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## Motivation to leave home during the transition to emerging adulthood among Turkish adolescents

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### ABSTRACT

Although the age of leaving home has increased during the past few decades, senior year in high school remains a significant period during which many adolescents consider moving out, especially to attend university. However, the role of personal, practical and familial factors on adolescents' motivation to leave home prior to the actual transition are still unknown. The current study investigated adolescents' motivation to leave home while they still lived with their parents and its association with adolescent-reported personal and practical circumstances, and parent-child relationship quality. Participants were 558 Turkish senior high school students (62% female), all living with their parents in Istanbul, Turkey. Results showed that just above one third of the adolescents (38%) wanted to leave home after high school. Boys, adolescents from high SES and nonintact families were more likely to be motivated to leave home. Satisfaction with living situation, parental support for home-leaving, and importance of practical and personal circumstances influenced adolescents' motivation to leave home. The adolescent-mother relationship was differently related to adolescents' motivation compared to the adolescent-father relationship. Conflict with both parents, but only fathers' warmth was associated with motivation to leave home above and beyond all practical and personal circumstances.

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Leaving home; motivation; parent-child relationship; life transitions

Over the past four decades, the number of young individuals postponing home-leaving has increased in most industrialized countries (Fry 2016; Seiffge-Krenke 2013). Yet, the pathways and timing of this transition are quite diverse. Previous studies revealed that gender (Stattin and Magnusson 1996), socioeconomic status (SES; De Marco and Berzin 2008), family structure (Blaauboer and Mulder 2010), parent-child relationship quality (Seiffge-Krenke 2006), and culture (Kleineper and de Valk 2017) are associated with timing of leaving home. While most research on home-leaving comprises of population studies, very few focused on individual and familial dynamics behind leaving home (e.g. Kins et al. 2009).

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One aspect of home-leaving that has received little empirical investigation is young individuals' motivation regarding moving out. Self-determination theory (SDT) argues that individuals' actions are influenced by different types of motivations (Ryan and Deci 2000). Actions based on autonomous motivations rather than controlled motivations promote well-being and satisfaction. Considering home-leaving, young individuals' motivations may be vital to the overall moving out experience and may influence their experiences in emerging adulthood such as university adjustment and performance, relationship with parents, and well-being. Moreover, SDT identifies autonomy, relatedness and competence as basic psychological needs, and emphasizes that social contexts such as parents promote these needs. Ample research showed that autonomy supportive parenting encourages autonomy compared to controlling parenting (e.g. Kins et al. 2009; Soenens et al. 2007). Parents holding power may pressure and be less emphatic with their children, and hinder their autonomy need. While parental warmth promotes children's need for relatedness, high levels of parental conflict can undermine it. Therefore, parent-child relationship quality may be related to adolescents' motivation and investigating this association may help us further understand the complex home-leaving decision.

To this date, only two studies have investigated motivation to leave home. Kins et al. (2009) found that motivational dynamics behind the current living situation were more salient for Belgian emerging adults' well-being and satisfaction than the actual place of residence. Lou, Lalonde, and Giguère (2012) reported differences in motivation to leave home by comparing Eastern and South Asian Canadians to European Canadians and highlighted the impact of parental approval and family collectivism on motivation. Both studies emphasize parents' influence on young individuals' motivation to leave home, yet they only examined emerging adults who had already moved out.

The current study is first to examine adolescents who still live with their parents to investigate their motivation prior to a potential first opportunity to leave home. The anticipation of high school graduation, followed by the possibility to participate in tertiary education, is usually the first time adolescents consider leaving home (Mulder and Clark 2002). This separation from family may be temporary as some emerging adults return to parental home after graduating from university (South and Lei 2015). While some adolescents are highly motivated to leave home to have a full-extent university experience away from parental influence, others are not, and the anticipation of leaving home may be stressful for them (Bernier, Larose, and Whipple 2005). Moreover, not all who want to move out may have the chance to do so, and those who do not want to leave home must leave to attend university. Therefore, it is essential to investigate adolescents' motivation prior to the first opportunity to leave home to understand the complex home-leaving decision.

### *Current trends in leaving home patterns*

Both in the United States and in Europe, the percentage of emerging adults living with their parents has increased over the years (Choroszewicz and Wolff 2010; Fry 2016). Among European countries, 48% of young individuals (ages 18–29) reside with their parents, which is a 4% increase from 2007 to 2011 (Eurofound 2014). At the same time, home-leaving patterns show diversity between and within regions. In Central and Northern Europe, a substantially higher percentage of individuals move out in their 20s, compared to Southern Europe where living with parents in late 20s is normative (Seiffge-

Krenke 2013). In Turkey, home-leaving patterns are like Southern and Eastern European countries with the mean age of leaving home in urban areas being 23.3 years, and in rural areas 26.8 years (Koç 2007). A common trend observed in many countries is that women leave home earlier than men (Seiffge-Krenke 2013). This difference is often explained by women entering a stable romantic relationship earlier (Koç 2007), but starting university and moving out to be independent at a younger age than men are also substantial reasons (De Jong Gierveld, Liefbroer, and Beekink 1991).

Specific to university students, among 28 European countries on average 36% of students live with their parents, 21% with partner, 18% in student housing, 15% with others, and only 10% live alone (Hauschildt, Vögtle, and Gwośc 2018). University students' residential statuses also differ across regions with Southern European countries having the highest percentage of students coresiding with parents. Compared to the European average, Turkey has the highest rate (40%) of university students living in student housing, and a lower percentage of students living with their parents (29%). University students' home-leaving patterns also differ by gender. In the U.S. (Chen and Zerquera 2018), the Netherlands (Sá, Florax, and Rietveld 2012) and Turkey (Eurostudent 2017) women are more likely to leave home for university than men. Yet, no gender differences were found among young individuals from Portugal (Sá et al. 2011). Overall, a cultural variation in home-leaving is evident, but as ample research has been conducted in the U.S. and Europe, different cultures need to be investigated.

### *Leaving home related to practical and personal circumstances*

Family finances is one of the most researched determinants of home-leaving. Young individuals from high SES families leave home earlier than those from low SES families (De Marco and Berzin 2008; Sá, Florax, and Rietveld 2012; South and Lei 2015), yet some studies failed to detect an association between SES and timing of leaving home (e.g. Le Blanc and Wolff 2006; Seiffge-Krenke 2006), and others found a different relation. As young individuals from high SES families often resided in large cities with several universities, they were also less likely to leave home (Hauschildt, Vögtle, and Gwośc 2018; Sá et al. 2011). Perhaps adolescents from high SES families are more satisfied with their residential standards and prefer to coreside with parents. Also, adolescents may consider their parents' financial resources, the cost of moving out, together with practical (i.e. distance between university and home) and personal circumstances (i.e. not feeling ready to leave home) and thus not perceive moving out as a sensible choice.

Family structure is another determinant that has been consistently related to leaving home. Young individuals from non-intact families are more likely to leave home than those from intact families (Blaauboer and Mulder 2010). In step-parent families, often the timing of home-leaving is earlier as the relationships can be more strained. In large families, adolescents with siblings may be more motivated to leave home simply due to feeling overcrowded (De Jong Gierveld, Liefbroer, and Beekink 1991; Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1998) and the need for individuation compared to only child adolescents (Feinberg et al. 2003). Yet, the odds of leaving home for university for adolescents with siblings may be lower due to less financial resources being available for each child

(Mulder and Clark 2002). In sum, we expect that SES, family structure and number of siblings would be associated with motivation to leave home for university.

### *Leaving home and parent-child relationship quality*

Considerable research has focused on young individuals' residential status and parent-child relationships, yet only few examined the association between earlier relationship characteristics and home-leaving patterns (Blaauboer and Mulder 2010; Seiffge-Krenke 2006, 2009). Positive and warm relationships with parents (Blaauboer and Mulder 2010), more so with mothers than fathers (South and Lei 2015) was related to home-leaving at a later age. Emerging adults living with their parents perceived higher parental support (Seiffge-Krenke 2009), lower parental conflict, but also lower support for autonomy than those who moved out (Seiffge-Krenke 2006). The impact of parent-child relationship quality on leaving home for university was argued to be smaller than on leaving home for independence, or to live with a partner (De Jong Gierveld, Liefbroer, and Beekink 1991). However, none of these studies investigated adolescents' motivation to leave home and its association with parent-child relationship quality before the actual transition. Parents may support their children in pursuing tertiary education, but they may not encourage them to move out especially in cultures such as Turkey, where family connectedness is highly valued and leaving home together with marriage is normative.

In sum, the home-leaving decision cannot be fully understood without considering the cultural and familial context in which adolescents' motivations are shaped. Given that most of the studies are conducted in the U.S. or western Europe, we are yet to understand home-leaving in different cultures. The present study took place in Istanbul, Turkey, where independent living, as well as the participation in education has shown an increase among urban youth, while traditional values such as family connectedness continue to be important (Akyil et al. 2016). However, no research to this date has considered Turkish adolescents' motivation to leave home. This is the first study to investigate the association between adolescents' motivation to leave home and the role of both desired and undesired characteristics of the relationship with mothers and fathers such as warmth, conflict, power and autonomy support.

### *Youth and higher education context in Turkey*

Turkey has the highest percentage (15.6%) of youth (15–24 years) among European countries (TUIK 2015). Approximately 5.5 million students are in secondary education, of which 54% are studying in general (Anatolian, super, science, and private high schools), 35% in vocational and technical, and 11% in religious institutions. Only 10% of students in secondary education attend private schools which are competitive and have high tuition fees (Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education 2018).

To attend university, young individuals need to pass the university entrance exam. In 2017, approximately 2.5 million individuals took the exam, yet only one-third got into a university. Private, science and Anatolian high schools have the highest university placement rates (between 50–66%). Approximately 30% of the test-takers are those who did not get into a university the previous year (ÖSYM 2017).

More than half of the students in Turkey still attend a university outside of their hometown for reasons such as education quality, popularity of universities, and offerings of big cities. However, this trend is different for students living in Istanbul. According to 2015 statistics, more than half of the university students in Istanbul (62%) are from Istanbul (Eşidir 2017), given that 62 out of 207 universities are in the vicinity. However, the area size of Istanbul is larger than many European cities (5 times bigger than London, 11 times bigger than Oslo). Thus, adolescents residing in Istanbul may still leave home for university to avoid long commutes. These characteristics make Istanbul a unique context to examine adolescents' motivation to leave home.

## The present study

The present study aims to add to the current literature on home-leaving patterns by addressing previous limitations. First, many studies on home-leaving were retrospective, but we chose to investigate motivation before the actual transition occurs. Second, given that home-leaving decision is multifaceted, we investigated the role of practical, personal and familial circumstances all together. This allowed us to examine multiple aspects of motivational dynamics behind the home-leaving decision. Third, while most studies included only one characteristic of parent-child relationship quality, we examined both desired and undesired features separately for mothers and fathers. Finally, this is the first study to investigate Turkish adolescents' motivation to leave home.

The present study examines three research questions. First, how many adolescents want to leave home after high school? Second, how does adolescents' motivation to leave home relate to practical and personal circumstances? And third, does parent-child relationship quality predict adolescents' motivation to leave home? Our hypotheses are as follows: First, although approximately 50% of students in private and specialized public high schools (e.g. Anatolian schools, science schools, foreign language schools) enter university (ÖSYM 2017), almost all senior students in these high schools aim to attend university. Thus, we expect approximately 50% of adolescents to be motivated to leave home after high school, and more girls than boys. Second, we anticipate that adolescents from high SES families, from non-intact family structure, and only child adolescents will be more likely to be motivated to leave home after high school compared to adolescents from low SES families, with intact family structure and adolescents with siblings. Furthermore, we expect adolescents who perceive financial, practical, personal and familial circumstances as highly important in their decision to leave home and are satisfied with their current living situation to be less motivated to move out. Third, we expect that adolescents reporting lower warmth, higher conflict, higher autonomy support and higher power in parent-child relationships to be more likely to be motivated to leave home.

## Method

### Participants

The sample included 558 Turkish senior high school students (62.2% female,  $M_{age} = 17.74$ ,  $SD = .53$ ) living with their parents in Istanbul, Turkey. Almost three quarter of participants

(73.8%) were attending a type of public school (i.e. Anatolian high school, science high school), and all were preparing to take the university entrance exam approximately 6 months later. The majority (84.9%) had parents who were married and had at least one sibling (81.4%). Most participants reported they were living with both parents (83.7%), and the rest indicated that they were living with their mother (12.9%), their father (1.6%), or in a different family structure (1.8%) (e.g. with one biological parent and one stepparent, or with a relative). More than half of the participants (58.0%) had at least one parent who completed university or graduate school.

## Measures

### Motivation to leave home

Participants answered a single item on whether they would like to leave home after high school, ranging from 1 (*definitely no*) to 5 (*definitely yes*). Participants' responses were recoded as unmotivated (0), undecided (1) and motivated (2) to leave home.

### Demographic variables

Parents' combined highest education level was used as an indicator of family SES. Participants' responses were coded as follows: primary/middle school as low SES (0), high school as middle SES (1), and university/graduate school as high SES (2), and next as a dummy variable (0 = low/mid SES, 1 = high SES). Participants indicated their parents' marital status, and it was dummy coded as intact if married (0), and nonintact if separated, divorced or widowed (1). Participants also answered how many siblings they had (i.e. only child, one siblings, two siblings), and their responses were coded as a dummy variable (0 = with siblings, 1 = only child).

### Practical and personal circumstances

Multiple factors were considered to capture the complex motivational dynamics behind leaving home. A single item was used to assess participants' satisfaction with their current living status ranging from 1 (*very unhappy*) to 5 (*very happy*). Next, to understand what factors might be important in participants' decision to leave home, four items from the Emerging Adulthood Questionnaire (Yanir, Guttman, and Guttman 2011) were chosen. Participants rated the importance of practical (e.g. short distance between university and parental home), financial (e.g. high rent or student housing fees), personal (e.g. not feeling ready to leave home), and familial circumstances (e.g. the importance of living at home for their parents, worrying about parent-child relationship worsening if they moved out) when considering leaving home, ranging from 1 (*not important*) to 10 (*very important*). Finally, participants were asked to what extent their parents would support their decision to move out, and provide financial support if they want to leave home, ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*).

### Parent-child relationship quality

Adolescents' self-reports regarding warmth, conflict, and power in the relationship with their mothers and fathers were measured with the Turkish-adapted version (Nemlioğlu 2011) of the Network of Relationship Inventory-short form (NRI; Furman and Buhrmester 1985). All subscales of the NRI were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from

1 (*hardly at all*) to 5 (*extremely much*). Warmth was measured using the Support subscale which consisted of eight items (e.g. 'How much does your mother/father really care about you?'). The Support scale showed acceptable reliability in this sample (mothers  $\alpha = .80$ , fathers  $\alpha = .86$ ). Conflict was measured with the Negative Interaction subscale which consisted of six items (e.g. 'How much do you and your mother/father argue with each other?') and showed good reliability in this sample (mothers  $\alpha = .92$ , fathers  $\alpha = .94$ ). The Power subscale had six items (e.g. 'To what extent is your mother/father the boss in your relationship?') and showed good reliability in this sample (mothers  $\alpha = .84$ , fathers  $\alpha = .91$ ).

The extend of parents' autonomy support was measured with the Turkish-adapted version (Fehimoğlu-Sinan 1998) of the Balanced Relatedness subscale from Shulman's Intimacy Scale (Shulman et al. 1997). The Balanced Relatedness scale consisted of seven items with a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not true*) to 4 (*very true*) (e.g. 'My mother/father respects my ideas'). The scale had good reliability in this sample (mothers  $\alpha = .89$ , fathers  $\alpha = .90$ ). Higher scores represented higher levels of the relationship quality.

### Procedure

The present study utilized convenience sampling. Both public and private high schools and university exam tutoring centers in Istanbul, Turkey were targeted to achieve a diverse student sample. A study invitation letter was sent via email. Three Anatolian public schools, two private schools and one exam preparation center responded positively. These institutions were visited twice during the fall of 2017. During the first visit, the study was explained to the senior students. Those who were interested and at least 18 years old signed the consent form. Younger students were given an information letter and consent form to be delivered to their parents. These students were asked to return the signed consent forms within one week. During the second visit, students with a signed consent form (91%) completed a paper-pencil form questionnaire set in one class hour. Students participated voluntarily and did not receive any monetary compensation or grade points. This study was approved by Koç University Committee of Human Research in Turkey.

### Data analysis

Preliminary analyses including demographics, correlations and attrition analysis were conducted using The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 24.0. Missings analysis revealed that Little's Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) Test was significant ( $\chi^2 (175,558) = 251.105, p < .001$ ) with the highest percentage (3%) of missing values being observed among adolescent-father relationship variables. Further analyses revealed that participants with missings differed from participants with complete data only with respect to parents' marital status. More specifically, if parents were divorced or widowed there were more missings ( $\chi^2 (1,558) = 67.98, p < .001$ ).

To answer our research questions, multinomial logistic regression was utilized in Mplus version 8.2 (Muthén and Muthén 1998–2017). Motivation to leave home (motivated, undecided, and unmotivated) was the outcome variable. The unmotivated adolescents were chosen as the reference group. Our predictors were demographic factors, practical



and personal circumstances, and parent–child relationship variables. Given the nested structure of our data (adolescents nested in schools), the intraclass correlation (ICC) value was calculated and found to be .086 ( $p = .12$ ), meaning that 8.6% of the variance in motivation to leave home stemmed from between school differences. To adjust the estimated standard errors and fit statistics, we used the ‘cluster = schools’ option in Mplus. We utilized a two-step procedure: First, we analyzed each variable separately to examine whether the individual effects on home-leaving differed from effects in a model with multiple predictors entered simultaneously. After that, we examined the impact of the predictors in a stepwise fashion. First, demographic, practical and personal factors were entered into the model all at once. Second, parent–child relationship variables were entered all together, with separate analyses for each parent.

## Results

### Descriptives

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for all study variables. Table 2 shows the correlations among the practical and personal circumstances, and mother and father

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics of all study variables ( $N = 558$ ).

Variable	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )
Gender		
Female	347(62.2)	
SES		
Low	34(6.1)	
Middle	199(35.7)	
High	324(58.1)	
Family structure		
Intact	474(84.9)	
Non intact	85(15.1)	
Number of siblings		
Only child	104(18.6)	
One sibling	318(57.0)	
Two or more siblings	136(24.4)	
Motivation to move out		
Yes	213(38.2)	
No	210(37.6)	
Undecided	133(23.8)	
Satisfaction with living situation		2.74(.86)
Parental support for leaving home		2.12(1.38)
Financial support of parents for leaving home		3.83(1.09)
Importance of circumstances for leaving home		
Practical		7.07(2.63)
Financial		6.52(3.00)
Personal		5.22 (3.13)
Familial		4.66(3.17)
Adolescent-mother relationship quality		
Warmth		4.03(.62)
Conflict		2.91(.93)
Power		2.99(.84)
Autonomy support		3.17(.67)
Adolescent-father relationship quality		
Warmth		3.69(.79)
Conflict		2.50(1.00)
Power		3.02(1.03)
Autonomy support		3.12(.75)

Note: *M* = mean; *SD* = standard deviations.

**Table 2.** Correlations between practical and personal factors and parent-adolescent relationship variables.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Practical and Personal Factors															
Satisfaction	–														
Parental sup.	.16**	–													
Financial sup.	.30**	.29**	–												
Practical circ.	.08	.03	.07	–											
Financial circ.	–.05	–.08	–.19**	.27**	–										
Personal circ.	.10*	–.05	.05	.30**	.21**	–									
Familial circ.	.00	–.25**	–.09*	.12**	.26**	.43**	–								
Mother Relationship															
8. Warmth	.35**	.13**	.25**	.20**	.01	.26**	.09*	–							
9. Conflict	–.21**	.00	–.15**	–.12**	.11*	–.09*	.05	–.48**	–						
10. Power	–.11**	–.10*	–.08	.03	.09*	.07	.21**	–.12**	.39**	–					
11. Aut. sup.	.28**	.21**	.22**	.16**	–.03	.16**	.01	.64**	–.55**	–.37**					
Father Relationship															
12. Warmth	.35**	.16**	.36**	.14**	–.12**	.18**	.00	.42**	–						
13. Conflict	–.24**	–.09*	–.24**	–.11*	.09*	–.12**	.10*	–.13**	.17**	–		–.51**	–		
14. Power	–.07	–.15**	–.11**	–.01	.05	–.05	.19**	–.09*	.04	.26**	–	–.05	.30*	–	
15. Aut. sup.	.32**	.23**	.29**	.12**	–.09*	.15**	–.07	.37**	–.24**	–.15**	.50**	.71**	–.60**	–.34**	–

Note: Parental sup. = parental support, Financial sup. = financial support, Practical circ. = importance of practical circumstances, Financial circ. = importance of financial circumstances, Personal circ. = importance of personal circumstances, Familial circ. = importance of familial circumstances, Aut. sup. = autonomy support.

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ .

relationship qualities. Multicollinearity statistics revealed that both the variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance values were acceptable. Paired t-tests showed that maternal warmth ( $t(538) = 10.22, p < .001$ ) and conflict ( $t(538) = 7.26, p < .00$ ) were significantly higher than paternal warmth and conflict. No significant difference between maternal and paternal power and autonomy support were found.

### *Individual effects of all study variables on motivation to leave home*

Just above one third of the adolescents (38.2%) were motivated to leave home, while almost the same percentage of adolescents were not (37.6%), and the rest (23.8%) were undecided (see Table 1). Table 3 demonstrates the bivariate relationship of each predictor with motivation to leave home. Almost all predictors were significantly related to motivation to leave home. Boys, adolescents from high SES and non-intact families, and only child adolescents were more likely to be motivated to leave home compared to girls, adolescents from low-mid SES, intact families and with siblings. Satisfaction with living situation was only significantly related to motivation to leave home when comparing undecided adolescents to unmotivated ones. All other practical and personal factors, except for financial ones, were significantly related to motivation to leave home. Regarding parent-child relationship quality, all expect power were significant predictors of motivation to leave home with adolescents reporting a more positive relationship quality being less likely to be motivated to leave home. For undecided adolescents, only conflict with mother and father were significant.

**Table 3.** Multinomial regression analysis of all study variables: bivariate effects on different levels of motivation.

Predictor	Motivated vs. Not Motivated		Undecided vs. Not Motivated	
	<i>B</i> ( <i>SE</i> )	<i>OR</i>	<i>B</i> ( <i>SE</i> )	<i>OR</i>
Female	-.44(.20)*	.64	-.29(.24)	.75
High SES	1.39(.42)**	4.00	.51(.21)*	1.67
Nonintact family	.90(.16)***	2.47	.91(.22)***	2.47
Only child	.64(.18)***	1.89	.23(.16)	1.26
Satisfaction	-.30(.24)	.74	-.34(.09)***	.71
Parental sup.	.47(.17)**	1.59	.37(.05)***	1.44
Financial sup.	.00(.06)	1.00	.05(.14)	1.05
Practical circ.	-.19(.06)**	.83	-.06(.02)**	.94
Financial circ.	-.03(.04)	.97	.04(.03)	1.04
Personal circ.	-.32(.05)***	.73	-.12(.01)***	.88
Familial circ.	-.18(.03)***	.83	-.08(.03)**	.92
Warmth-Mother	-.95(.10)***	.39	-.19(.29)	.83
Conflict-Mother	.79(.12)***	2.19	.30(.12)*	1.35
Power-Mother	.12(.07)	1.13	.11(.13)	1.12
Aut. sup.-Mother	-.69(.22)**	.50	.00(.19)	1.00
Warmth-Father	-.65(.14)***	.52	-.28(.24)	.76
Conflict-Father	.63(.11)***	1.87	.42(.10)***	1.52
Power-Father	.05(.12)	1.05	-.00(.09)	1.00
Aut. sup.-Father	-.58(.15)***	.56	-.16(.24)	.85

Note: *OR* = odds ratio; Parental sup. = parental support; Financial sup. = financial support; Practical circ. = importance of practical circumstances; Financial circ. = importance of financial circumstances; Personal circ. = importance of personal circumstances; Familial circ. = importance of familial circumstances; Aut. sup. = autonomy support.

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

**Table 4.** Practical and personal factors, and parent-adolescent relationship variables as predictors of motivation to leave home.

Predictor	Model 1				Model 2a-Adolescent Mother				Model 2b-Adolescent Father			
	Motivated vs. Not Motivated		Undecided vs. Not Motivated		Motivated vs. Not Motivated		Undecided vs. Not Motivated		Motivated vs. Not Motivated		Undecided vs. Not Motivated	
	B(SE)	OR	B (SE)	OR	B(SE)	OR	B(SE)	OR	B(SE)	OR	B(SE)	OR
Female	-.13(.24)	.88	-.08(.33)	.92	-.35(.20)	.70	-.21(.30)	.81	-.03(.21)	.97	-.09(.27)	.92
High SES	1.32(.43)	3.73**	.33(.28)	1.40	1.34(.40)	3.81**	.29(.24)	1.34	1.28(.39)	3.60**	.22(.28)	1.24
Non-intact fam.	.64(.14)	1.91***	.87(.21)	2.37***	.60(.16)	1.81***	.90(.26)	2.47**	.62(.26)	1.87*	.89(.30)	2.42**
Only child	.13(.27)	1.13	.00(.26)	1.00	.17(.31)	1.19	.05(.17)	1.06	.16(.33)	1.17	.00(.23)	1.00
Satisfaction	-.47(.12)	.62***	-.45(.06)	.64***	-.29(.10)	.75**	-.42(.09)	.66***	-.27(.13)	.76*	-.29(.09)	.75**
Parental sup.	.50(.19)	1.65*	.41(.05)	1.50***	.56(.21)	1.75**	.42(.07)	1.52***	.52(.17)	1.69**	.38(.06)	1.46***
Financial sup.	-.02(.10)	.98	.09(.12)	1.09	.56(.12)	1.06	.11(.10)	1.12	.15(.11)	1.16	.12(.11)	1.12
Practical circ.	-.17(.04)	.84***	-.08(.03)	.92***	-.15(.04)	.86**	-.08(.03)	.92*	-.16(.04)	.86***	-.07(.03)	.93*
Financial circ.	.10(.05)	1.10	.11(.03)	1.11***	.07(.05)	1.07	.11(.03)	1.11**	.08(.05)	1.08	.09(.03)	1.09**
Personal circ.	-.29(.04)	.75***	-.13(.02)	.88***	-.29(.04)	.75***	-.14(.02)	.87***	-.26(.03)	.77***	-.12(.02)	.89***
Familial circ.	-.05(.04)	.96	-.01(.04)	.99	-.08(.03)	.93*	-.04(.04)	.96	-.08(.03)	.92*	-.04(.04)	.96
Warmth					-.17(.21)	.85	.00(.02)	1.00	-.30(.08)	.74***	.01(.24)	1.01
Conflict					.90(.16)	2.46***	.54(.21)	1.71*	.55(.05)	1.73***	.53(.17)	1.70**
Power					-.05(.16)	.95	.14(.16)	1.15	.00(.11)	1.00	.03(.14)	1.03
Aut. sup.					-.19(.34)	.83	.37(.22)	1.44	-.14(.10)	.87	.15(.19)	1.17

Note: OR = odds ratio; Non-intact fam. = non-intact family structure; Satisfaction = satisfaction with living situations; Parental sup. = parental support; Financial sup. = financial support; Practical circ. = importance of practical circumstances; Financial circ. = importance of financial circumstances; Personal circ. = importance of personal circumstances; Familial circ. = importance of familial circumstances; Aut. sup. = autonomy support.

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

### *Role of practical and personal circumstances on motivation to leave home*

In the first model, demographic factors, practical and personal circumstances were entered at once (see Table 4). Compared to the bivariate effects, SES and family structure remained significant while considering other predictors. Gender, being only child and importance of family circumstances no longer predicted motivation to leave home, but effects of parental support for leaving home and importance of practical and personal circumstances remained significant. As perceived parental support for home-leaving increased, adolescents were more likely to be motivated and undecided than unmotivated to leave home. Higher levels of importance given to practical and personal circumstances lowered the odds of being motivated and undecided to leave home. For higher levels of satisfaction, the odds of being motivated and undecided were lower compared to unmotivated adolescents. SES was no longer a significant predictor of motivation for undecided adolescents, but the importance given to the financial circumstances increased the likelihood of being undecided than being unmotivated to leave home.

### *Motivation to leave home and parent-child relationship quality*

In the final model, four qualities of parent-child relationship were entered together and analyzed separately for each parent (Model 2a and 2b, see Table 4). Overall, the effects of demographics and personal and practical circumstances did not change when entering parent-adolescent relationship quality factors. Power and autonomy support did not add to the prediction of motivation to leave home on top of the other predictors. Yet, corrected for all other predictors, conflict remained a significant predictor for both parents. For higher levels of maternal and paternal conflict, the odds of being motivated to leave home and being undecided increased compared to unmotivated adolescents. For adolescent-father relationship quality only, warmth was also a significant predictor. The odds of being motivated to leave home decreased for higher levels of paternal warmth.

## **Discussion**

By focusing only on adolescents living at home and shortly before their graduation from high school, the present study investigated adolescents' motivation to leave home and its association with practical, personal and familial circumstances. At the most general level our findings contribute to the home-leaving literature in showing that adolescents varied in their motivation to leave home, and the adolescent-mother relationship was differently related to adolescents' motivation compared to the adolescent-father relationship. Conflict with both parents and fathers' warmth had an impact above and beyond all practical and personal circumstances. Results also shed light onto undecided adolescents and how they differed from motivated and unmotivated adolescents.

### *Motivation to leave home after high school*

Our findings revealed that not all adolescents are motivated to leave home. Only one third of adolescents about to graduate from high school were motivated, which was lower than what we hypothesized. Several explanations may be provided for this result. First, our

sample mean age was 17.74 years old. Given that the mean age of leaving home in urban areas of Turkey is 23.3 years old (Koç 2007), adolescents may consider the year after high school graduation as too early to move out and they may adhere to the age norms for leaving home (Tosi 2017). Thus, with an older sample we may find a higher percentage of motivated individuals. Second, adolescents in our sample have the option to attend university while continuing to live with their parents because 30% of the universities in Turkey are in the vicinity. Third, the number of motivated adolescents may increase as undecided adolescents make up their minds closer to the university exam or after the results are announced. Therefore, additional measurement points are needed to fully understand senior high school students' motivation to leave home.

In contrast to previous research and our hypothesis, girls were less likely to be motivated to leave home than boys. This finding suggests that motivation may be influenced by cultural norms as also shown by Lou, Lalonde, and Giguère (2012). Although today's parents especially in urbanized areas of Turkey and in high SES families are more supportive of their children in becoming independent, they also value family relatedness (Akyl et al. 2016). Cultures that emphasize family relatedness have a higher impact on women than men (Sorokou and Weissbrod 2005), and often women are given the role of maintaining emotional closeness between generations (Kağitçibaşı and Ataca 2005). Leaving home for university may not be normative especially for girls raised in families with a more traditional background. The present study provides support to this explanation by a posthoc analysis showing that girls expected their parents to be less supportive of their decision to leave home than boys.

In sum, leaving home for university requires special attention. While in general home-leaving patterns in Turkey are like Southern European countries, leaving home for university patterns show differences. For instance, in Italy, almost all university students live at home, but in Turkey approximately half of the university students move out (Hauschildt, Vögtle, and Gwosć 2018). Our findings indicate that some students who leave home for university may not be motivated. This can have important implications for adjustment to university and well-being. Furthermore, leaving home for university can be temporary. Parents may expect their children to return home after graduation and the actual separation from family can happen in late 20s. Future research is needed to investigate emerging adults' preferences for residential status after graduating from university.

### *Practical and personal factors explaining motivation to leave home*

The present study showed that practical and personal circumstances were salient factors influencing motivation to leave home. As expected our results supported earlier studies (Sá, Florax, and Rietveld 2012; South and Lei 2015) in which SES was an accelerator for home-leaving. Adolescents from high SES families were almost four times more motivated to leave home compared to low/mid SES families. Parents from high SES generally value higher education, and thus we expected them to be more supportive of their children leaving home for university. Furthermore, adolescents rated financial circumstances (e.g. rent or student housing fees) as the second most important factor in their home-leaving decision, but it was only associated with undecided adolescents' motivation. As half of the university students continue to live with their parents to save money (Patiniotis

and Holdsworth 2005), undecided adolescents may be considering the cost of moving out, its practicality and benefits up until the university exam.

As hypothesized, adolescents motivated to leave home were twice more likely to be from nonintact families. In line with previous research (Blaauboer and Mulder 2010), adolescents may prefer universities that are further away to distance themselves from the negative family climate. One possible indicator for this could be adolescents' satisfaction with their current living situation. As expected, adolescents with lower levels of satisfaction were more likely to be motivated to leave home. However, further analyses revealed that satisfaction levels did not differ by family structure, but only by SES. Because satisfaction was handled as a general term in our study, potential reasons behind low levels of satisfaction were unclear.

In line with SDT, our results also showed that higher levels of parental support for leaving home increased the likelihood of being motivated to leave home. The social context (i.e. parents in this study) seem to have an impact on motivation to leave home, and it is likely that parents promote children in making autonomous choices. However, we did not investigate whether adolescents' motivation was autonomous or controlled. Future studies may further extend our findings by investigating different types of motivations.

### *Parental conflict and paternal warmth related to motivation to leave home*

The present study tackled both desired and undesired characteristics of the parent–child relationship. Among all qualities, conflict with both mother and father, and warmth of father emerged as the most stable predictors of motivation to leave home. Negative family climate was found to be associated with earlier timing of leaving home (Seiffge-Krenke 2006). We extended this finding by showing that adolescents reporting higher levels of parental conflict were more likely to be motivated to move out. From SDT's perspective, this finding suggests that high levels of conflict may be related to low levels of relatedness and autonomy at home, which in turn may increase adolescents' need for autonomy as well as motivation to move out. Although in our recent study with Dutch young individuals, we did not detect a significant relation between parental conflict in adolescence and timing of leaving home in emerging adulthood (Işık Akın et al. 2020), Turkish adolescents seemed to report higher levels of parental conflict than Dutch adolescents. Also, conflict might have a stronger impact on the motivation to leave home than the actual decision to move out.

Contrary to earlier findings (South and Lei 2015), only warmth of father was associated with motivation to leave home when considering the other parent–adolescent relationship aspects. Higher levels of paternal warmth lowered the odds of being motivated to leave home. Why we only found a significant relation with paternal warmth needs further investigation. Fathers compared to mothers in Turkey adapt faster to individualistic values such as autonomy (Akyıl et al. 2016). Therefore, adolescents may perceive their values and expectations to be more aligned with their fathers' than their mothers'. In general, mothers spend more time with their children than fathers, but our findings suggest that fathers' involvement may be a more salient factor in determining the overall family climate.

No association between power attributed to parents and motivation to leave home was detected. Adolescents living at home and depend on their parents may perceive them as

authority figures. This may be normative in Turkish culture where family relations are often hierarchical, and relatedness is a strong value. Perhaps with an older sample still living at home, we may find higher levels of parental power accelerating leaving home as it may conflict with emerging adults' need for autonomy.

In conclusion, although parent–child relationship quality was argued to be less important for leaving home to attend university than leaving home for independence (De Jong Gierveld, Liefbroer, and Beekink 1991), our findings indicate that considering all practical and personal factors, parental conflict and paternal warmth were significant for adolescents who consider leaving home for university.

### *Limitations and future research*

Besides several strengths outlined in the introduction, the present study had some limitations. First, due to using convenience sampling, the participating schools all had moderate to high university acceptance rates. Therefore, we anticipated that all senior students would aim to attend university. In other types of high schools (i.e. vocational schools), the university acceptance rates are much lower, and so may be the students' motivation to leave home for university. However, we did not foresee a difference between participating and unparticipating schools with respect to parent–child relationship quality. Furthermore, around one-fourth of Turkish youth are neither in education nor employed (OECD 2019), and they are most likely to continue to live at home. Also, our sample was highly educated compared to Turkey's demographics showing that only 23.4% of adults residing in Istanbul and 10.9% of adults in overall Turkey finished tertiary education (Eurostudent, 2017). Thus, our results cannot be generalized to all Turkish families and their children. Future research could benefit from addressing this limitation by having a more representative sample, including adolescents from other types of high schools as well as rural areas of Turkey.

Second, some of the study variables need to be examined in further detail in future research. For instance, satisfaction with current living situation was assessed broadly. Which specific aspects of the current living situation affected adolescents' satisfaction level was unclear. Similarly, SES was based on parents' combined highest education level as a measure of cultural capital. Future studies could include income and occupational status to fully grasp parents' financial statuses. Third, including multiple informants such as mothers and fathers could strengthen our findings by revealing similarities and differences between parents' and children's perspectives. Fourth, due to the cross-sectional design of our study, the results should be interpreted with caution. Motivated adolescents may be more likely to report negative aspect of their relationship with their parents. Thus, causality cannot be inferred from our results. Finally, as the average correlation between intention and action is usually only moderate (Ajzen 1991), the percentage of adolescents really leaving home after graduation can be assessed by using a longitudinal study design with follow-up measures after high school.

### *Conclusion*

Overall, the present study contributed to the current literature by providing comprehensive knowledge on how adolescents living with their parents but about to graduate from high school differed in their motivation to leave home, and to what extent the parent–



child relationship quality influenced their motivation in a culture that values both autonomy and relatedness. Our findings support the notion that family members are interconnected and significant life transitions in young individuals' lives are affected by individual, familial and cultural circumstances. Given that parental conflict and paternal warmth emerged as two salient relationship qualities impacting adolescents' motivation to leave home, the present study highlights the key role played by each parent in preparing their children for emerging adulthood. Therefore, our findings have important implications. Parents should recognize their children's need for a close and positive relationship, but also provide autonomy support to ensure that they make self-directed, autonomous decisions in transition to emerging adulthood. Parents need to allow adolescents to explore their needs and take actions that are in line with their self-directed intentions. Moreover, practitioners working with adolescents and their parents should pay special attention to late adolescence when important life decisions are about to be made and the role of certain personal, practical and familial circumstances needs to be explored to ensure a healthy transition to emerging adulthood. Finally, our findings emphasize that more research in cross-cultural contexts is necessary to fully understand the individual and familial dynamics of the home-leaving decision.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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