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The Relationship between Types of Bullying experienced by Primary School Students and Their Anxiety, State-Trait, Self-Esteem And Certain Socio-Demographic Characteristics

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Abstract

Bullying experienced by children causes negative emotions which lead to failure in their lives. This study aims to determine the relationship between types of bullying and anxiety, state-trait, self-esteem and certain socio-demographic characteristics of primary school students who exposed to bullying at least two times. A primary school in the city center of eastern part of Turkey was selected by simple random sampling method. A socio-demographic questionnaire, which was developed by the researchers, and state-trait anxiety inventory and self-esteem scales were provided to 595 students in this school by explaining how to fill out the questionnaires between January 1 and January 31, 2015. The most common types of bullying expressed by children were kicking and slapping in the physical bullying 11.7%, kidding in the verbal bullying 14.1%, discrimination in the emotional bullying 7.3% and sexually explicit expressions in the sexual bullying type 4.2%.

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Keywords: Anxiety; state-trait of the children; primary school students

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1. Introduction

Primary school period is considered as the beginning of the psychosocial period in children, and their experiences in this period directs their emotional and social development to a large extent. School period, which has the most intense peer relationships, may lead to involuntary behavior against poor and powerless children as well. This negative behavior developed by students is defined as peer victimization. And, peer victimization is defined as systematic and habitual behavior exerted to a student by single person or by a group (Gredler, 2003; Schafer, Werner, & Crick, 2002). Abusing/bullying person is usually called as bully, and the one who experienced this bullying is called as the victim in general (Seals & Young, 2003). Researchers divide the bullying into three types mostly: social exclusion, physical and verbal bullying (Gredler, 2003). The latter two are observable, they are included in direct bullying, whereas social exclusion is defined as indirect bullying. Although one can be exposed to bullying at any field and at any age, it is considered more important in primary and secondary education compared to other age groups since it is a developmental risk factor (Craig & Pepler, 2003; Seals & Young, 2003). Children exposed to bullying are considered to be at risk in terms of many psychological variables (Craig & Pepler, 2003). There are studies reporting that children who exposed to bullying need more psychological help, have higher level of depression and anxiety, and have a lower self-esteem (Craig, 1998). It was stated that the stress and harm caused by bullying experienced in childhood may lead to negative effects in adulthood also, and it was also noted that bullying not only affects the victim but also the bully as well (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2004; Farrington, 1993).

In line with the results of the research conducted on bullying, communication-wise prevention and training activities are planned and implemented for family, friends, teachers, students. In this way, the problems can be resolved without causing major harm, by acting early. Based on this approach, this study was planned to compare types of bullying experienced by primary school students and their anxiety, state-trait, self-esteem and certain socio-demographic characteristics.

This study aims to determine the relationship between types of bullying and anxiety, state-trait, self-esteem and certain socio-demographic characteristics of primary school students who exposed to bullying at least two times.

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

A primary school in the city center was selected by simple random sampling method. A socio-demographic questionnaire, which was developed by the researchers, state-trait anxiety inventory and self-esteem scales were provided to 605 students in this school by explaining how to fill out the questionnaires. Questionnaires were completed and returned by 595 students on the specified deadline January 1 - January 31, 2015. Permission of the school administration and children's parents were obtained for the study.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics Questionnaire

Includes questions on gender, age, grade, parental education and employment status, monthly income, number of people in the family, family type and number of children.

2.2.2. State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children

The Turkish reliability and validity study of this scale developed by was Spielberger 1973 carried out by Özusta 1995 (Özusta, 1995; Spielberger & Edwards, 1973). It is used to measure the state and trait anxiety levels of children in the 9-12 age group. The validity and reliability study of the scale was conducted with 724 children in the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th grade. It can be applied individually or as a group.

Trait Anxiety Inventory. Aims to measure persistent individual differences, as well as predisposition for anxiety. The scale consists of 20 items in total. It evaluates the children's feeling according to frequency of occurrence. Statements such as "I get angry at home" or "My hands shake" are answered by one of the "not at all", "sometimes"

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