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Post-Earthquake Social Life Perception Scale: Validity and Reliability Study



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Abstract

The Kahramanmaraş earthquakes of February 6, 2023 in Türkiye displaced the socially embedded structure of spaces due to significant material losses and human fatalities. The earthquakes destroyed symbolically valuable and emotionally comforting “lived spaces”. The displacement of the taken-for-granted world likely transformed individuals’ emotional states, perceptions of space, and perspectives toward social relationships. This study aims to develop a valid and reliable scale to measure adults’ perceptions of social life after the earthquake (Post-Earthquake Social Life Perception Scale, PESLPS). The study sample consisted of individuals residing in the container cities of Kahramanmaraş and Hatay. The results indicated that the final scale comprises 10 items across three dimensions (perception of container city, emotional state, and social relationships), explaining 51.62% of the total variance. Confirmatory factor analysis supported the three-factor structure with acceptable fit indices ($\chi^2/df = 1.536$; RMSEA = .037; SRMR = .0531; TLI = .921; CFI = .946; GFI = .976). The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients were adequate, with a value of .889 for the entire scale. These findings demonstrate that the PESLPS possesses acceptable levels of validity and reliability. Given Türkiye’s susceptibility to earthquakes, developing such a scale presents significant societal benefits.

Keywords

Earthquake • Container city • Post-Earthquake Social Life Perception Scale (PESLPS) • Social relationship • Türkiye

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Post-Earthquake Social Life Perception Scale: Validity and Reliability Study

On February 6, 2023, two earthquakes centered in Kahramanmaraş directly affected approximately 14 million people in Türkiye. The disaster claimed the lives of 53737 individuals and left 107213 injured. A total of 39466 buildings collapsed, 21175 structures were deemed in urgent need of demolition, 199967 were classified as severely damaged, and 43698 were moderately damaged (Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, Directorate of Strategy Development, 2025). In addition, the disaster caused the internal migration of nearly 3 million individuals across the country (Demir & Gülerce, 2023, p. 301). Following the disaster, temporary shelter services were provided for approximately 3.6 million individuals. In 2023, 144668 people were accommodated in 360167 tents established across 332 tent cities. Subsequently, container cities were constructed, and by 2025, tent cities were dismantled as the construction of container cities was completed. As of 2024, approximately 650000 people have been accommodated in 214000 containers. In the provinces of Hatay and Kahramanmaraş, two of the most severely affected cities, where the survey was developed and the scale applied, 340819 individuals are living in a total of 111602 containers (Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, Directorate of Strategy Development, 2024).

Earthquakes shake not only the physical world but also individuals' lived-world, transforming how they perceive and experience social life. The erosion of ontological security (Bozkurt, 2023; Brooks et al., 2016), the destruction of lived spaces (Firat, 2022), traumatic losses and fear (Sönmez, 2022; Yıldız & Akkoyun, 2023; Yelboğa, 2023), and the deterioration of social relationships (Birkök & Eroğlu, 2004; Erdem, 2023; Selçuk, 2024) are just a few of the resulting consequences. In more familiar terms, the earthquake had multifaceted effects, many of which have been documented in various studies. These include economic (Şen, 2023), demographic (Kaygalak, 2023), and psychological impacts (Güler et al., 2024), as well as effects on medical services (Karaağaç, 2023), the business world (Dündar, 2023), and migration (Aslan, 2023). In this sense, the earthquake is a force that dislodges the taken-for-granted world, disrupting the continuity and coherence of the everyday life-world.

Although an earthquake is a geophysical event, the fundamental assumption of this study is that it is also a sociological phenomenon. The February 6 earthquakes undoubtedly shattered the life-worlds of millions and transformed their perceptions of social life. This study aimed to develop a scale to measure how individuals' perceptions of social life have changed due to the earthquake. For this purpose, appropriate items were identified and factor analyses were conducted through a survey. Subsequently, confirmatory factor analyses were performed, demonstrating that the developed scale is both valid and reliable. The development of this scale enables the identification of changes in earthquake survivors' perceptions of social life, thereby facilitating timely and targeted interventions. In this way, a ready-to-use measurement tool has been produced to support the implementation of necessary measures for a healthy recovery process and to be used in potential future disasters.

The Impact of Earthquakes on the Transformation of Social Life

The Construction of Social Reality

Human beings are entities that construct the world and exhibit an openness toward it (Berger & Luckmann, 2008). This 'openness to the world' refers to one's ability to engage in reciprocal relationships with others within social life. Social life is a realm where individuals coexist, form mutual interactions,

experience solidarity or conflict, and inhabit a world enveloped by cultural layers. From the moment of birth, the individual is embedded in the social world. Through the process of socialization, one internalizes social life via habits, customs, and traditions (Berger & Luckmann, 2008). However, emerging situations may disrupt this relational structure and compel individuals to cope with unfamiliar realities. However, newly emerging conditions may at times dislocate this relationship, compelling individuals to confront and adapt to unfamiliar situations.

Social life is inherently multidimensional. In this study, particular emphasis is placed on space, the individual self, and social relationships. The focus lies in understanding how individuals perceive the container city as a new living space after the earthquake, how they experience their emotional states, and how they interpret their social relations.

People construct reality within the context of social life. In other words, social reality is characterized by its intersubjective nature (Berger & Luckmann, 2008). This feature allows the process of institutionalization to unfold temporally and to be shaped by spatial transformations. In this context, the February 6 earthquakes will be remembered in history as a moment when social life was abruptly fractured and its continuity disrupted. The earthquake dismantled the institutional world -created and sustained through historically continuous repetition- and compelled individuals to reconstruct it. Under the prevailing conditions, a reorganization process begins. The reconstruction of social life becomes possible only through a negotiation between prior stocks of knowledge and the emerging realities. In other words, past learning is mobilized to perceive and make sense of new circumstances.

The construction of the life-world under post-earthquake conditions is fraught with challenges. Due to the earthquake, individuals who were forced to leave their safe living environments now face the necessity of constructing a new ground for interaction with unfamiliar others in container cities. Living in proximity with individuals from different social classes or strata, from rural or urban backgrounds, and from various family structures has undoubtedly led to both new problems and new forms of social construction. Natural disasters paradoxically trigger both social disorganization and solidarity, leading to increased crime rates while also stimulating community efforts to rebuild (Tezcan, 2023). These developments -both challenges and new formations- are only possible through social interaction. Every new experience and repetition will redefine their current social positions. It is precisely at this point that this study aims to examine individuals' perceptions of social life.

The Effects of the Earthquake

What kinds of social consequences may arise from a physically occurring earthquake? This question forms the central thesis of this study. While an earthquake is indeed a geophysical phenomenon, it is simultaneously a sociological one, as it leaves deep and lasting marks on social life in terms of both its impact and aftermath. Bates and Peacock (1987) argued that disasters can disrupt the functioning of social systems, resulting in permanent transformations within social structures; such events can influence systems of social stratification, potentially leading to either regression or advancement, damage existing infrastructure, cause labor and financial shortages, and generate new behavioral patterns. Similarly, in their study on the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and subsequent tsunami, Hori, Tsumuraya, Kanamori, Maeda, Yabe, and Niwa (2014) found that following the disaster, the depopulation of the city of Minamisoma accelerated, with younger generations abandoning both employment and the city itself, resulting in a labor crisis.

Disasters also have significant economic consequences. Klomp and Valckx (2014) stated that natural disasters have a considerable and increasing negative impact on per capita economic growth, particularly in developing countries. Since such events hinder long-term development goals, they tend to affect developing and underdeveloped countries more severely (UKKDF, 2001, p. 38). Similarly, Khan and colleagues (2023) observed that disasters have more pronounced effects in low-income countries, whereas the impacts tend to be less severe in high- and upper-middle-income nations. Paudel and Ryu (2018), in their study of the 1988 Nepal earthquake, concluded that disasters deepen existing inequalities between social classes. Fox et al. (2002) further argued that job loss and other financial hardships experienced during disaster periods may intensify economic dependency within families and lead to increased conflict among family members due to heightened financial strain.

In addition to its impact on the social structure and the economy, an earthquake transforms social relationships. As LaFollette (1997) emphasizes, to live is, first and foremost, to relate. These relationships are often personal and sometimes institutional. In this context, Giddens' (2010b) notion of "pure relationships" may also be relevant. The social world, in essence, is constructed through the establishment of these forms of relationships. As Goffman (2012) explains, mutual interactions generate "working consensuses" that help individuals define their positions securely within social life and mitigate potential threats to their existence. The earthquake, in this sense, invalidated the pre-existing consensuses and the social relationships built upon them. As such, the reconstruction of social relationships becomes a necessity. The earthquake has thus introduced new forms of social interaction.

Weitzman and Behrman (2016, p. 185) found that earthquakes may escalate familial tensions and lead to an increase in 'intimate partner violence' (IPV), demonstrating that even spousal relationships are not immune to transformation in post-disaster settings. Despite the emotional intimacy shared between partners, they are often unable to avoid relational changes following a disaster. Tekin-Babuç and Gökçe (2024) also argue that the strategies and methods developed to adapt to new living conditions and to reorganize the altered social order can lead to changes in personal identities and relational networks. In their study, some families reported that they encountered new roles and responsibilities in the aftermath of the disaster, and they had to navigate these newly emerged positions (Tekin-Babuç & Gökçe, 2024).

Beyond these social and economic disruptions, earthquakes also produce profound psychological and emotional trauma (Stratta & Rossi, 2013). Individuals generally feel secure and protected within the societies they inhabit. This sense of security and trust reflects one's belief in the continuity and sustainability of the life-world (Güloğlu, 2022). In this regard, trust is not only a social condition but also a form of existential wagering (Sztompka, 2003). As Giddens (2010a) explains, ontological security refers to an individual's emotional confidence in the continuity and reliability of the social world. Earthquakes interrupt this continuity and disrupt the flow of everyday life, leaving individuals feeling vulnerable and exposed to risk. Natural disasters often lead to social disorder and chaos, creating conditions that encourage criminal behavior (Tezcan & İnan, 2024). Therefore, earthquakes can produce profound and complex effects on individuals' behaviors. These effects are often tied to the processes of coping with traumatic experiences, uncertainty, and loss. If individuals do not receive adequate psychological support following the disaster, post-traumatic stress may evolve into more chronic conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Sakarya & Güneş, 2013). Chan and colleagues (2012) found high levels of PTSD and depressive symptoms among earthquake survivors, particularly among those who lost close family members. Demirci and Avcu (2021), in interviews with 30 women aged over 18 whose homes were damaged during the İzmir/Seferihisar earthquake, reported

that participants faced both material and emotional hardships, including problems related to shelter and safety. These women also described their struggles with insomnia, despair, trauma, stress, and anxiety. Due to gender roles that place expectations on women to hold the family together and remain resilient, the authors concluded that women are particularly vulnerable to psychological breakdowns in the aftermath of disasters (Demirci & Avcu, 2021).

Experiencing Life in Post-Disaster Container Cities

Lefebvre (2014) argues that space is socially produced. Homes, neighborhoods, and cities, as lived spaces, are inherently subjective (Lefebvre, 2014). When we recognize space as a “lived space,” we acknowledge it as a meaningful entity. Phenomenologists describe the body as something that extends into space. This extension also shapes the way we experience space. Therefore, the relationship between space and the individual is closely tied to one’s world of meaning. Nearly everything that happens to us has a spatial dimension. As Paul Ricoeur explains in *Oneself as Another* (2010), the self is “someone to whom things happen.” Even a small change in space can signal transformation within the person. Almost everything that happens to us has a spatial aspect. An earthquake can be described as the movement of space caused by a non-human factor, which represents a massive disaster that disrupts people’s shared life-world. Earthquakes affect physical structures and, through them, human lives. Spaces are filled with meanings and symbols, and each has its own unique language. An earthquake is a violent disruption of this language and subjectivity.

After the February 6 earthquakes in Türkiye, container cities were established in the affected regions. These temporary settlements have been housing survivors while permanent housing is still under construction. Container cities followed a grid layout and included infrastructure such as schools and markets. Compared to tent cities, they offered better physical conditions. However, when compared to the pre-earthquake lived spaces -places of comfort and existential security- they felt completely unfamiliar.

The word “container” means portable. A “container city,” then, refers to a “portable city” (TDK, 2025). Although they are presented as temporary solutions to urgent needs, container cities can also serve as places of “temporary permanence” where “undesirable populations” are kept. In some cases, they function almost like prisons, especially where refugees are housed (Peternal & Podjed, 2024). However, after a disaster, their use as temporary shelters carries less political and ideological weight. Peternal and Podjed (2024), in their study of post-earthquake container settlements in Croatia, observed that people initially accepted this form of housing. Over time, however, it was perceived as a form of social isolation. Residents began experiencing depression, anxiety, and loneliness. The authors also found that the longer people stayed in container cities, the more evident it became that local authorities failed to understand their needs. Therefore, they argue that container cities must be analyzed as a cultural phenomenon and as a deep, multidimensional crisis. From this perspective, container cities are undeniably a sociological phenomenon.

Similarly, Yanardağ (2024) conducted a study on adolescent earthquake survivors (ages 12-19) living in container cities. The study showed that these youths lacked private space, internet access, and access to technological tools such as computers and tablets. They also had limited access to social and study areas. These shortages negatively affected their educational and psychosocial well-being. Limited living space and the lack of privacy made it difficult for them to manage their emotions and meet their need for solitude (Yanardağ, 2024). The study also noted that due to economic losses and insufficient family income, boys were often employed in sectors such as industry, construction, and manufacturing. In contrast, girls were given more responsibilities at home, such as childcare and household chores.

Container cities are seen as fast, simple, and relatively inexpensive solutions to housing needs. However, they always carry the risk of becoming permanent. This fear contributes to feelings of isolation among the residents. However, container homes are valuable because they provide shelter. How people arrange the interior and exterior of their containers shows this value. More importantly, container cities are waiting zones for those who refuse to relocate. These people wait for their homes and neighborhoods to be rebuilt in the same place. In this sense, a container city is a site of waiting. It is a liminal space. However, this does not mean that people are completely disconnected from social life. Rather, their familiar way of living has changed. Despite the challenges, people continue to build relationships. The key question is how those relationships have changed. In other words, how do people now perceive social life? This study developed a scale to explore and reveal exactly that perception.

Method

Study Group

The study group included individuals living in container cities located in Kahramanmaraş and Hatay, Türkiye. Participants were selected using the stratified sampling method. This method ensures that the specific subgroups within a population are properly represented. In this method, the population was divided into strata, and samples were taken independently from each subgroup (Berg, 2001). The sample included adult volunteers who had at least one child under the age of seven.

Using a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, the minimum required sample size was calculated as 384 participants. This calculation was based on the formula proposed by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018). In total, 398 individuals participated in the exploratory factor analysis, and 391 individuals participated in the confirmatory factor analysis. In addition, the ethical approval to conduct the research was obtained from the Ethics Committee of Kilis 7 Aralık University.

Scale Development Process

This study aimed to develop the Post-Earthquake Social Life Perception Scale (PESLPS) for use with Turkish-speaking adults. The scale development process followed the eight-step model proposed by DeVellis (2003):

1. **Identifying theoretical indicators and reviewing the literature:** The relevant theoretical concepts were defined, and the existing literature was systematically reviewed.
2. **Creating an item pool:** Items representing the identified constructs were generated.
3. **Deciding on the format of the instrument:** The scale structure and item format were determined.
4. **Consulting experts:** The draft items were evaluated by a panel of experts.
5. **Ensuring item validity:** The relevance and clarity of each item were assessed.
6. **Pilot testing:** The preliminary version of the scale was administered.
7. **Item analysis:** The effectiveness and suitability of the items were evaluated.
8. **Finalizing the scale:** The scale was refined and finalized based on feedback and analysis.

To begin the process, a literature review was conducted to identify factors that could influence individuals' behavior during extraordinary situations such as disasters. Based on this review, an initial pool of 40 items was created. These items were written in the form of statements reflecting the themes identified in

the literature. The response format was carefully selected to match the participants' cognitive levels and to minimize ambiguity. A five-point Likert scale was used, with response options ranging from *Strongly Disagree* (1) to *Strongly Agree* (5).

The content validity was examined using Lawshe's (1975) Content Validity Ratio (CVR) and Content Validity Index (CVI). To calculate these values, the draft items were sent to a group of experts. Expert feedback was used to assess the relevance and clarity of each item. All experts held at least a master's degree in their respective fields. A total of 12 experts were consulted from the fields of sociology, guidance and psychological counseling, curriculum and instruction, and educational measurement and evaluation. The experts were asked to evaluate whether the items matched the intended construct, whether they were necessary, and whether they were clear, concise, and easy to understand. Following the elimination of weak items, a revised draft of the scale was prepared for further construct validity analysis.

Data Analysis

The draft version of the PESLPS was administered to 398 adults. The content relevance of the data was evaluated using the content validity ratio (CVR) and content validity index (CVI). The suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. For construct validity, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed. Independent samples t-tests were conducted to assess item discrimination. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was used to examine the relationships between the factors and to assess internal consistency. Item-total correlations were also calculated to determine whether items measured the same underlying construct. All of these analyses were conducted using SPSS version 25.0. Additionally, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out with the help of AMOS. The following fit indices were reported: chi-square/degrees of freedom (χ^2/df), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI).

Findings

Content Validity

The content validity of the PESLPS was assessed on the basis of expert opinions. The experts were provided with an evaluation form and asked to classify each item as "Appropriate," "Not Appropriate," or "Needs Revision." If an expert marked an item as "Needs Revision," their feedback was collected, and the item was revised accordingly. The updated version of the item was then considered appropriate. The content validity ratio (CVR) for each item was calculated based on these evaluations. CVR was determined by subtracting 0.5 from the proportion of experts who rated the item as appropriate relative to the total number of experts. These values indicate the statistical significance of each item (as noted in Veneziano & Hooper, 1997; as cited in Yurdugül, 2005).

Table 1

Expert Ratings, Content Validity Ratios (CVR), and Content Validity Index (CVI)

Item No	Appropriate	Not Appropriate	CVR	Item No	Appropriate	Not Appropriate	CVR
1	6	6	0.00	21	5	7	-0.17
2	11	1	0.83	22	7	5	0.17
3	10	2	0.67	23	7	5	0.17
4	7	5	0.17	24	11	1	0.83

Item No	Appropriate	Not Appropriate	CVR	Item No	Appropriate	Not Appropriate	CVR
5	12	0	1.00	25	5	7	-0.17
6	5	7	-0.17	26	5	7	-0.17
7	6	6	0.00	27	7	5	0.17
8	11	1	0.83	28	8	4	0.33
9	3	9	-0.50	29	10	2	0.67
10	5	7	-0.17	30	8	4	0.33
11	10	2	0.67	31	10	2	0.67
12	1	11	-0.83	32	10	2	0.67
13	11	1	0.83	33	10	2	0.67
14	12	0	1.00	34	12	0	1.00
15	12	0	1.00	35	8	4	0.33
16	7	5	0.17	36	7	5	0.17
17	8	4	0.33	37	9	3	0.50
18	7	5	0.17	38	10	2	0.67
19	8	4	0.33	39	12	0	1.00
20	6	6	0.00	40	7	5	0.17

Note: The minimum acceptable CVR value for 12 experts is 0.56. Items scoring below this threshold were excluded from the final version of the scale. The overall content validity index (CVI) was calculated as 0.81, indicating high content validity for the scale.

Based on Lawshe's method and the evaluations of 12 experts, items with a CVR value below 0.56 were removed from the scale. The following items were excluded: Items 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 35, 36, 37, and 40.

Construct Validity

To assess the construct validity, a factor analysis was conducted. Within this scope, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were calculated. Principal component analysis (PCA) was performed, followed by direct oblmin rotation. According to Büyüköztürk (2002), factor loadings between .30 and .59 are considered moderate, while loadings of .60 and above indicate strong associations. Items with factor loadings below .30 are considered to have low explanatory power. Kalaycı (2010) states that for data sets of 350 or more, item loadings should be above .30. Based on these criteria, items with factor loadings below .30 and those loading on multiple factors (Items 3, 6, 10, 11, 12, and 16) were removed from the scale. After removing these items, factor analysis was repeated from the beginning.

Table 2

KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Results

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		,763
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	697,070
	df	55
	Sig.	,000

As shown in Table 2, the KMO value was found to be .763, indicating an acceptable level of sampling adequacy. The Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level, confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis.

Table 3*Total Variance Explained by Factors*

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues	% of the variance	Cumulative %	Extraction sums of squared loadings	% of the variance	Cumulative %	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings	% of the variance	Cumulative %
1	2.94	26.68%	26.68%	2.94	26.68%	26.68%	2.06	18.68%	18.68%
2	1.65	15.02%	41.70%	1.65	15.02%	41.70%	1.86	16.87%	35.55%
3	1.09	9.92%	51.62%	1.09	9.92%	51.62%	1.77	16.07%	51.62%
4	0.91	8.30%	59.93%						

The factor analysis revealed that the total amount of variance explained was 51.62%. The variance explained by each factor was 18.68% for the first factor, 16.87% for the second factor, and 16.07% for the third factor.

Table 4*Factor Loadings of Items*

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Item 1	0.54		
Item 2	0.64		
Item 4	0.67		
Item 5	0.69		
Item 7		0.80	
Item 8		0.76	
Item 9		0.63	
Item 13	0.55		
Item 14			0.65
Item 15			0.77

Items with loadings above .30 were assigned to the factor with the higher loading, provided that the difference between the two loadings was greater than .10. An examination of the factor structure showed that the scale consisted of two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. All remaining items had acceptable factor loadings within their respective factors, ranging from a minimum of .54 to a maximum of .80. The distribution of items across factors and the number of items per factor is presented in [Table 5](#).

Table 5*Item Distribution by Factor*

Factor	Number of Items	Factor Name	Item Numbers
Factor 1	5	Perception of the Container City	1, 2, 4, 5, 13
Factor 2	3	Perception of the Emotional State	7, 8, 9
Factor 3	2	Perception of Social Relations	14, 15

As shown in [Table 5](#), the first factor consists of 5 items (1, 2, 4, 5, 13), the second factor consists of 3 items (7, 8, 9), and the third factor includes 2 items (14, 15). In its final form, the scale comprises 10 items. Based on the literature, the factors were named as follows: Factor 1: Perception of Container City; Factor 2: Perception

of Emotional State; and Factor 3: Perception of Social Relations. After the factor analysis, the item numbers were reordered and presented in the table accordingly.

To assess item discrimination, an independent samples t-test was conducted. This analysis aimed to determine whether each item significantly differentiated between individuals in the lower and upper quartiles. Specifically, the scores of the lowest 27 % and highest 27 % of respondents were compared.

Table 6

Item Discrimination Values Based on the Lower and Upper 27% Groups

Group	N	M	SD	t	df	p
Lower	200	37.76	3.79	-32.51	198	.000
Upper		50.56	1.07			

As shown in Table 6, the arithmetic means of the lower and upper quartile groups were compared to evaluate the discriminative power of the scale items and total scores. The results of the independent samples t-test revealed statistically significant differences between the two groups, with these differences being highly significant at the $p < .001$ level.

To determine whether the scale items measure the same construct, item-total correlations were calculated. The resulting correlation coefficients are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Item-Total Correlations

Item	r	p	N	Item	r	p	N
1-Living in a container is difficult.	.495	.000	398	8-The earthquake negatively affected my emotional state.	.553	.000	398
2-While living in a container, my communication with my child deteriorated.	.598	.000	398	9-The earthquake led me to become more protective of my children.	.431	.000	398
4-In a container settlement, you cannot trust the people around you.	.573	.000	398	13-After the earthquake, I trusted the people around me less.	.578	.000	398
5-In the container settlement, my children picked up the negative behaviors they observed around them.	.588	.000	398	14-After the earthquake, I realized the importance of helping one another.	-.127	.011	398
7-The earthquake made me question the meaning of life.	.427	.000	398	15-After the earthquake, I started talking more with my children	-.196	.000	398

As shown in Table 7, each item in the scale was found to have a statistically significant correlation with the total score ($p < .000$). This finding indicates that the items interact consistently with one another and collectively measure the same underlying construct. Therefore, the results provide strong evidence supporting the internal structural integrity and consistency of the scale.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the three-factor structure of the Post-Earthquake Perception of Social Life Scale (PESLPS) on a separate adult sample ($n = 391$). The analysis was performed using AMOS 24. The following fit indices were examined to assess model adequacy: χ^2/df , RMSEA, SRMR, TLI, CFI, and GFI.

Figure 1
Confirmatory Factor Analysis

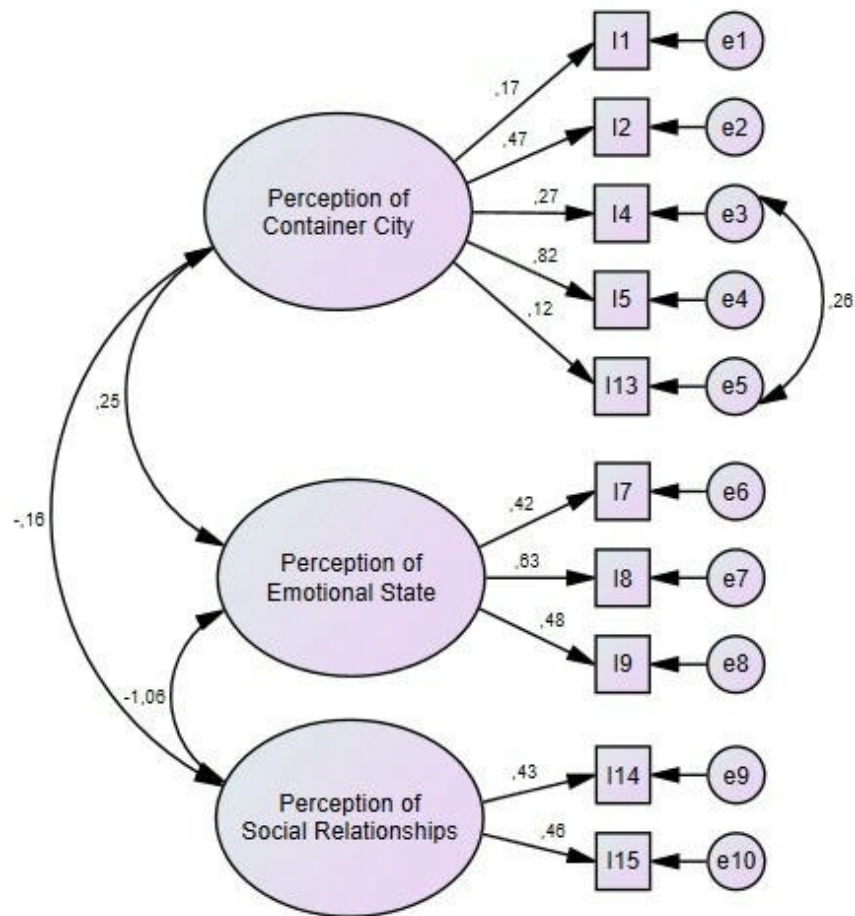


Table 8
Model Fit Indices for the PESLPS

Model	χ^2/df	RMSEA	SRMR	TLI	CFI	GFI
PESLPS	1.536	.037	.0531	.921	.946	.976

As shown in Table 8, the ratio of the chi-square to the degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) was found to be 1.536. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was .037, the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) was .0531, the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) was .921, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was .946, and the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) was .976.

In confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), the χ^2/df ratio is a widely accepted indicator of model fit. Ratios of 3 or lower are considered good, while ratios up to 5 are deemed acceptable (Çokluk et al., 2010). The obtained value of 1.536 indicates a good fit. The RMSEA measures the degree of error in the model's approximation of the population. Values of .08 or lower are considered acceptable (Çerezci, 2010), while some researchers indicate that values below .06 (Thompson, 2004) or even .05 (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004) reflect an excellent fit. In this study, the RMSEA was .037, indicating an excellent fit.

The SRMR represents the standardized difference between the observed and predicted covariances. Values below .05 are considered good; values between .05 and .10 indicate acceptable fit (Özabacı, 2011).

Harrington (2009) stated that values below .08 reflect an adequate fit. The SRMR in this study was .0531, which indicates an acceptable model fit. The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) evaluates the model fit by comparing it to a null model. Values closer to 1 indicate better fit. While TLI values above .95 are considered ideal (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004), values above .90 are generally accepted as adequate (Brown, 2015). The TLI in this study was .921, indicating an acceptable model fit.

The comparative fit index (CFI) compares the fit of the target model to that of an independent model. Values above .95 are considered good (Harrington, 2009; Bentler, 1989, as cited in Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), although values above .90 are also commonly accepted (Ayyıldız & Cengiz, 2006; Çokluk et al., 2010). The CFI in this study was .946, which meets the threshold for an acceptable fit. The goodness-of-fit index (GFI) evaluates the extent to which the model reproduces the observed data. Byrne (2001) notes that values above .90 are acceptable. The GFI in this study was .976, indicating an excellent model-data fit.

Confirmatory factor analysis organizes perceptions of post-earthquake social life into three main dimensions: Perception of the Container City, Emotional State, and Social Relations. The perception of the container city was measured using five items. The strongest indicator was “In the container settlement, my children picked up negative behaviors they observed around them” (i5, loading = .82). Moderate loadings were observed for “While living in a container, my communication with my child deteriorated” (i2, .47) and “In a container settlement, you cannot trust the people around you” (i4, .27). Lower loadings were found for “Living in a container is difficult” (i1, .17) and “After the earthquake, I trusted the people around me less” (i13, .12). This pattern suggests that participants primarily interpreted the container city experience through their children’s behavioral responses, while trust-related concerns appeared to be of secondary importance. The covariance between error terms e3 and e5 (.26) supports a shared response pattern among items with similar content.

The perception of emotional state reflects the inner turmoil experienced after the earthquake. The core item in this dimension was “The earthquake negatively affected my emotional state” (i8, loading = .63). Moderate loadings were observed for “The earthquake led me to become more protective of my children” (i9, .48) and “The earthquake made me question the meaning of life” (i7, .42). This pattern indicates that participants primarily internalized the trauma by recognizing their emotional reactions and protective tendencies. Rather than engaging in existential reflection, they tended to describe their experience through more tangible emotional impacts.

The Perception of Social Relations reveals how post-disaster solidarity was reestablished. Two items contributed to this factor with similar strength: “After the earthquake, I realized the importance of helping one another” (i14, loading = .43) and “After the earthquake, I started talking more with my children” (i15, .46). These moderate loadings are consistent with social interaction not being entirely disrupted.

However, participants appeared to rebuild solidarity cautiously and gradually, treating it as a renewed starting point.

The relationships between latent variables offer important insights into the psychosocial recovery process of earthquake survivors. A positive covariance (+.25) was found between negative perceptions of container living conditions and emotional distress, indicating that poor living conditions were associated with worsened emotional states. Moreover, as emotional strain increased, perceptions of social relations significantly declined (covariance = -1.06). This pattern suggests that internal emotional responses, such as “The earthquake negatively affected my emotional state” (i8) and “The earthquake led me to become more protective of my children” (i9)- may limit the development of social relationship dimensions, including “After

the earthquake, I realized the importance of helping one another” (i14) and “After the earthquake, I started talking more with my children” (i15). Emotional deterioration appears to weaken individuals’ connections to their social world, potentially reducing their capacity to seek support and engage in collective solidarity mechanisms.

The weak but negative relationship between the Perception of Container City and the Perception of Social Relations (covariance = -.16) reveals that physical living conditions are not the sole determinant of social connectedness. Rather, the emotional state primarily shapes this connection. In other words, dissatisfaction with the housing experience does not directly weaken social relationships; instead, it produces an indirect effect by disrupting emotional well-being. This pattern indicates that improving physical conditions alone is not sufficient in post-earthquake interventions. Emotional support processes and the strengthening of social bonds must be addressed simultaneously. Recovery should not be confined to a physical space; it must be understood as a multilayered process that integrates emotional and social components.

Reliability Analyses

To assess the reliability of the PESLPS, both the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient and the split-half method were used. These methods were applied to determine the internal consistency (homogeneity) of the overall scale and its subdimensions. The Cronbach’s alpha values for the total scale and subscales are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Reliability coefficients (Cronbach’s alpha)

Dimension	Cronbach’s Alpha
Total Scale	.889
1. Perception of the Container City	.815
2. Perception of the Emotional State	.873
3. Perception of Social Relations	.781

In addition to Cronbach’s alpha, the split-half reliability method was used to evaluate the consistency of the measurement tool. For this analysis, the test was divided into two halves, with the first consisting of the first subdimension and the second combining the second and third subdimensions. The correlation between the two halves is shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Split-half reliability analysis

Halves Compared	N	r	p
Half 1 vs. Half 2	398	.74	.001

As seen in Table 10, there is a statistically significant correlation between the first and second halves of the test, indicating that the test demonstrates an acceptable level of reliability.

Discussion

The study included 391 adults. Yaşlıoğlu (2017) stated that in scale development, a higher number of observations per item improves reliability, and the ideal ratio is 1:5. In this context, given that the number of items administered to the study group was 16, the participation of 391 adults can be considered sufficient for the sample size.

KMO is an indicator of sampling adequacy and examines inter-item correlations. Values above .60 are generally considered acceptable (Stevens, 2002, as cited in Field, 2018). Bartlett's test of sphericity evaluates the applicability of factor analysis. It tests whether the correlations between items are sufficiently strong to justify factor extraction (Ntoumanis, 2005). The KMO value of .787 was within the acceptable limits. Bartlett's test result was significant at the $p < .05$ level. These findings show that the data were suitable for factor analysis.

Each item in a well-constructed scale is expected to correlate with the total score. This confirms whether the items belong to the same construct. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis showed that all items had a statistically significant correlation with their total scores ($p < .000$). This indicates that all items belong to the same structure. The CFA results supported the three-factor structure of the PESLPS. The fit indices were within the acceptable limits: $\chi^2/df = 1.584$; RMSEA = .039; SRMR = .0429; TLI = .914; CFI = .940; GFI = .974.

In the literature, a reliability coefficient of .70 or above is considered sufficient. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients were $\alpha = .889$ (total scale), $\alpha = .815$ (perception of container city), $\alpha = .873$ (perception of emotional state), and $\alpha = .781$ (perception of social relations). These values indicate high internal consistency. Both the overall scale and each subscale exceed .70. When subscales are present, alpha should be calculated separately for each (Cronbach, 1951, as cited in Field, 2018). In this study assessed split-half reliability by dividing the items into two parallel halves, correlating their total scores, and applying the Spearman-Brown correction. A significant correlation was found between the first and second halves, supporting the reliability of the scale. It is stated that values higher than .7 indicate high internal consistency (Seğer, 2015).

The results of the confirmatory factor analysis indicate that earthquake survivors interpret the experience of container living not merely through physical conditions but primarily through their children's behavioral responses (i5, loading = .82). This emphasizes the direct impact of parental stress on children's emotional and behavioral difficulties. Short et al. (2023) reported that post-earthquake parental anxiety was significantly associated with children's emotional symptoms, behavioral problems, and hyperactivity. Accordingly, container settlements appear to serve a regulatory function in shaping parenting roles and restructuring family dynamics in the aftermath of a disaster. In addition, observations pointed to a shift in survivors' perceptions of trust within the container settlements. The container housing areas established after the earthquake disrupted the traditional continuity of "home and neighborhood," placing survivors in a liminal space. This sense of temporariness weakens what Giddens (2010a) calls ontological security, centering a loss of trust in one's living environment. Recent field studies confirm that earthquake survivors in Türkiye experience container living as a form of displacement, both physically and in terms of identity, and that the perception of insecurity contributes to emotional deterioration (Çakın & AlMajdalawi, 2025; Aldrich, 2012).

The distribution of items within the Perception of the Emotional State factor indicated that individuals primarily experienced trauma as a disruption in mood, followed by behavioral (protective parenting) and cognitive (existential reflection) manifestations. This sequential pattern is consistent with a layered internalization of trauma among survivors. Notably, the impact of emotional turmoil on social relationships also emerges as a critical theme. While the existing literature emphasizes the regulatory role of social ties on mental health, it also warns that weakened social relationships in the aftermath of trauma may hinder emotional recovery (Kawachi & Berkman, 2001). In this context, the emotional state functions not only as an individual psychological indicator but also as a determinant of social participation and social capital.

The moderate loadings of the items within the Perception of the Social Relations factor indicate that post-earthquake social interactions were not entirely disrupted, but were gradually reestablished in a limited way, depending on emotional well-being. While tendencies toward mutual aid and increased family communication emerged as key indicators of this factor, participants appeared to rebuild their social relationships cautiously and selectively. This finding aligns with existing research on the role of social capital in recovery processes. Indeed, the literature highlights that social ties are essential to both community resilience and mental health, and that reestablishing these bonds has a direct impact on psychosocial recovery after disasters (Wind, Fordham, & Komproe, 2011).

Conclusion

This study developed a valid and reliable measurement tool to assess adults' perceptions of post-earthquake life. The scale consists of 10 items and 3 subdimensions: perception of the container city, emotional state, and of social relations. Designed in a Likert-type format, the scale asks respondents to rate items from *Strongly Disagree (1)* to *Strongly Agree (5)*. The total score ranges from 10 to 50. Each subdimension can also be scored separately. Higher scores indicate a more positive perception within the relevant subdimension or the overall construct.

PESLPS is designed to evaluate individuals' perceptions of their post-earthquake experiences across three core dimensions: perception of container cities, emotional state, and social relations. Anticipating potential shifts in social perceptions despite future disasters is considered critical, particularly for the effective planning of intervention and recovery strategies. Container cities, widely adopted as emergency solutions across the globe, have become an integral part of the post-disaster reality. Individuals' perceptions of these temporary settlements are shaped by key factors such as spatial belonging, the uncertainty inherent in temporariness, and perceived quality of life. In addition, the psychological impacts of disasters often lead to fluctuations in individuals' emotional states, which can significantly influence their perception of their environment and their lived reality, both directly and indirectly. The disruption or collapse of social relationships following disasters can result in increased social isolation and a heightened need for community support. Therefore, the restoration of social ties and the reinforcement of communal bonds are essential components of the post-disaster recovery process. Data collected through this scale, grounded in the aforementioned dimensions, can contribute to a comprehensive understanding of post-disaster social reality. This, in turn, may facilitate the development of intervention strategies that are rapid, practical, and sustainable. The PESLPS is applicable in the aftermath of earthquakes and other types of natural disasters.



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Appendix

Appendix 1

PESLPS Form (English Translation)

Factor	Item No	Statements
Perception of the Container City	1	Living in a container is difficult.
	2	While living in a container, my communication with my child deteriorated.
	4	In a container settlement, you cannot trust the people around you.
	5	In the container settlement, my children picked up the negative behaviors they observed around them.
Perception of the Emotional State	13	After the earthquake, I trusted the people around me less.
	7	The earthquake made me question the meaning of life.
	8	The earthquake negatively affected my emotional state.
Perception of Social Relations	9	The earthquake led me to become more protective of my children.
	14	After the earthquake, I realized the importance of helping one another.
	15	After the earthquake, I started talking more with my children

Note: The items listed above were translated into English by the authors. The validity and reliability analyses of the English version are the subject of a separate study.