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The school bullying and perceived parental style in adolescents

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Abstract

The study aims at researching the relation between the perception of parental style of adolescents and school bullying. The participants of this study consisted of children between 9,10,11,12 classes of different two high schools. Data were collected using questionnaires Student Relation Attitudes Scale and Parental Style Scale. In result of study, reverse significant correlations were found between brullent personality subscales of Student Relation Attitudes Scale and acceptance/interest dimension of mother. Significant positive relationships were found between self-reliance of Student Relation Attitudes Scale and self-control dimensions of mother and father. Significant relationships were found between avoiding bullying subscale and acceptance/interest dimensions of mother and father.

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1. Introduction

While an individual try to answer the question “who am I?” in adolescence period s/he is in struggle with her environment in a compact spiritual investigation. In that period, the adolescent tries to find a place among her/his peers while leaving her/his parents. Especially in that period, getting a place among peers is important for developing a healthy identity. The concept of school bullying gets very important as adolescent in struggle with her/his environment try to find a place among her/his peers. In case a student s exposed to negative behaviors by one or someone among others the student become a bully or victim (Olweus, 1986, 1991; cited in Olweus, 2002). The concept of school can be defined as ones harming, abusing or continuously disturbing other (Olweus, 2002). Kochenderfer-Ladd and Skinner, (2002) classified peer bullying as physical (tapping), verbal (strange nicknames) indirect verbal (tell others not being friend with X) and general (not included in any above groups. At the same time, the adolescent bachelors’ close relation with the adults being trusted, self-accepted, tolerance and imitating them is important in developing their personal identity. According to Olweus (1994), some boys exposed to peer bullying

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are found as being in a closer and positive relationship with their adults and especially with their mothers (Olweus, 1994).

In Taiwan, authoritarian parents and parents subscale (hotness) is related negatively to the adolescent who are directly or indirectly bullied by their peers (Hokado, Lou and Angeles, 2006). There is positive correlation between being protective parents and children's prosocial attitudes which is learned from peers (Ozcinar, 2006). According to Atik (2006), the scores of exposition to bullying of girls between 11-15 years of age (second cycle of basic education) who were exposed to bullying and the scores of family style were positively correlated. Scores of strict supervising parental style are found low between boys bullied by their peers. In addition, be accepting parents style scores of the victim groups were founded low. Examination of the literature indicates that bullying by peers appearing in different shapes and effects was examined in different samples. Also, there is much research in types of bullying (Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Crick and Bigbee, 1998), disparity of reactions (Salmivalli & Lagerspetz, 1996), gender (Rivers & Smith, 1994; Wolke, Woods, Stanford & Schuz, 2001), psycho-social risk factors (Marini, Dane & Bosacki, 2006), self-respect (Karatzias Power & Swanson, 2002) and parents and school psychosocial periods (Idsoe, Solli & Cosmovici, 2008). In literature, there are also many studies on relationship between bullying and committing on offence of children (Baldry & Farrington, 2000), aggression and assertiveness (Schwartz, Dodge & Coie, 1993; Underwood, 2002) and bullying at work (Smith, Singer, Hoel & Cooper, 2003).

In Turkey, Yıldırım (2001) researched different aspects of bully, victim/bully and being not involved with bullying children. He found that victim children in relation to their friends shows faced characteristics and asking for help. According to the studies carried by Dölek (2002) those subject to bullying, and the bully indicated no significant difference between students of state schools and private schools. Gültekin (2003) determined that children of 11 were exposed more to open attacks, and those 16 were the target for dating attacks more than others.

In adolescent period individuals' success in coping with developmental duties depends on challenges with those in the environment finding a place among peers, relationship established by parents play a very important role in developing personal identity. Based on this rationale, this study aims at researching the relation between the perception of parental style of adolescents and school bullying.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The study group consisted of a total of 275 students, 135 (49%) female and 140 (51%) male, who were studying at 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grades in two high schools in Ankara during the spring semester of 2008-2009 academic year.

2.2. Research Instrument

Student Relationship Attitude Scale developed by Koc (2006) is composed of 21 items and 3 subscales: (a) bullying personality, (b) self-confidence and (c) avoidance from bullying. Among these subscales, the bullying personality makes rumor, joking apart, externalizes socially, attacks innocent and helpless victim in a distressing position or anxious, worried about something without any. Regarding construct validity, result of factor analysis the subscales factor loads varied between .51 and .75. Student Relationship Attitudes Scale subscale's Cronbach alpha was .81 for bullying personality, .69 for self-confidence and .57 for avoidance from bullying.

Parenting Style Scale (PSS) is developed by Sumer and Gungor (1999) by sampling from acceptance/involvement and strict control dimensions suggested by Macoby & Martin (1983) and also Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg & Dornbusch (1991). PSS, which can be applied to adolescents and parents, is consisted of 22 items. 11 items is related to strict control and the other items are related to acceptance/involvement. Thus, the application of adolescent reliability of perception of mother acceptance/involvement and strict control dimension was founded .91 and .81. The reliability of perception of father acceptance/involvement and strict control dimension was funded as .90 and .79 (Gungor, 2000).

2.3. Procedure

Scales were administered during the class sessions. Students were asked to respond to Student Relationships Attitude Scale and then to Parenting Style Scale. As for the data analysis correlation techniques were used.

2. Results (Findings)

Results of Pearson's moments product correlation indicated a negative significant correlations between Student Relationships Attitude Scale and Parenting Style Scale; between bullying personality subscales of Student Relationships Attitude Scale and acceptance/involvement dimension of mother ($r=.33$, $p<.01$) and of father ($r=-.31$, $p<.01$). In addition, no significant relationship was found between bullying personality subscales and strict control dimension of mother ($r=-.07$) and of father ($r=-.09$). On the other hand, significant positive relationships was found between self-confidence of Student Relationships Attitude Scale and strict control dimension of mother ($r=.18$, $p<.01$) and of father ($r=.19$, $p<.01$). No significant relationships was found between self-confidence scale and acceptance/involvement dimension of mother ($r=-.03$) and of father ($r=-.03$). Significant relationships were found between avoidance from bullying subscale of Student Relationships Attitude Scale and acceptance/involvement dimension of mother ($r=.28$, $p<.01$) and of father ($r=.25$, $p<.01$). On the other hand, no significant relationship was found between avoidance from bullying subscale and strict control dimension of mother ($r=.02$) and of father ($r=.00$).

3. Discussion

The concept of school bullying refers to situations where, over a period of time, a person is repeatedly exposed to negative acts (e.g. verbal abuse, offensive remarks, ridicule, slander or social exclusion) from peers. Bullying involves systematic aggression aimed at one or more individuals by another individual or a group. When exposed to intentional and systematic psychological harm by another person, either real or perceived, victims may experience fear, anxiety, helplessness, depression and shock. Such victimization may even change their perception of the school environment to one of threat, danger and insecurity. Research has indicated that exposure to bullying negatively affects victims' health and well-being. The symptoms reported by the victims include low self esteem, anxiety, sleep disturbance, recurrent nightmares, various somatic problems, concentration difficulties, irritability, feelings of depression, and self-hatred. In addition, many victims of bullying report lacking social support (Björkqvist et al., 1994; Einarsen et al., 1996; Einarsen & Raknes, Matthiesen, & Hellesoy, 1996; Einarsen & Raknes, 1997; Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Kile, 1990; Leymann, 1990, 1996; Leymann, 1996, 1992; Niedl, 1996; Vartia, 1996; Zapf et al., 1996; Zapf, Knorz, & Kulla, 1996; cited in Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002). However, victims who had been bullied for many years reported a higher level of impairment and did those who had been bullied for a short period of time (Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002). Research has shown that bullying significantly decreases when parent's acceptance/involvement increases. Also, perceived self-identity changes positively. Hence the more parental acceptance/involvement, the more avoidance from bullying acts they displayed. On the other hand, the more perceived parental strict controlled behaviors, the more perceived security. For that reason, it is possible that perceived parental strict controlled behavior is significantly related to self-confidence which affects attitudes positively.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

In accordance with previous findings, the result of present study show parental acceptance/involvement dimension display negatively significant relationship with bullying personality subscale of Student Relationships

Attitude Scale, whereas positively significant relationship with avoidance from bullying. Self-confidence subscale has shown positively significant relationship parental strict control dimension. However, dimension of parental strict control has shown negatively significant relationship between bullying personality and avoidance from bullying subscales. No significant relationships were found between self-confidence subscale and parental acceptance/involvement. On the basis of the present findings, we suggested that bullying personality, avoidance from bullying and self-confidence subscales can be reexamined by developing a model considering the effects of acceptance/involvement and strict control dimensions and relations with peers. We also suggest that an important therapeutic goal would be to assist victims in rebuilding a new set of viable and mature basic assumptions of themselves, other people, and the world. Moreover, future research endeavors should focus on individuals' perception of bullying and its sequel, since these factors may play an important role in explaining individual difference. School guidance programs can be developed to realize an increase in parental acceptance/involvement attitudes. The long-term studies can be applied to peers, teachers and parents about topics on bullying, avoidance from bullying and self-confidence.

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