The 2011 data includes 3902 individuals in consanguineous marriages, which constitutes 21% of the participants. Consanguineous and non-consanguineous marriages have been compared in terms of spouse selection, early marriage as well as marriage satisfaction factors including conflicts, problem solving, spending time together, disagreement in material issues, expectations on roles, and getting along with the family of the spouse. The results verify that, consanguineous marriages continue not only depend on sociological factors but also base on psychological factors.

**Keywords:** Consanguineous marriage, marriage, marriage problems, research on family structure, TURKSTAT

### Türkiye’de Akraba Evliliklerinin Türkiye Aile Yapısı Araştırması 2006 ve 2011 Yılı Verilerine Dayalı Olarak Çeşitli Evlilik Faktörleri Açısından İncelenmesi<sup>1</sup>

### ÖZET

Bu araştırma Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı, Aile ve Toplum Hizmetleri Genel Müdürlüğü’nün, Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) ile birlikte yürüttüğü 2006 yılı Türkiye Aile Yapısı Araştırması ve 2011 yılı Türkiye Aile Yapısı Araştırması verilerine dayanarak hazırlanmıştır. Araştırmanın amacı, Türkiye’deki akraba evliliklerinin evlilikle ilgili çeşitli faktörler açısından incelenmesi ve akraba evliliklerinin akraba olmayan evliliklerle çeşitli faktörler açısından kıyaslanarak, ne gibi avantajlar yüzünden sürdüğünün tespit edilebilmesidir. 2006 yılı verilerinde akraba evliliği yapanlar 4412 kişiyle, araştırmaya katılan grubun %22’sini oluşturmaktadır. 2011 yılı verilerinde akraba evliliği yapanlar 3902 kişiyle, araştırmaya katılan grubun %21’ini oluşturmaktadır. Akraba evlilikleriyle akraba olmayan

<sup>1</sup> This study is based on the data from the Research on Family Structure in Türkiye 2006 and 2011, jointly conducted by the General Directorate of Family and Community Services of the TR Ministry of Family and Social Policies and the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT).



evlilikler, eş seçimi ve evliliğin başlangıç aşaması, evlilik doyumunu belirleyen faktörlerden çatışma, problem çözme, birlikte zaman geçirme, maddi konularda anlaşmazlık, rol beklentileri, eşin ailesiyle anlaşabilme başlıklarında ele alınmıştır. Sonuçlar akraba evliliklerinin sadece sosyolojik değil, psikolojik faktörlere dayalı olarak da sürdüğünü doğrulamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Akraba evliliği, evlilik, evlilik problemleri, aile yapısı araştırması, TÜİK.

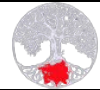
## INTRODUCTION

Consanguineous marriage, a type of marriage that is also common in Turkey, may be defined as a marriage between those persons who are in the same family through marriage relations, especially between cousins. While consanguineous marriages are very rare in industrialized Western societies, Turkey, alongside Asian and Muslim countries, is one of the countries where such marriages are common (Ökten, 2009; Ayan, Beder-Şen, Ünal and Yurtkuran, 2002).

According to Research on Family Structure in Türkiye 2006 data, 22.4% of marriages in Turkey are consanguineous marriages (Research on Family Structure in Türkiye 2006). According to the 2011 data, 21.3% of the married individuals had prior kinship with his/her first spouse. Consanguineous marriages continue to show a strong presence as one of the realities of family structure in Turkey. Nearly one in four persons have prior kinship relations with his/her spouse. In urban areas this ratio drops to 21.1%, whereas in rural areas the ratio goes up to 28.2% (Research on Family Structure in Türkiye 2011).

With the exception of Ankara, consanguineous marriages take place through the paternal line in Turkey. (Ayan, Beder-Şen, Ünal and Yurtkuran, 2001). The frequency of consanguineous marriages varies widely between regions and increases as one moves from west to east. According to the 2011 data, the rate of consanguineous marriages is 44.8% in Southeast Anatolia. This ratio is the lowest at 6.4% in the Marmara Region (Research on Family Structure in Türkiye 2011). The frequency of consanguineous marriages drop as education and quality of life levels increase. Urban groups that are raised and live in Turkey's developed areas exhibit a low ratio of consanguineous marriages (Ayan, Beder-Şen, Ünal and Yurtkuran, 2002; Zencir, 2005; Ökten, 2009).

The claim that children born to consanguineous marriages have a high probability of developing disabilities and birth defects is broadly supported by research (Kayahan et al. 2003; Zencir, 2005; Akbaba, Kis, Nazlıcan and Gündüz, 2012). The risk that a child born to a consanguineous marriage will be born with a disability or birth defect is 8-9%, twice that of the remaining population (Uskur, 2001). Why consanguineous marriages continue to exist despite the medical risks is a pressing research topic for science. Kinship is fundamentally a means to manage daily and local life (Tillion, 2006). Similar traditions may be thought as factors that make daily life easier. Coming from the same family means having the same traditions, and this makes life easier to manage. Considering the difficulties of the rural populations that make a living through husbandry and agriculture face, kinship emerges as a factor that may facilitate social solidarity.



In Southeast Anatolia, where consanguineous marriages are the most common, kinship is a strong bond that keeps family members together and that serves as the main context of social solidarity. The social structure of this region suggests that groups gain strength by establishing real or imagined blood ties to one another. Rules governing family and marriage are seen as the most important element contributing to the survival of the traditional structure. In the region where the preservation of the paternal line is the focus, marriage within the line is encouraged, first and foremost between the children of uncles. According to Ökten (2009), there is more than one political, economic, social and regional factor that encourages this type of marriage, which is common in the region.

While many sociological explanations are frequently articulated in order to explain why consanguineous marriages continue to be so prevalent, and such explanations include keeping certain clans out of a lineage, preventing the division of inherited land and property, strengthening the tribe, social, economic and political support, not paying dowry, reducing the likelihood of a divorce, guaranteeing basic support and solidarity, guaranteeing the honor and maidenhood of the women, securing the material and immaterial heritage as well as the future through compliance with traditional authority, geographical location, rural urban migration (Altuntek, 2001; Uskun, 2001; Fidaner, 2001; Tillion, 2006; Ökten, 2009; Teebi, 2010; Islam, 2012; Abdalla and Zaher, 2013;); psychological factors are insufficiently addressed.

Psychological factors that seem noteworthy, based on previous research, include the formation of a strong “us” perception, strengthening family bonds, the inflection of cognitive reality because of growing up with the imperative, “my bloodline must continue,” psychological support and solidarity within the family, strengthening family bonds, not wanting anyone outside the bloodline to benefit from the family wealth, the idea that someone from the same family would have an easier time coping in case of falling into poverty, that women would not move far from their hometown after marriage, that being cared for in old age is guaranteed, that youths have the easiest time interacting with members of the opposite sex in their own family because of the oppressive structure of the society, the family’s fear of opening up, the ease of adaptation between spouses who come from the same tradition, not distancing oneself from the original family as a result of marriage (Sezen, 2005; Tillion, 2006; Ökten, 2009a; Ökten, 2009b).

If we observe the global distribution of and the causes behind consanguineous marriages, the reported number of individuals in consanguineous marriages in the entire world is about 1.1 million, and one out of every three marriages of this kind are between cousins (Bittles, 2008; Teebi, 2010; Hamami et al., 2011; Islam, 2012). While marriage between cousins is the most common form of consanguineous marriage in our country, marriage between cousins is extremely rare in Germany. However, in parts of the world where immigration is common, such as Western Europe, North America and Oceania, this ratio increases (Bittles, 2008). According to “Geneva International Consanguinity Workshop Report”, (Hamami et al., 2001) consanguineous marriages are traditionally acceptable in especially North Africa, the Middle East and West Asia. In the band extending from Pakistan and South India in the East and



Morocco in the West, consanguineous marriages are more prevalent than 20%, in some regions, more prevalent than 50%. Consanguineous marriages are also common among the Christian communities living in Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine. According to the report, the marriages between first degree cousins are at 44-49% in Sudan, 25-42% in Saudi Arabia, 12-50% in Syria, 32-34% in Yemen, 29-33% in Iraq, 25-30% in Libya, 17-38% in Pakistan and 15-25% in Turkey. Over the last century, the ratio of consanguineous marriages has dropped sharply in Europe, North America and Japan (Hamamy et al., 2001). The reasons for the continuation of consanguineous marriages include, consanguineous marriages, especially between cousins, being a means of preservation of cultural values, preservation of family structure and wealth, ease of marriage arrangements, good relations between in-laws and material advantages pertaining to dowry. In the Middle East, the society supports consanguineous marriages. For Arab societies, consanguineous marriages are strongly believed to preserve the status of women and to help develop good relations between brides and mothers-in-law. (Islam, 2012; Abdalla and Zaher, 2013). Huang's (2005) research on marriages in the Asian countries shows that families have more influence in marriage decisions in Asian countries such as China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Malaysia and India.

The earliest studies on kinship in Turkey are monographic studies of villages. Later studies have followed the social and cultural dynamics of the country and, marriage and kinship have been studied in the context of a process of "change," where the defining problem has been the rural-urban migration from the 1950s onwards. Research after these years has focused on consanguineous marriages in the context of social organization. (Altuntek, 2001).

Today, consanguineous marriages are the subject of sociological, medical and anthropological research. Both the sources of information and the quality of information require an interdisciplinary approach (Ayan, Beder-Şen, Ünal and Yurtkuran, 2002). However, psychological processes are the least well represented in interdisciplinary research on consanguineous marriages. Although the medical consequences of consanguineous marriages are well known, there is almost no research on where these marriages stand within the social structure and on the reasons that support their existence (Ökten, 2009). One of the conclusions reached during the Geneva International Consanguinity Workshop, where international experts and consultants working on consanguineous marriages came together in 2011, was that the possible social advantages of consanguineous marriages needed verification in light of evidence-based research. During the workshop, the emphasis was not only on the risks involved in consanguineous marriages but also on the need for further research on the reasons for the continuation of these marriages (Hamamy et al., 2001). Consequently, we need comprehensive social and psychological research that investigates why these marriages continue to be prevalent in our country. State policy, social support and security, regional economic development and rising education levels do not cause these marriages to become less common. Although there are known risks of giving birth to disabled children who will lead life in disability, such marriages continue to be prevalent, and require us to understand the psychological gains involved in consanguineous marriages.



Marriage satisfaction is defined as the level of satisfaction and happiness derived from the relationship between couples (Holman, 2002; Harway, 2005; Nichols, 2005). The main factors determining marriage satisfaction are, (1) affection and love in marriage, (2) ability to work through problems, (3) ability to resolve conflicts, (4) spending time together, (5) agreement on material issues, (6) sexual satisfaction, (7) compatible understanding of roles and expectation, (8) getting along with parents of spouses, (9) not having problems with children (Bradbury, Fincham and Beach 2000; Chapin, Chapin and Sattler). Research that investigates consanguineous marriages based on these factors could be a substantial contribution to the literature. This research will try to compare and contrast consanguineous marriages and non-consanguineous marriages in terms of conflicts, problem solving, spending time together, disagreements regarding material issues, sexuality, roles and expectations and getting along with spouses' parents, which are factors involved in marriage satisfaction. Understanding the problems and perceived advantages in consanguineous marriages is essential to assessing why the society continues to support consanguineous marriages despite the risks. Such knowledge will provide key input for programs, projects and research that will inform, improve and develop new behavioral patterns in society. The path to reducing consanguineous marriages lies in determining the elements that make consanguineous marriages attractive and planning research that determine the substitutes for them.

In this context, the goal of this research is to compare consanguineous and non-consanguineous marriages according to various factors, and to understand what advantages contribute to the longevity of the former.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research is based on the data from the Research on Family Structure in Türkiye, conducted by the General Directorate of Family and Community Services of the TR Ministry of Family and Social Policies.

For the 2006 research, TURKSTAT designed the sample and executed the questionnaire among household individuals over 18 in households. The multi-phase, multi-layer and randomized sample has targeted rural and urban Turkey and represented NUTS<sup>2</sup> Level 1 (12 geographical zones) and the size of the sample was 14,380 households. The research covers 12,280 households. In these households, there were 24,647 over 18. In addition, the demographic information for each household member has been collected (n=48,235 household members).

TURKSTAT's multi-phase, multi-layer and randomized sample for the 2011 research has targeted rural and urban Turkey and represented NUTS Level 1 (12 geographical zones) as well

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<sup>2</sup> NUTS: Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics: The regions have been analyzed according to the NUTS, which is the European Union (EU) classification, criteria to make the data comparable to that drawn from the EU. After cities that have similar social, cultural and geographical similarities have been grouped together by taking population into account, 12 level 1 region units have been created. These 12 units are İstanbul, Western Marmara, Eastern Marmara, the Aegean, Western Black Sea, Eastern Black Sea, Western Anatolia, Central Anatolia, Northeastern Anatolia, Central-Eastern Anatolia, Southeastern Anatolia and the Mediterranean Region.



as Ankara and İzmir. The target sample size was 14,300 and was designed to represent rural and urban Turkey and NUTS Level 1. In order to ensure that the data was representative, 1045 additional households were surveyed in İzmir and 1155 households were surveyed in Ankara. Therefore, the total target sample was 16,500 households. As part of this research, information was collected from 12,056 households and 44,117 household members. Furthermore, detailed interviews have been conducted with 23,279 household members who were at and above 18 years old.

For both research projects, settlements whose populations were below 200, institutionalized populations which comprise approximately 3% of the population and include retirement homes, military barracks, hospitals, hotels and kindergartens and, nomadic populations have been excluded from the sample.

The data used in this research takes the question “do/did you have a kinship relationship with your spouse” as its basis and aims to compare consanguineous and non-consanguineous marriages. In the 2006 data, 4412 individuals or 22% of the total number of participants were in consanguineous marriages. In the 2011 data, 3902 individuals or 21% of the total number of participants were in consanguineous marriages.

### **Data Collection Tools**

The questionnaire used in the 2006 research has been prepared by the TR Ministry of Family and Social Policies , TURKSTAT and State Planning Organization experts. The questionnaire used in the 2011 research has been prepared by General Directorate of Family and Community Services of the TR Ministry of Family and Social Policies, TURKSTAT and State Planning Organization experts and academics and represents a revision of the 2006 questionnaire.

### **Fieldwork**

The fieldwork in 2006 has been conducted between June 10-August 8, 2006, and the fieldwork in 2011 has been conducted between August-October 2011.

The fieldwork has been done as face to face interviews using tablet computers. In order to prevent individuals from being influenced by other household members, pollster teams of two have visited the households and conducted interviews such that household members could not hear one another’s answers.

### **Data Analysis**

The data has been evaluated using SPSS 19 software. The data is qualitatively defined. In order to see whether the difference between observed and expected frequencies were significant; the





Chi-Square Test has been used. The significance level has been set at 0.05, where  $p < 0.05$  is taken to mean that there was a significant dependence or relation (Büyüköztürk, 2002).

## Findings

The first section under this heading deals with general demographic variables and then observes the differences between consanguineous and non-consanguineous marriages in terms of spouse selection and early marriage, and in terms of conflict, problem solving, spending time together, conflict regarding material issues, roles and expectations, and relations with spouse's family, which are factors that determine marriage satisfaction. Since the data is very large, the questions where the answers given are not significantly dependent on marriage types have been excluded.<sup>3</sup>

If we are to approach the data in terms of demographic information, the 2006 data involved 24647 individuals. According to data, 4412 (22%) individuals were in consanguineous marriages. Of these individuals, 53.3% were female (2353 people) and 46.7% were male (2059 people). The 2011 involved 23379 individuals and 3902 (21%) individuals were in consanguineous marriages. Of these individuals, 53% were female (2076 people) and 47% were male (1826 people). The chi-square test on the sample individuals in both 2006 and 2011 shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between type of residential area (2006:  $X^2$ : 83.960, sd:1,  $p < .001$ ; 2011:  $X^2$ : 51.759, sd: 1,  $p < .001$ ), region (2006:  $X^2$ : 817.436, sd: 11,  $p < .001$ ; 2011:  $X^2$ : 840.041, sd: 11,  $p < .001$ ), age groups (2006:  $X^2$ : 17.062, sd:5,  $p < .01$ ; 2011:  $X^2$ : 28.423, sd: 5,  $p < .001$ ), education levels (2006:  $X^2$ : 426.393, sd: 5,  $p < .001$ ; 2011:  $X^2$ : 367.144) and marriage types. Based on these results, it has been found that the ratio of individuals in consanguineous marriages who lived in urban areas was higher than the ratio of individuals who were not in consanguineous marriages. (2006:56.7 %; 2011: % 65.3). According to the 2006 data, consanguineous marriages were most prevalent in the Mediterranean Region(% 14.1) and Southeast Anatolia (% 14.0), whereas according to the 2011 data, the highest prevalence was in Southeast Anatolia (% 15,6) and the Mediterranean Region (% 14.0). For both years, the lowest incidence of consanguineous marriage was in the Western Marmara Region (2006:% 1, 2011: % 1.7). According to the 2006 data, the age bracket where consanguineous marriages were most prevalent was 25-34 (%25.3). According to the 2011 data, this bracket was 35-44 (%22.6). The prevalence might have gone up an age bracket because of the five years that passed between the two polls. When we compare the two sets of data, illiteracy in consanguineous marriages was at 19.6% in 2006 and at 14.5% in 2011. For both years, illiteracy among consanguineous spouses was more prevalent than among non-consanguineous partners (%8.3 in 2001). Both brackets comprise mostly of primary school graduates while non-

<sup>3</sup> Since the research covers two separate years and includes a large amount of data, some data have been excluded from the tables. Interested researchers may contact the author in order to access other data tables.



consanguineous marriages have a higher percentage of high school degree or higher level of education.

The answers given to the question of “how do you address the basic needs of your household with your income” in 2006, individuals who claimed to have poor livelihood were 37.7% in consanguineous marriages and 34.1% in non-consanguineous marriages. Individuals who selected the very poor livelihood box were 17.6% in consanguineous marriages and 14.6% in non-consanguineous marriages. In 2011, the answer of “how well off do you think your family is with your monthly income”, individuals who perceived their family as being poor were higher in consanguineous marriages (19.8%) than in non-consanguineous marriages (15.9%) (2006:  $X^2=89.307$ ;  $p<.001$ ; 2011:  $X^2=38.174$ ;  $p<.001$ ).

In 2006, the participants were asked the age at which they got married. The chi-square test suggests that there is a statistically significant difference between the answers given to the question “When did you first get married” and the type of marriage ( $X^2=344.297$ ;  $sd:4$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The data shows that marriage before 18 was more prevalent in consanguineous marriages (26%) than in non-consanguineous marriages (17.6%). Furthermore, the method of marriage (2006:  $X^2: 217.467$ ,  $sd:6$ ,  $p<.001$  ; 2011:  $X^2=173.649$ ;  $p<.001$ ), the type of officiation (2006:  $X^2: 142.159$ ,  $sd: 3$ ,  $p<.001$  ; 2011:  $X^2=: 28.206$ ;  $p<.001$ ), whether or not there was a dowry (2006:  $X^2: 371.384$ ,  $sd: 1$ ,  $p<.001$ ; 2011:  $X^2: 3.542$ ;  $p<.05$ ) also have statistically significant difference with the type of marriage, based on the chi-square analysis. Arranged marriages, marriages decided by the family and non-voluntary marriages were more prevalent in consanguineous marriages (39.4%) than in non-consanguineous marriages (28.9%). The same result was 12% in the 2011 data. The large discrepancy in the data might be because the question asked in 2011 was clearer because of the added expression (non-voluntary). In any case, non-voluntary marriages arranged by families are higher in consanguineous marriages. Both the 2006 data and the 2011 data suggest that dowry payments were more prevalent in consanguineous marriages (2006: consanguineous marriages: %27.5; non- consanguineous marriages: %15; 2011: consanguineous marriages: %24.3; non- consanguineous marriages: %13.2).

Furthermore, more individuals in consanguineous marriages responded positively to the question “do you think consanguineous marriages are acceptable?” (%36,  $X^2: 2433.803$ ,  $sd:1$ ,  $p<.001$ ) than did individuals in non-consanguineous marriages (7.1%) in the 2006 data. This percentage in the 2011 data was 35.9% ( $X^2:1954.945$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The most popular response to the question “Why should there be consanguineous marriages? Please indicate the most important reason” was “knowing and preserving the family roots,” which accounted for 37.9% of the answers in 2006 and 37.6% in 2011. The second most popular response was “because related children get along better,” which accounted for 30% of the answers in 2006 and 24% in 2011. Another remarkable result was the response to the 2006 question “What should couples that cannot have children through medical means do?” 22.8% of the individuals in consanguineous marriages responded “adopting a related child.” This response accounts for 18% ( $X^2: 229.680$ ,  $sd: 6$ ,  $p<.001$ ) of the responses among individuals in non-consanguineous marriages.





Furthermore, the chi-square analysis shows that there is a significant statistical difference between the responses to the 2006 question “How determinant is your religious belief in selecting a spouse?” and marriage type ( $X^2=160.306$   $p<.001$ ). Individuals in consanguineous marriages who think that religious belief is very important were higher (47.1%) than individuals in non-consanguineous marriages (39.5%). When asked whether men could marry someone from a different religion in 2011 ( $X^2=70.786$   $p<.001$ ), more individuals in consanguineous marriages gave a negative response (59.3%), than did individuals in non-consanguineous marriages (42.5%). When asked whether women could marry someone from a different religion in 2011 ( $X^2=85.315$   $p<.001$ ), more individuals in consanguineous marriages gave a negative response (63.8%), than did individuals in non-consanguineous marriages (49%).

The data in the following table is informative regarding the conflict sub-dimension of marriage satisfaction.

Table 1. Chi-Square Analyses for Conflict in Marriage and Marriage Type

Conflict in Marriage		2006				2011			
		Consanguineous		Non-Consanguineous		Consanguineous		Non-Consanguineous	
		N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Household Chores and Childcare	Never	2662	65.1	8614	61.8	2,287	64.8%	7,577	59.6%
	Sometimes	1277	31.2	4783	34.3	1,042	29.5%	3,972	31.2%
	Frequently	93	2.3	379	2.7	70	2.0%	376	3.0%
	N/A	56	1.4	174	1.3	130	3.7%	791	6.2%
		$X^2: 17.218; sd: 3; p<.01$				$X^2: 55.896; sd: 3; p<.001$			
Style**	Never	3,513	85.9	11,835	84.8	-	-	-	-
	Sometimes	498	12.2	1,772	12.7	-	-	-	-
	Frequently	40	1.0	255	1.8	-	-	-	-
	N/A	37	.9	87	.6	-	-	-	-
		$X^2: 18.719; sd: 3; p<.001$							
Jealousy	Never	3,601	74.9	9,624	72.5	3,022	85.9%	10,689	83.9%
	Sometimes	914	18.9	2,754	20.6	374	10.6%	1,581	12.4%
	Frequently	161	3.1	505	3.8	56	1.6%	259	2.0%
	N/A	154	3.2	402	3.0	68	1.9%	207	1.6%
		$X^2: 12.499; sd: 3; p<.01$				$X^2: 12.868; sd: 3; p<.05$			
Cultural*** Differences	Never	-	-	-	-	3,323	94.1%	11,761	92.4%
	Sometimes	-	-	-	-	86	2.4%	481	3.8%
	Frequently	-	-	-	-	11	.3%	71	.6%
	N/A	-	-	-	-	111	3.1%	416	3.3%
						$X^2: 18.633; sd: 3; p<.001$			
Personality*** Differences	Never	-	-	-	-	3,283	93.0%	11,442	89.9%
	Sometimes	-	-	-	-	181	5.1%	1,018	8.0%
	Frequently	-	-	-	-	21	.6%	105	.8%
	N/A	-	-	-	-	45	1.3%	158	1.2%
						$X^2: 35.728; sd: 3; p<.001$			

\* Expressed just as childcare in 2011 data.

\*\* There is no significant difference between answers to this question and marriage type in 2011 data.

\*\*\*2006 data does not include this question.



As it can be read from the table (Table 1), individuals who claimed never to have problems in household chores and childcare, style, jealousy, cultural differences and personality differences were higher in consanguineous marriages than in non-consanguineous marriages.

Furthermore, the chi-square analysis of the 2011 data on the responses given to the question “do you have problems with your spouse in matters of political opinion” have a significant statistical difference with marriage type ( $X^2=38.463$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Those who claim never to have problems are higher in consanguineous marriages (97%) than in non-consanguineous marriages (94%).

The problem-solving factor in marriage, which is another indicator of marriage satisfaction, can be analyzed using the following data.

*Table 2. Chi-Square Analyses Results for Problem Solving and Marriage Type*

Problem Solving (What do you do when you run into a problem with your spouse that you cannot resolve by talking?)		2006				2011			
		Consanguineous		Non-Consanguineous		Consanguineous		Non-Consanguineous	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>I raise my voice*</b>	Frequently	862	21.1	3,142	22.5	-	-	-	-
	Sometimes	1,319	32.3	4,981	35.7	-	-	-	-
	Very Rarely	481	11.8	1,715	12.3	-	-	-	-
	Never	1,426	34.9	4,112	29.5	-	-	-	-
		$X^2; 44.476$ sd: 3; $p<.001$							
<b>I resort to violence*</b>	Frequently	21	.5	56	.4	-	-	-	-
	Sometimes	101	2.5	212	1.5	-	-	-	-
	Very Rarely	126	3.1	343	2.5	-	-	-	-
	Never	3,840	93.9	13,340	95.6	-	-	-	-
		$X^2; 23.088$ sd: 3; $p<.001$							
<b>I remain silent</b>	Frequently	1,367	33.4	4,373	31.3	657	18.6%	2019	15.8%
	Sometimes	1,266	31.0	4,596	32.9	1391	39.4%	5200	40.8%
	Very Rarely	454	11.1	1,447	10.4	-	-	-	-
	Never	1,002	24.5	3,534	25.3	1477	41.9%	5527	43.4%
		$X^2; 13.231$ , sd: 3; $p<.01$				$X^2; 15.733$ , sd: 2; $p<.001$			
<b>I leave the room**</b>	Never	-	-	-	-	2,827	80.0	9,716	76.2
	Sometimes	-	-	-	-	617	17.5	2,599	20.4
	Frequently	-	-	-	-	87	2.5	430	3.4
						$X^2; 24.386$ , sd: 2; $p<.001$			
<b>I leave the house**</b>	Never	-	-	-	-	3,399	96.3	12,202	95.7
	Sometimes	-	-	-	-	120	3.4	437	3.4
	Frequently	-	-	-	-	12	.3	106	.8
						$X^2; 9.312$ , sd: 2; $p<.05$			
<b>I separate my bed***</b>	Never	-	-	-	-	3,367	95.5%	12,037	94.5%
	Sometimes	-	-	-	-	137	3.9%	587	4.6%
	Frequently	-	-	-	-	20	.6%	108	.8%
						$X^2; 6.293$ , sd: 2; $p<.05$			

\* There is no significant difference between answers to this question and marriage type in 2011 data.

\*\* There is no significant difference between answers to this question and marriage type in 2006 data.

\*\*\*2006 data does not include this point.



As it is clear in the table (Table 2), the chi-square analysis reveals that there is a significant statistical difference between the type of marriage and raising voice, resorting to violence and remaining silent in the 2006 data on reactions to problems with spouse and, remaining silent, leaving the room, leaving the house and separating the bed in the 2011 data on reactions to problems with spouse. According to the 2006 data, those who never raise their voice to their spouse are higher in consanguineous marriages (34.9%) than in non-consanguineous marriages (33.4%). However, those who say they never resort to violence are higher in non-consanguineous marriages (95.6%) than in consanguineous marriages (93.9%). Consanguineous marriages also have a higher incidence of occasional or rare violence than do non-consanguineous marriages. According to the 2011 data, those who never remain silent are higher in non-consanguineous marriages (43.4%). Of individuals who are in consanguineous marriages, 80% say they never leave the room, 96.3% say they never leave the house and 95.5% say they never separate the bed. These percentages are lower in non-consanguineous marriages.

The following table summarizes the alleged reactions of the spouses in the event of a conflict.

As it can be seen from the table (Table 3), individuals in consanguineous marriages more frequently responded to the 2006 questionnaire that their spouses never raised their voice (38.2%) and frequently remained silent (32.2%), never got cross with (57.9%), never left the room (86.8%), never broke things (96.9%), never separated his/her bed (96.2%) than did individuals in non-consanguineous marriages. However, the percentage of individuals who said that their spouse never resorted to violence is higher in non-consanguineous marriages (95.1%) than in consanguineous marriages.

When we look at the 2006 data regarding spending time together, the chi-square analysis reveals that there is a significant statistical difference between the responses to going out to eat, going out for a picnic, going to the movies/theater and marriage type (going out to eat :  $X^2=255.810$ ;  $p<.001$ ; picnic:  $X^2=105.705$ ;  $p<.001$ ; movie-theater:  $X^2=200.406$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Individuals who say they never go out to eat as a family (79.1%), never go out for picnics (57.5%) and never go to movies/theater (91.8%) are higher in consanguineous marriages. These percentages are lower in non-consanguineous marriages (going out to eat: %66,5; picnic: %48,8; movie-theater: %83,2).

When we look at the 2011 data, there is a significant statistical difference between certain social activities, which is a determining factor in marriage satisfaction, and marriage type. A higher percentage of individuals in consanguineous marriages say that they never go out to the movies/theater (87.2%) than in non-consanguineous marriages 76.4) ( $X^2=221.400$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Furthermore, when individuals were asked whether they played cards, backgammon, video games and similar games at home, a higher percentage of individuals in consanguineous marriages said “never” (88.7%) than did in non-consanguineous marriages (81.2%) ( $X^2=124.791$ ;  $p<.001$ ).



Table 3. Chi-Square Analyses Results for Spouse' Problem Solving and Marriage Type

Problem Solving  (What does <u>your spouse</u> do when you run into a problem with your spouse that you cannot resolve by talking?)		2006				2011			
		Consanguineous		Non-Consanguineous		Consanguineous		Non-Consanguineous	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Raises Voice*	Frequently	879	21.5	3,197	22.9	-	-	-	-
	Sometimes	1,239	30.3	4,429	31.8	-	-	-	-
	Very Rarely	410	10.0	1,572	11.3	-	-	-	-
	Never	1,561	38.2	4,752	34.1	-	-	-	-
		<b>X<sup>2</sup>: 24.646; sd: 3; p&lt;.001</b>							
gets cross with*	Frequently	290	7.1	1,271	9.1	-	-	-	-
	Sometimes	993	24.3	3,249	23.3	-	-	-	-
	Very Rarely	436	10.7	1,367	9.8	-	-	-	-
	Never	2,369	57.9	8,062	57.8	-	-	-	-
		<b>X<sup>2</sup>: 18.596; sd: 3; p&lt;.001</b>							
Resorts to violence*	Frequently	22	.6	90	.6	-	-	-	-
	Sometimes	99	2.4	258	1.8	-	-	-	-
	Very Rarely	138	3.4	338	2.4	-	-	-	-
	Never	3,828	93.6	13,264	95.1	-	-	-	-
		<b>X<sup>2</sup>: 17.387; sd: 3; p&lt;.01</b>							
Remains silent	Frequently	1,318	32.2	4,229	30.3	502	14.2	1541	12.1
	Sometimes	1,266	31.0	4,673	33.5	1273	36.1	4673	36.7
	Very Rarely	471	11.5	1,471	10.5	-	-	-	-
	Never	1,034	25.3	3,576	25.6	1750	49.6	6525	51.2
		<b>X<sup>2</sup>: 12.897; sd: 3; p&lt;.01</b>				<b>X<sup>2</sup>: 11.699; sd: 2; p&lt;.00 p&lt;.01</b>			
Leaves the room**	Never	-	-	-	-	3,059	86.7	10,473	82.2
	Sometimes	-	-	-	-	422	11.9	1,945	15.3
	Frequently	-	-	-	-	49	1.4	319	2.5
		<b>X<sup>2</sup>: 42.639; sd: 2; p&lt;.001</b>							
Leaves the house**	Never	-	-	-	-	3,424	97.0%	12,289	96.5%
	Sometimes	-	-	-	-	93	2.6%	360	2.8%
	Frequently	-	-	-	-	12	.4%	90	.7%
		<b>X<sup>2</sup>: 6.368; sd: 2; p&lt;.05</b>							
Breaks things***	Never	-	-	-	-	3,421	97.0%	12,215	95.9%
	Sometimes	-	-	-	-	90	2.6%	442	3.5%
	Frequently	-	-	-	-	17	.5%	76	.6%
		<b>X<sup>2</sup>: 8.098; sd: 2; p&lt;.05</b>							
Separates his/her bed***	Never	-	-	-	-	3,381	96.0%	12,108	95.3%
	Sometimes	-	-	-	-	112	3.2%	519	4.1%
	Frequently	-	-	-	-	29	.8%	82	.6%
		<b>X<sup>2</sup>: 7.226; sd: 2; p&lt;.05</b>							

\* There is no significant difference between answers to this question and marriage type in 2011 data.

\*\* There is no significant difference between answers to this question and marriage type in 2006 data.

\*\*\*2006 data does not include this question.

The following data should give an idea regarding disagreements regarding material issues, which are another determining factor in marriage satisfaction.



Table 4. Chi-Square Analyses Results for Disagreements regarding Material Issues and Marriage Type

Disagreements regarding Material Issues		Consanguineous		Non-Consanguineous	
		n	%	n	%
<b>2006*</b>  <b>Do you have disagreements with your spouse regarding expenses?</b>	Never	2,724	66.6	9,338	66.9
	Sometimes	1,183	28.9	4,098	29.4
	Frequently	153	3.7	461	3.3
	N/A	30	.7	53	.4
		<b>X<sup>2</sup>: 10.636; sd: 3; p&lt;.05</b>			
<b>2011**</b>  <b>Insufficient Income</b>	Never	2,319	65.7%	8,741	68.7%
	Sometimes	927	26.2%	3,161	24.8%
	Frequently	255	7.2%	713	5.6%
	N/A	31	.9%	111	.9%
		<b>X<sup>2</sup>: 18.048; sd: 3; p&lt;.001</b>			

\* There is no significant difference between answers to this question and marriage type in 2011 data.

\*\*2006 data does not include this question.

The results show that individuals in consanguineous marriages are more frequently in disagreement with their spouses regarding material issues. Those who frequently have problems with expenses and insufficient income are more common in consanguineous marriages than in non- consanguineous marriages.

Another important factor that contributes to the health of a marriage is roles and expectations or sharing of roles (Gladding, 2002). When we evaluate the 2006 data from this perspective, the chi-square analysis reveals that there is a significant statistical difference between the responses to question “Who does the various household chores?” and marriage type. According to the answers to the question on who provides childcare in 2006 data, the mothers in consanguineous marriages are more frequently in charge of infant daycare (97.9%) than are mothers in non-consanguineous marriages (90.5%). While 0.6% of the responses from individuals in non-consanguineous marriages show that the father is in charge, this percentage is 0 in consanguineous marriages. (X<sup>2</sup>=51.802; p<.001). Individuals in consanguineous marriages more frequently say that other chores are shared between household members. For example, for ironing (X<sup>2</sup>=57.570; p<.001) 11.6% of the individuals in consanguineous marriages and 9.4% of the individuals in non-consanguineous marriages say that they share these chores with other household members. Laundry, even with a machine, (X<sup>2</sup>= 21.559, p<.0) is a shared duty for 9.6% of the individuals in consanguineous marriages and for 7.7% of the individuals in non-consanguineous marriages.

However, when we turn to duties regarding expenses, the situation changes. Men are more frequently in charge of spending, e.g.: More individuals in consanguineous marriages (43.1%)



think that daily grocery shopping ( $X^2=144,868$ ;  $p<.001$ ) is mostly the man's duty than do individuals in non-consanguineous marriages (33.5%). Regarding monthly bills ( $X^2=78.457$ ,  $p<.001$ ), more individuals in consanguineous marriages think that it's the man's duty (78.2%) than do individuals in non-consanguineous marriages (72.2%). The pattern is similar for purchasing decisions; more individuals in consanguineous marriages think that it's the man's decision (27.3%) than do individuals in non-consanguineous marriages (18.2%) ( $X^2=178.951$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

The responses to the question "Why shouldn't women work?" in the 2011 data also displays a significant statistical difference with marriage type ( $X^2=32.336$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Individuals who responded that the "primary duties of the woman are household chores and caring for the children" were higher among consanguineous marriages (63.7%) than among non-consanguineous marriages (54.7%).

The data that might help compare the extended family relations in consanguineous and non-consanguineous marriages can be found below.

*Table 5. Chi-Square Analyses Results for Relations with Relatives and In-Laws and Marriage Type*

Relations with Relatives and In-Laws		2006				2011			
		Consanguineous		Non-Consanguineous		Consanguineous		Non-Consanguineous	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Who makes the decisions in relationships with the extended family?*	Male	1,053	23.9	2,450	16.0	-	-	-	-
	Female	449	10.2	1,893	12.3	-	-	-	-
	Household members	2,910	66.0	10,984	71.7	-	-	-	-
		$X^2; 149.428$ ; sd: 2; $p<.001$							
How would you assess your relationships with the extended family?*	None/Deceased	43	1.0	145	.9	-	-	-	-
	Very Good	1,017	23.1	3,268	21.3	-	-	-	-
	Good	2,984	67.6	10,347	67.5	-	-	-	-
	Average	328	7.4	1,378	9.0	-	-	-	-
	Bad	32	.7	144	.9	-	-	-	-
	Very Bad	7	.2	45	.3	-	-	-	-
How would you assess your relationship with your mother-in-law?		$X^2; 18.490$ ; sd: 5; $p<.01$							
	None/Deceased	1,669	37.8	5,364	35.0	1273	36.0	5209	32.9
	Very Good	833	18.9	2,741	17.9	618	17.5	2351	18.4
	Good	1,667	37.8	6,228	40.6	1378	38.9	5130	40.1
	Average	179	4.1	680	4.4	201	5.7	795	6.2
	Bad	52	1.2	216	1.4	42	1.2	152	1.2





	Very Bad	13	.3	98	.6	27	.8	143	1.1
		$X^2$ ; 26.264; sd: 5; $p<.001$				$X^2$ ; 14.641; sd: 5; $p<.05$			
How would you assess your relationship with your father-in-law?*	None/Deceased	2,317	52.5	7,426	48.5	-	-	-	-
	Very Good	612	13.9	2,189	14.3	-	-	-	-
	Good	1,305	29.6	4,938	32.2	-	-	-	-
	Average	128	2.9	501	3.3	-	-	-	-
	Bad	40	.9	196	1.3	-	-	-	-
	Very Bad	10	.2	76	.5	-	-	-	-
		$X^2$ ; 30.542; sd: 5; $p<.001$				-			
How would you assess your relationship with your other in-laws?	None/Deceased	78	1.8	412	2.7	-	-	-	-
	Very Good	832	18.8	2,684	17.5	-	-	-	-
	Good	3,065	69.5	10,361	67.6	-	-	-	-
	Average	371	8.4	1,536	10.0	-	-	-	-
	Bad	55	1.3	250	1.6	-	-	-	-
	Very Bad	11	.3	84	.5	-	-	-	-
		$X^2$ ; 35.783; sd: 5; $p<.001$				-			
How often do you see your mother-in-law/father-in-law?	Everyday	605	22.7	1,777	18.2	-	-	-	-
	Several times a week	618	23.2	2,540	26.0	-	-	-	-
	Several times a month	603	22.7	2,397	24.5	-	-	-	-
	Several times a year	758	28.5	2,700	27.6	-	-	-	-
	Never	78	2.9	371	3.8	-	-	-	-
		$X^2$ ; 36.854; sd: 4; $p<.001$				-			
How often do you see your mother-in-law?	Never	-	-	-	-	52	2.3%	215	2.5%
	Several times a year	-	-	-	-	655	29.3%	2,218	26.2%
	Several times a month	-	-	-	-	611	27.4%	2,549	30.1%
	Several times a week	-	-	-	-	458	20.5%	2,082	24.5%
	Everyday	-	-	-	-	457	20.5%	1,417	16.7%
		-				$X^2$ ; 37.746; sd: 4; $p<.001$			
How often do you see your father-in-law?	Never	-	-	-	-	44	2.6%	185	2.8%
	Several times a year	-	-	-	-	524	30.3%	1,747	26.8%
	Several times a month	-	-	-	-	487	28.1%	1,955	30.0%
	Several times a week	-	-	-	-	355	20.5%	1,630	25.0%
	Everyday	-	-	-	-	321	18.5%	1,004	15.4%
		-				$X^2$ ; 27.922; sd: 4; $p<.001$			

\*2011 data does not include this question..

\*\* There is no significant difference between answers to this question and marriage type in 2011 data.

As is clear from the table (Table 5), the 2006 data shows that 23.9% of individuals in consanguineous marriages said men when asked “who makes the decisions in relationships with the extended family.” This percentage is 16% in non-consanguineous marriages. Those who assess their relationships with extended family to be “very good” are higher in consanguineous marriages (23.1%) than in non-consanguineous marriages (21.3%). Those who responded “very good” to the question “How would you assess your relationship with your mother in law,” which was present in both questionnaires, were 18.9% in consanguineous marriages and 17.5% in non-consanguineous marriages. Those who responded “good” were 40.1% in non-



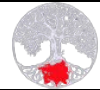
consanguineous marriages. This percentage is 38.9% in consanguineous marriages. In 2006, those who assessed their relationship with their father in law as being good were 32.2% in non-consanguineous marriages. This percentage is 29.6% in consanguineous marriages. In 2006, those who said that they saw their mother-in-law/father-in-law everyday were 22.7% in consanguineous marriages. This percentage is 18.2% in non-consanguineous marriages. Likewise, the 2011 data shows that, the rate of respondents who claim that they see their mothers-in-law everyday is higher in consanguineous marriages (20.5%) than in non-consanguineous marriages (16.7%). The frequency of seeing the father-in-law is higher in consanguineous marriages (18.5%) than in non-consanguineous marriages (15.4%).

In addition to this data, the chi-square analysis of the answers to the 2006 question “To which direction do you think family relations are going in our society” and marriage type reveals that there is a significant statistical difference ( $X^2=157.931$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Those who say that the outlook is negative were higher in non-consanguineous marriages (57.3%) than in consanguineous marriages (47.3%). Likewise, those who think that Turkey’s EU membership would make things worse are higher in non-consanguineous marriages (29.7%) than in consanguineous marriages (24.7%) ( $X^2=112.846$ ;  $p<.001$ ).

## CONCLUSION

According to the research, 22.4% of marriages in 2006 were consanguineous, while this percentage was 21.3% in 2011. This data is consistent with the Geneva International Consanguinity Workshop Report. The map published by the workshop suggests that consanguineous marriages in Turkey are in the 20-29% bracket (Hamami et al., 2011).

People in consanguineous marriages in our country mostly reside in the rural areas, are between 35 and 44 years old, mostly have primary school education and rarely have higher education degrees, live in all parts of Turkey, but mostly in Southeast Anatolia and the Mediterranean Region, and often have poor livelihoods. Previous research on our country shows that there is a difference between consanguineous marriage and low levels of education for women, and that an improvement in the quality of life leads to decline in consanguineous marriages (Ayan, Beder-Şen, Ünal, Yurtkuran, 2001; Çiçeklioğlu et al., 2013). Research on the Middle East and Arab countries shows that while consanguineous marriages in these countries are much more prevalent in these countries than they are in ours, improvement in women’s education and female participation in the work force are leading to a decline in consanguineous marriages in Jordan, Lebanon, Bahrain and in certain parts of Palestine (Islam, 2012). Bhagya, Sucharitha and Ramakrishna’s (2013) interviews with 1164 women in Mangalore, a region in India where consanguineous were prevalent, shows that there was a remarkable decline in consanguineous marriages as levels of women’s education and socio-economic status improved and families’ control mechanisms over marriages lost their effect. Tezcan and Coşkun’s (2004) 1978 Turkey Fertility Research (TFR-1978) and 2003 Turkey Population and Health Research (TPHR-2003) data sets investigate the changes in certain basic parameters in marriage and show that the age of first marriage is low among the less-educated, rural populations and in consanguineous marriages and that women who are less educated, live in rural areas, are married at a young age, live within the extended family, have a mother tongue other than Turkish, and are in



consanguineous marriages have a greater tendency to have only religious officiation of marriage than do other women. Foreign literature also shows similar trends.

According to the research, <18 marriages are more prevalent in consanguineous marriages. Research on Diyarbakır shows that 48% of <18 marriages are consanguineous (Sır, Kaya, Kaya and Bez, 2012).

The research also shows that family-arranged marriages are more prevalent in consanguineous marriages. Previous research also suggests that parents and relatives are influential in consanguineous marriages (Fidaner, 2001). Ayan et al. (2001) show in their research on Ankara that the majority of the individuals in consanguineous marriages show traditional behavior and believe that they are the main decision-making mechanism in their children's marriages. Those who say "Our family decided and we approved" are 55% and those who say "my family decided without consulting me" are 12%. Tunç's (2004) research on 200 women in Van shows that consanguineous marriages constitute 34.01% of the marriages. The research also shows that traditional marriages that are decided on by families and relatives, rather than between spouses, continue to be prevalent, and that nearly half (51%) of the women said that family and relatives decided on her spouse. Another research on Pakistan shows that families continue to be the top decision-making mechanism in selecting the spouses in consanguineous marriages (Hussain, 1999). However, research on societies where spouse selection is made freely and where people are allowed to follow their own inclinations very rarely marry someone from their family (Timur, 1972).

The research shows that individuals in consanguineous marriages believe that consanguineous marriages help preserve family roots and that they have a higher likelihood of getting along with their spouses in consanguineous marriages. Based on these ideas, they are more approving of consanguineous marriages. One research on consanguineous in Turkey asked participating men and women whether they were *happy to be in a consanguineous marriage*. 80% of the women responded in the affirmative, 72% said that they love and get along with their spouses while 28% said that they were glad to have married someone familiar, that they would rather marry someone familiar than marry a stranger. 83% of the men are happy to be consanguineous marriages. 87% of the men in consanguineous marriages say that they love their spouse, while 13% say that it is important to continue family traditions. As levels of education and quality of life increase, the frequency of consanguineous marriages decline (Ayan, Beder-Şen, Ünal, Yurtkuran, 2001). Ayan et al.'s (2001) research on Ankara asks men and women "why they prefer consanguineous marriage." 42% of the women preferred a consanguineous marriage because they knew and trusted their spouse before they got married, 34% said they loved their spouses and 19% said that they did not want a stranger in their families. Women and men were also asked whether they were "glad to be in a consanguineous marriage." The vast majority of the women (80%) are glad to be in a consanguineous marriage. Among women who are glad to be in consanguineous marriages, the main reasons are loving and getting along with their spouses (72%) and, being familiar with their spouses and thinking that marrying a stranger could have been worse (28%). 83% of the men were happy to be in consanguineous marriages. Of these men, 87% said that they loved and got along well with their spouses and 13% said that it was important to continue family traditions. Based on this research, scholars claim that immaterial culture, such as familiarity and mutual trust, replace material concerns such as not dividing the family wealth, which lies at the foundation of consanguineous marriages. However, one research on Düzce, Yığılca conducted with 274 female participants shows that one out of five participants believes that consanguineous marriage will not lead to disabilities in their

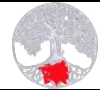


babies or has no opinion on this matter (Mayda et al. 2010). Considering this result, we could say that our society is generally uninformed about the risks involved in consanguineous marriages. This lack of information should be considered as part of adult education (Tavukçu and İrgil, 2008; Mayda et al. 2010 ; Ayan, Beder-Şen, Ünal and Yurtkuran 2002; Çiçekçioğlu et al., 2013). The improvement of the general level of education and informing the general population about genetic diseases causes such marriages to drop below 0.3% and even lower in large cities (Uskur, 2001).

Another determining factor in consanguineous marriages is similarities in religious belief. More people in consanguineous marriages believe that religion is a determining factor in selecting a spouse. In such cases, consanguineous marriages appear to be a factor that guarantees compatibility of religious belief. Research on Muslims in Pakistan shows that similarity of religious beliefs is one of the primary factors that contribute to the continuity of consanguineous marriage (Hussain, 1999).

Our research shows that household chores, childcare, style, jealousy, cultural differences, personality differences and political opinion are perceived to be less likely to emerge as problems in consanguineous marriages. Models for upbringing of children and cultural structures may be more similar within a family than between families. The similarity of cultural structure facilitates compatibility in issues such style or political opinion. It may be expected that children who grow up in similar families will have similar personalities. Compatibility between spouses will also facilitate mutual trust and may reduce distrustful behavior, such as jealousy. Research on the Middle East also shows that cultural similarity and similarities in tradition are factors that contribute to the survival of consanguineous marriage in Middle Eastern societies (Abdalla and Zaher, 2013). Tekbaş, Oğur and Uçar's (2005) research on 402 married soldiers shows that 18.7% of the marriages are consanguineous and, despite the expectation to see "material concerns" as the leading cause, the foremost cause for consanguineous marriages were "love and affection." 75% of the soldiers who were part of the research said that they were in consanguineous marriages because of love/affection, 12.5% said they were forced to marry by their families, 10.9% married so as not to "split the family wealth." Yıldırım (1992) shows that marriage type, sharing of household chores, sexual compatibility between spouses, consanguineous marriages and social support variables had a significant effect on compatibility between married spouses. Fidanoğlu's (2007) research, which uses the Couple Compatibility Scale shows that the average compatibility scores in faithfulness, satisfaction, agreement as well as the total scores of individuals in consanguineous marriages are higher in a statistically meaningful way compared to the scores of individuals in non-consanguineous marriages. Thus, consanguinity has a positive effect on compatibility between spouses. "Geneva International Consanguinity Workshop Report" (Hamamy et al., 2001) shows that consanguineous tend to be more stable than non-consanguineous marriages and, incompatibility and divorce in such marriages are very rare. Research on Arab societies verifies that consanguineous marriages are more stable and divorces are rare (Islam, 2012).

However, there is also research that supports the opposite conclusions. Fışıloğlu (2001)'s research on spousal compatibility in consanguineous marriages involved 150 couples and showed that spousal compatibility was lower among consanguineous marriage group than among the non- consanguineous marriage group. Another research on self-esteem involved 150 pregnant women in Çanakkale. The findings show that the pregnant women who had low level of education and was married to a spouse with a low level of education, lived with the extended family, married at an early age, was in a consanguineous marriage and defined her relationship



with her spouse as being “bad” had lower self-esteem (Gümüş et al., 2011). Research on Arab societies shows that women forced into consanguineous marriages were likely to develop depression, anxiety, psychosomatic diseases, low self-esteem and suicidal tendencies (Douki, Ben Zineb, Nacef and Halbreich, 2007).

Our research shows that, in terms of problem solving skills, behaviors such as raising one’s voice, remaining quiet, leaving the room, getting cross with, breaking things, leaving the house and separating one’s bed in response to conflict with the spouse are less prevalent in consanguineous marriages. However, the results show that resorting to violence and physical violence are more prevalent in consanguineous marriages during conflicts. This suggests that domestic violence in consanguineous marriages must be investigated in the context of the survival of maladjusted behavior between generations.

Another factor that supports the marriage relationship is spending time with the family. Our research shows that sitting at the dinner table with the family is a continuing tradition. However, spending time together by going out to eat, going to picnics and going to the movies/theater are more common in non-consanguineous marriages. Part of the reason behind this might be that consanguineous marriages are more prevalent in the countryside and the average level of income in consanguineous couples are lower. What might explain the rarity of playing cards, backgammon or video games at home is the preference for sharing a meal with the family over and above other activities. A leisure activity in consanguineous marriages is yet to be studied.

Agreement over material issues is a decisive factor in marriage satisfaction. We have observed that individuals in consanguineous marriages are more likely to have problems regarding spending and insufficient income. Since couples have fewer conflicts about other issues (childcare and household chores, style, jealousy, cultural differences, political opinions, etc.), what might account for conflicts in material issues might be the insufficiency of their socioeconomic resources. That people in consanguineous marriages have lower income is a conclusion that is in line with previous research (Ayan, Beder-Şen, Ünal and Yurtkuran, 2002, Bhagya, 2013)

Sharing roles in a marriage enhances happiness in a marriage so long as the spouses are in agreement (Gladding, 2002). In consanguineous marriages, chores such as ironing and laundry are more commonly shared than they are in non-consanguineous marriages, while consanguineous couples also have a strong perception that childcare is the mother’s duty. In their own words, “the primary tasks of the woman are childcare and housework.” However, daily grocery shopping, paying monthly bills, etc. are the male’s duty, and it is the male who makes the final purchasing decisions. Therefore, it could be said that the prevalent organization in consanguineous marriages is one where childcare and decision-making are assigned to a certain household member and the members have a “complementary” relationship. (Gladding, 2002; Nazlı, 2000).

As a result of the factor analysis in developing a scale for marriage satisfaction in Turkey, dissatisfaction with in-laws, which includes bride-groom, mother-in-law, father-in-law relationships, has proven to be a factor on its own, which distinguishes Turkey from the patterns we find in foreign literature (Canel, 2013). Research on happy couples in consanguineous marriages shows that married couples are happy to have married someone familiar and prefer to marry someone they know well rather than marry a stranger (Ayan, Beder-Şen, Ünal, Yurtkuran, 2001). This data also shows that in consanguineous marriages, the male is the





decision-maker in the relationships with the extended family. Those who qualify their relationship with their mothers- and fathers-in-law as being good are more prevalent in non-consanguineous marriages, but the few who would qualify it as being “very good” are in consanguineous marriages. As one might expect, seeing one’s father- or mother-in-law everyday is more common in consanguineous marriages. Those who claim never to see their father- or mother-in-law are more common in non-consanguineous marriages. This suggests that consanguineous marriages might benefit from avoiding the disruptive effects of not getting along with in-laws, which is otherwise very common in our country, and from similar traditions as well as from familiar family settings.

Ayan et al. (2001) show that 47% of the women and 57% of the men in consanguineous marriages think that “the familiarity of the families minimizes conflict between couples.” Previous research shows that “knowing the lineage” and compatible “traditions” are important factors in selecting a spouse among one’s kin (Fidaner, 2001). Another research on Turkey shows that as satisfaction in the relationships with the extended family increases or decreases, marriage compatibility also increases or decreases (Şener, Terzioğlu, 2002). Özbey’s (2012) research shows that perceived social support from extended family in voluntary marriages and consanguineous marriages is higher than it is in arranged marriages. In this context, Altuntek (2001) shows that parents of brides think that marriage is an act of surrender, and that marrying one’s daughter to someone in their own family, to a nephew reduces the tension involved.

Another conclusion of this research is that those in consanguineous marriages more often qualify their relationship with the extended family as being “very good.” The results are similar in other societies. Denic, Nagelkerke and Agarwal’s (2009) research on the causes behind the survival of consanguineous marriages in different parts of the world concludes that extended families support one another to a great extent in consanguineous marriages.

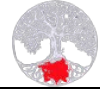
Furthermore, another conclusion of our research is that individuals in non-consanguineous marriages more frequently think that family relations in the society at large are in decline. Those who think that Turkey’s European Union membership will affect families adversely are also more common in non-consanguineous marriages. The question whether this is because people in consanguineous marriages feel safer because of consanguinity or because people in consanguineous marriages more frequently live in the countryside and share similar political opinions can be subject of further research.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our research, the reasons for the survival of consanguineous in our country might be listed as follows:

1. The idea that consanguineous marriages help knowing and preserving family heritage.
2. The idea that couples who come from the same family will get along better during marriage.
3. Similarities in religious belief and political opinion.
4. Relatively fewer differences in culture and personality.
5. Lower incidence of problem solving behavior (except physical violence) when in conflict with spouse.





6. The agreement on “complementary” roles (household chores and childcare are the mother’s duty, while making money is the father’s duty, etc.).
7. Fewer conflicts with the in-laws.
8. The desire of individuals in consanguineous marriages to continue the practice of consanguineous marriage based on the reasons listed above.

Therefore, in regions where such marriages are common, the reasons for the popular desire to continue the practice of consanguineous marriage may be taken into account and pilot programs, projects and programs that offer substitutes for the reasons for the survival of these practices may be implemented. The fundamental goal of such a project must be to meet, through other means that do not require consanguineous marriages, the needs that consanguineous marriages currently satisfy. For example, if the existence of similar traditions is a comforting factor in marriages, group projects that enhance compatibility between couples in this regard might be implemented. This way, the need for consanguineous marriages may decline. Likewise, another factor that reduces marriage satisfaction in Turkey are the in-laws (Canel, 2007) and programs as well as psychological support groups that enhance compatibility between groom, bride, mothers-in-law and fathers-in-law may be created. Another option might be to offer pre-marital counseling services or group programs to inform and prepare the youths for marriage. Studies such as this one contain rudimentary input for such programs.

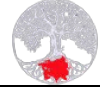
We have observed that birth defects, which is a probably outcome of consanguineous marriages, do not stop such marriages. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the social and economic factors that contribute to the survival of such marriages, to create projects that inspire trust in the state’s ability to offer the needed social and economic support and to launch information campaigns. The main agents in such marriages are usually the heads of families. Such campaigns and projects may target these decision-makers. The future programs must be designed to inform, change and convince these individuals. It is especially necessary to include among these comprehensive and progressive social and material support programs. The role of tribes and tribal marriage arrangements must also be the subject of a separate study.

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