



Investigation of the relationship between family relations and peer bullying of primary and secondary school students¹

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Abstract. The aim of this study to examine whether there is a significant difference between primary school students' perceptions of family relationships and their peer bullying attitudes. "Peer Bullying Determination Scale" and "Family Relations Scale for Children" have been used to analyze 147 students from 4th, 5th and 6th grades of a private primary school in İstanbul and the results were interpreted by t test and a regression analysis. Analysis of the results showed that the family relations perceptions of the students might vary according to the gender and grades level. Moreover, it was determined that primary school students' perceptions of family relations were effective on peer bullying attitudes.

Keywords: Peer Bullying, Victim, Perceptions of Family Relations, Primary and Secondary School

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INTRODUCTION

Peer bullying is common in schools and is also a hidden aspect of social relationships. Although bullying has remained an unimportant issue in schools for many years, recent studies in many countries show that peer bullying is one of the most common problems seen in schools. The research made in Turkey (Yurtal & Cenkseven, 2007; Kepenekçi & Çınkır, 2006; Önder & Yurdal, 2008; Pişkin, 2003; Şimşek & Palancı, 2014), in Australia (Rigby & Slee, 1991), in Norway (Olweus, 1993), in America (Nasnel et al., 2001) shows a high prevalence of bullying in many countries. While bullying, which can be seen in various cultures, was considered a natural consequence of growing up incorrectly in the past, today it is a problem defined as incompatibility in social development that can easily turn into a crisis for the individual who is both a bully and a victim (Dölek, 2000). According to Olweus (2005), who started the first studies on bullying in schools, bullying is the exposing of one or more students to these behaviours as a result of the deliberate abuse of power. Bullying, which is considered a systematic abuse of power (Rigby, 2002), is defined as the physical, verbal or psychological harm of one or more students to a peer who is consciously weak (Page & Page, 2003; Schwartz, Dodge & Coie, 1993; Seals, 2002; Farrington, 1993; Furniss, 2000; Pişkin & Ayas, 2011). Bullying is defined as aggressive and repetitive behaviour that intentionally hurts other people (River & Smith, 1994; Smith & Brain, 2000; Sharp & Smith, 1994).

School environments can be defined as indispensable environments for children and adolescents to socialize and develop social and emotional skills. After a certain age, students spend the most productive times of the day with their friends rather than their families. As a result, they model their peers rather than family members (Steinberg, 2007) and meet their needs of belonging as a member of a group, as part of a team, by establishing social solidarity. However, being exposed to aggression and bullying attitudes in school can prevent the development of children and adolescents. Studies have revealed that children who are bullied or exposed to bullying have low academic success and their school ties are weakened (Spriggs, Iannotti, Nansel, & Haynie, 2007). In this respect, there is a need for comprehensive studies on peer bullying in terms of grade level, gender and many other factors.

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In this study, the bullying attitudes of primary and secondary school students were examined by looking at their perception of class, gender and family relationships. According to the studies on peer bullying, the characteristics of the family structure are known as one of the important explanations of bullying behaviours. Family, which is as old as the existence of human beings and has deep-rooted dynamics and has an important place in human life, is generally an institution that affects the lives of individuals positively. Family is an institution that consists of people who are connected to each other by biological and / or psychological, historical, emotional or economic ties and who see themselves as a part of the household (Gladding, 2006). The family is divided into healthy (functional) and unhealthy (non-functional) families. Self-worth is high in healthy families and communication is direct, open, clear, distinct and honest (Satir, 2001; Zorbaz & Owen, 2013). In healthy families, rules are flexible, humanistic, social ties are open and promising, and they have the right to choose. Children who grow up in healthy families generally grow up healthier biologically, psychologically and socially. For this reason, they are more successful in every field in life because their problem solving skills are higher (Gladding, 2006). Unhealthy families, on the other hand, have impaired communication functions, and interpersonal relationships are disconnected and based on rules. The roles have been imposed on individuals (Bulut, 1990; Zorbaz & Owen, 2013). Compared to healthy families, it is seen that unhealthy families have poor communication skills, low self-esteem for each other, less willingness to spend time with each other, and dysfunctional partnerships consisting of individuals who have difficulty in solving problems.

It is among the basic duties of the family to raise children as individuals, to maintain their relationships with their peers in a healthy way, to be disciplined and educated on certain issues and to provide the support the child needs. A child who grows up in an unhealthy family is unlikely to know how to deal with or find solutions to the problems they face. Children's personality development, self-esteem, and social relations with their peers are the main sources of the parents' personality traits, and their attitudes and behaviours towards each other and their children (Yavuzer, 2004). It is observed that children who grow up in families with negative parental attitudes also exhibit similar behaviours in their social relationships (Ceylan, 2017). In addition to the biological function of the family, another important function is that the members respond to each other's emotional needs (Zorbaz & Owen, 2013). Situations where emotional needs are not met lead to the emergence of both physical and emotional problems. The study conducted with babies in two orphan homes in Iran is an example of this. Babies between the ages of 0-2, who grew up in the orphans' home and spent their entire lives in a cradle, fed with a bottle based on a cradle, and taken only once every two days, did not have the physical development to sit even when they were 21 months old (Öktem, 2006). When the individual is exposed to all cognitive and sensory stimuli, in the development process as a whole, it can show a healthy and holistic development. Thus, the individual can learn ways to establish harmonious and healthy relationships in social life.

When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are many national and international studies on peer bullying in children and adolescents. For example, personality traits of bullies who frequently conflict with their peers, are weak in interpersonal relationships, aggressive, antisocial, insensitive personality structure, use physical power to solve problems, do not receive sufficient support from the family (Olweus, 1993; Pişkin, 2002; Baldry & Farrington, 2000), while victims were found to have more timid, anxious and insecure personality traits (Craig, 1998; Olweus, 1993). According to a study conducted in Germany, it was found that 16% of the students between the ages of 9-11 were bullied, and 5% displayed bullying behaviours (Fekkes, Pijpers, & Verloove-Vanhorick, 2005). There are also a large amount of research on family characteristics and peer bullying. Research has been conducted on issues such as family's child-rearing attitudes (Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Turgut, 2005; Akgün, 2005), family attachment behaviours (Totan & Yöndem, 2007), and domestic violence behaviours (Baldry, 2003). In other similar studies, the

family's control over the child, controlling attitudes, interest and communication with the child were found to be related to the status of bully or victim (Bernstein & Watson, 1997; Stevens De Bourdeaudhuij & Oost, 2002; Holmes & Holmes-Lonergan, 2004; Olweus, 2005; Smokowski and Kopasz, 2005). For example, there are findings indicating that the way one parent communicates with the child is related to the child's bullying behaviours (Olweus, 2005; Smokowski & Korpasz, 2005), and that the effect of parental behaviours on the child changes depending on gender (Olweus, 2005). For example, it has been found that bully children perceive their fathers stronger than their mothers (Bowers, Smith, & Binney, 1992), while male victims have closer and more positive relationships with their mothers (Olweus 1994).

Although international studies on peer bullying according to gender difference show that male bullying attitudes are much higher than girls (Camodeca, Terwogt, & Schuengel, 2002; Fekkes, Pijpers, & Verloove-Vanhorick, 2005; Northagen et al.2005), there are also very few studies showing that there is no difference between boys and girls (Peskin, Tortolero, & Markham, 2006). Studies conducted in Turkey generally show that the ratio of bullies and victims is higher among men than women (Dolek, 2002; Yurtal and Cenkseven, 2007; Pişkin, 2010). Some studies addressing peer bullying according to age factor have found that age does not make a significant difference (Kapıcı, 2004; Mynard & Joseph, 2000), and according to some other studies, bullying attitudes decrease with age (Dölek, 2002; Şirvanlı-Özen; 2006).

Although there are studies that examine the relationship between family relationships and bullying behaviours such as parental attitudes, parent personality traits, family structures, bullying attitudes of children or adolescents were not examined through their perception of their families' relationships. In this study, the bullying attitudes of the students were examined according to their perceptions that prevent or support family relations, taking into account the differences between gender and grade levels. In this respect, this research is the first study that examines the relationship between families perceived as obstructive or supportive and bullying attitudes in which gender and grade level differences are taken into account.

METHOD

In this section, explanations about the research model, study group, data collection, data analysis and interpretation are given.

Research Pattern

The research is a relational study in descriptive survey model. The independent variables of the study are gender, grade level, and perceptions that prevent and support children's family relationships. The dependent variables of the study are the peer bullying attitudes, including the bully and victim status of the students.

Study Group of the Research

The universe of the study consists of primary school (fourth grade) and middle school (fifth and sixth grade) students attending a private school in Istanbul Bahçelievler district in the 2018-2019 academic year. Using the stratification sampling method for the research, 160 students were reached by determining three classes from fourth grade levels, two classes from fifthth grade and three classes from 6th grade levels, but 13 of these data were not included in the scope of evaluation due to incorrect and incomplete filling for this reason 147 data has been taken into consideration. The limitation of the research sample constitutes the limitation of the research. The reason why the research was limited to a single school is that the researcher had permission to collect data from this school where she was located for an educational reason.

Considering the distribution of the research sample by grade level; 34.01% are fourth grade, 23.13% are fifth grade and 42.86% are sixth grade. Considering the distribution by gender, 51.70% of the participants are girls and 48.30% are boys.

Table 1. *Distribution of Research Participants by Grade Level and Gender*

		4th grade (aged 10)	5th grade (aged 11)	6th grade (aged 12)	Total
Gender	Girls	22(%44)	25(%73,5)	29(%46)	76(%51,70)
	Boys	28(%56)	9(%26,4)	34(%53,9)	71(%48,30)
Total		50(%34,01)	34(%23,13)	63(%42,86)	147

Data Collection Tools

In order to collect data within the scope of the research, the personal information form prepared by the researcher and the Family Relationships Scale for Children and The Peer Bullying Scale Child form are used.

Family Relationships Scale for Children (FRSC): This scale was developed to measure whether children perceive family relationships as healthy or unhealthy, and validity and reliability studies of this scale were conducted by Zorbaz and Owen (2013). As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, the scale, which was reduced from 56 items to 20 items with two factors, can be applied to fourth, fifth and sixth grade students. Students responded to each item in a 3-point Likert type, 3 = Always 2 = Sometimes 1 = Never. For confirmatory factor analysis, the scale was applied to 300 students who were studying in grades four and five. In the confirmatory factor analysis, the fit index values were calculated as $\chi^2 / df = 1.89$, NFI = .90, CFI = .96, GIFI = .91, AGFI = .89 and RMSEA = .05, and the two-factor structure was confirmed. The Cronbach Alpha consistency coefficient was found to be .82 and .84 for the first sub-dimension, Inhibitive Family Relationships, and .76 and .78 for the second sub-dimension Supportive Family Relationships. The scores that can be obtained from the Inhibitive Family Relations subscale range from 10-30, while the scores from the Supportive Family Relations subscale range between 10-30. High scores from the first subscale show that children perceive their families as having disabling properties, and high scores from the second subscale show that children perceive their families as having developmental features. The scale does not provide total scores and subscales are used as two separate scales.

The Peer Bullying Scale Child Form: The Peer Bullying Scale Child Form was developed by Pişkin and Ayas (2011). The scale consisting of 37 items is applied to primary school students. Validity and reliability studies were conducted to determine the two sides of bullying behaviours among children, the bully and victim. This scale, in which students give two-sided answers to each item as "done to me" and "I did", consists of five sub-factors: physical, verbal, isolation, spreading rumours, and damaging things. The items of these sub-factors are physical between 1-10, verbal between 10-16, isolation between 16-21, spreading rumours between 21-28, damaging items between 28-37.

As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis conducted for the construct validity of the scale, the model consisting of 37 items and five factors was found to be theoretically and statistically appropriate. Confirmatory factor analysis was applied for the construct validity of this scale developed by Pişkin and Ayas (2011). As a result of the first level DFA, the fit index is $\chi^2 = 1422.14$ (sd = 616, p. = .00), $\chi^2 / df = 2.30$ RMSEA = 0.056, GFI = 0.85, AGFI = 0.82, CFI = 0.92, NFI = 0.87 and NNFI = 0.91, The fit index as a result of the second level CFA was found as $\chi^2 = 1471.43$ (sd = 621, p. = .0000), $\chi^2 / df = 2.36$, RMSEA = 0.057, GFI = 0.84, AGFI = 0.82, CFI = 0.96, NFI = 0.87 and NNFI = 0.91 Cronbach's alpha values were calculated for the reliability of the scale, and the internal consistency coefficient of the victim dimension was found to be .80, and the internal consistency coefficient for the bully dimension was found to be .87. The lowest score that can be obtained from the bully and victim dimensions of the scale is 37 and the highest score is 185. The higher the scores, the higher the level of being a bully and victim is.

Collection of Data

The data were collected from students studying in the fourth, fifth and sixth grades of a private primary school during the 2018-2019 academic year. The data were collected by obtaining ethics committee permissions, national education, school and teacher permissions. The process of answering the scales was completed in about half an hour within one class hour, with the support of classroom teachers and providing explanatory information to the students to answer them. Later, the data obtained from a total of 147 students, including 50 from the fourth grade, 34 from the fifth grade and 63 from the sixth grade, were arranged according to grade levels and gender variables, taking into account the sub-factors. While performing the statistical analysis, the confidence interval value was taken as 0.95 (0.05).

Data Analysis

The data collected within the scope of the research were made with the SPSS Windows 20 program. Since the descriptive scanning method was used in this study, t test was used to analyze the class level and gender differences. Regression analysis was conducted to look at the effect of the family relations inhibiting and supportive sub-factors of students on showing and exposure to bullying.

RESULTS

In this section, the differences between primary and secondary school students' perception of family relationships, the relationship between exposure to peer bullying or peer bullying behaviours, and the differences between the supportive perception levels of family relationships by gender factor and grade levels were analyzed and the findings were presented. Descriptive values obtained for the research data are presented.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for the Perceptions of the Participating Students to Inhibitive and Supporting Family Relationships, and the Factors of Being Bullied and Victim

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Inhibitive	147	10	27	14,04	3,162	1,495	2,896
Supportive	147	17	30	26,82	2,706	-,972	,705
Victim	147	37	128	60,02	20,922	1,020	,579
Bully	147	37	119	46,69	13,245	2,471	8,385

The mean perception of the inhibitive family relationships of the participant students was found to be 14.04, standard deviation 3.162, and the average perception of supportive family relationships was found to be 26.82, standard deviation 2.706. The average standard deviation of being in peer bullying was found to be 60.02, 20.922, and the average victim being 46.69 standard deviation was found to be 13.245. After the descriptive statistical values, it was examined whether there was a significant difference between the inhibitive and supportive sub-factors that determine the students' perceptions of family relationships and the gender variable.

Table 3. T-test for unrelated samples conducted to determine whether the inhibitory and supportive scores in perceptions of family relationships vary by gender.

<i>Inhibitive</i>	N	F	t	df	X	SS	p*
Female	76	.083	-2.064	145	13.52	3.18	.041
Male	71				14.59	3.06	
<i>Supportive</i>	N	F	t	SD	X	SS	p*
Female	76	.014	2.126	145	27.27	2.65	.035
Male	71				26.33	2.69	

Table 3 includes the total inhibitor and supporter scores of the t test results of the gender variable. As can be seen, it is seen that male students ($X = 14.59$; $SD = 3.06$) have more inhibitory relationships with their families than female students ($X = 13.52$; $SS = 3.18$) and this result is statistically significant ($t(145) = -2.064$; $p \leq 0.05$). This situation coincides with the perception of girls to be more supported by their families. When the t test results of the total supporter scores in Table 2 were compared, it was observed that the perceptions of male students ($X = 26.33$; $SD = 2.69$) in the context of being supported by their families were statistically significantly progressed at lower levels [$t(145) = 2.126$; $p \leq 0.05$] than female students ($X = 27.27$; $SD = 2.65$).

Table 4. Variance Analysis Showing the Variability of Students' Perceptions of Family Relations by Grade Level

<i>Inhibitive</i>	<i>Degrees of Freedom</i>	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p*</i>
<i>Intergroup</i>	2	83.273	41.637	4.356	0.15
<i>In-group</i>	144	1376.482	9.559		
Total	146	1459.755			
<i>Supportive</i>	<i>Degrees of Freedom</i>	<i>Sum of Square</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p*</i>
<i>Intergroup</i>	2	36.715	18.358	2.560	.081
<i>In-group</i>	144	1032.686	7.171		
Total	146	1069.401			

Table 4 shows the results of one-way analysis of variance on how the perception levels of the participant students that prevent and support family relations vary according to their class level (4th, 5th and 6th grade levels). Values show a statistical difference in terms of class level variable ($X_{4th\ grade} = 13.18$; $X_{5th\ grade} = 13.76$; $X_{6th\ grade} = 14.87$) for the inhibitive family relationships perception [$F_{2,146} = 4.356$; $p \leq 0.05$; $p = 0.15$], the same is not true for perceptions of supportive family relationships [$F_{2,146} = 2.560$; $p \geq 0.05$; $p = 0.081$]. The Tamhane T2 test, which is one of the post hoc tests, was used to determine the grade levels in which the perception of inhibiting family relationships varies. Accordingly, sixth grade students' perceptions of inhibitory family relationships were significantly higher than fourth grade students ($X_{4th\ grade} = 13.18$; $X_{6th\ grade} = 14.87$; mean difference = 1.69; $p \leq 0.05$; $p = .010$).

In addition to the variance analysis, multiple regression analyzes were carried out in order to determine to what extent the variables of being bullied and bullying could predict each other according to the perception of inhibitive and supportive family and peer bullying scale, which are sub-factors of the family relationships perception scale. In this context, two models have been established. In the first model, there are basically three variables: "the average scores of perception of inhibitive family relationships (A)", "the average scores of the perception of supportive family relationships (B)" and the average scores of the "peer bullying" variable (C)". These three variables were handled in a theory-based manner and it was tried to be predicted how much of the possible variance to occur in C variable could be explained by variables A and B. The tables below contain the findings of the multiple regression analysis performed on behalf of the relevant variables.

In this part of the study, the correlation coefficients between the variables of being a peer bully and being a victim of bullying and the variables that inhibit and support the perception of family relationships were examined. The correlation coefficients between variables are expected to be between 0.30 and 0.70 values (Pallant, 2011; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The scores of the students participating in the study from the Peer Bullying Scale and the Family Relations Perception Scale indicate a moderately significant relationship ($r = 0.44$, $p < 0.05$) and ($r = .32$, $p < 0.05$). Accordingly, as perceptions of family relationships increase, students are more likely to

be bullied and exposed to peer bullying. In addition, as the perceptions of supporting family relationships increase, students' cases of peer bullying ($r = -0.36, p < 0.05$) and being exposed to peer bullying ($r = -0.22, p < 0.05$) also decrease.

Table 5. *The Relationship Status between the Perception of Family Relationships Inhibitive and Supporting Sub-dimensions and the Variables in Peer Bullying and the Victim of Peer Bullying*

		Inhibitive	Supportive
Bully	r	.446	-.356
	p	.000	.000
	N	147	147
Victim	r	,327	-,222
	p	,000	,000
	N	147	147

Table 6. Summary of the Multiple Regression Model Established for the Total Inhibiting and Supporting Scores of Students' Perception of Family Relations and the Values of the Variable "Being Bullied"

Predicted	Predicted	B	Standard Error B	β	t	p
	Fixed	38,198	17,612		2,169	,032
Bullying	Inhibitive	1,578	,418	,377	3,774	,000
	Supportive	-,510	,489	-,104	-1,043	,299
R= ,453	R ² = ,205	Corrected R ² =,194	F _(2 146) =18,602			p=,000

The values in Table 6 show how much of the variance in the "being bullied" variable of the total supportive and inhibit scores can explain or predict. As can be seen, the R² value was calculated as .205. This value can predict that a significant portion of participant students' peer bullying situations have an inhibitive perception of family relationships. In similar studies in the field of social sciences, it is very important to explain another independent variable that is related to more than 10% of the variance contained by a psychological factor (Pallant 2011; Tabachnick & Fidell 2007) and this value indicates a threshold value that should be considered ($\geq 10\%$). In addition, the beta (β) coefficients obtained from the regression analysis were also taken into account in order to observe the analytical effects of supportive and inhibitive learner perceptions, which are considered under independent variables, in terms of family relationships. The beta coefficient for the total inhibitive scores is 377, while this value for the total supportive points is -0.104. Therefore, the variable that predicts a significant part of the 20% of the variance within the dependent / predicted peer bullying variable explained in the context of this study is determined through the family relationships inhibitory perceptions. The contribution of family relationships supportive perceptions in the model is not significant.

The values in Table 7 show how much of the variance in the "Peer Bullying Victim" variable of the total supportive and inhibitive scores can explain or predict. As can be seen, the R² value was calculated as .107. This value can state that the inhibitive and supportive perceptions of the participant students towards family relations control a significant part of their exposure to bullying behaviour. Here, too, more than 10% of the variance is explained by the perception of inhibitive family relationships, which is another independent variable with dependent relation. Beta (β) coefficients obtained from regression analysis were also taken into consideration in

order to observe the analytical effects of students' supportive and inhibitive perceptions of family relationships, which are handled under independent variables. While the beta coefficient for the total inhibitive scores were 322, for the total supportive scores this value was obtained as -.006. Therefore, a significant portion of the 10% of the variance within the dependent / predicted "peer bullying" variable explained in the context of this study relationships are determined through their inhibiting perceptions. The contribution of family relationships supportive perceptions in the model is not significant.

Table 7. Summary of the Multiple Regression Model Established for the Total Inhibitive and Supporting Scores of Students' Perception of Family Relations and the Values of the "Peer Bullying Victim" Variable

Predicted	Predicted	B	Standart Error B	β	t	p
	Fixed	31,365	29,497		1,063	,289
Victimization	Inhibitive	2,133	,701	,322	3,045	,003
	Supportive	-,048	,818	-,006	-,059	,953
R= ,327	R ² = ,107	Corrected R ² =,094	F ₍₂₁₄₆₎ =18,602		p=,000	

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the first stage of the study, it was examined whether there is a significant difference in the perceptions of inhibitive and supportive family relationships of primary school students according to the variables of gender and grade levels. According to the findings, it has been determined that male students have higher levels of inhibitive family relationships than female students. Students' supportive family relationship levels also differ significantly according to the gender variable. Accordingly, female students' supportive family relationship levels were found to be significantly higher than male students' supportive family levels. When the literature was examined, it was seen that studies examining family relations and gender differences were very limited. A study conducted with primary school students obtained results parallel to the results of this study. In other words, female students' levels of supportive family relationships are high, while males have low perceptions of inhibitive family relationships, while male students' perceptions of inhibitive family relationships are high (Karacaoğlu, 2019). In other studies, it was found that gender is effective in perceiving family relationships in fourth and fifth grade students (Göncü, 2013; Şirin et al., 2018). Another study found that 13.9% of mothers showed authoritarian attitudes when raising their daughters and 8.6% when raising boys (cited in Şanlı & Öztürk, 2015). According to this result, boys who are raised more freely in childhood than girls exhibit the same freedom in adolescence, while mothers whose anxiety levels increase show more inhibitive behaviours and thus boys perceive their families more inhibiting. According to this study, it is thought that this situation is the reason why male students perceive their families more inhibiting than female students.

At the next stage of the study, the difference between the family relationship perceptions of students at three different grade levels (fourth, fifth and sixth grade) was examined. When the perceptions of family relationships of the students were examined according to their grade levels, it was found that there was no difference between the fourth and fifth grades, there was a significant difference between the fourth and sixth grade levels, and the 6th grade students perceived family relationships more inhibitive than the fourth grade. It is thought that the reason why there is no difference is that the fourth and sixth grade students have similar developmental levels due to the proximity of their age levels. The main reason for finding a difference in family

relations perceptions of fourth and sixth grade students is considered to be the beginning of a differentiation with the onset of the adolescence process. No change was found on the basis of grade level in terms of students' perception of supportive family relationships. According to the study conducted by Göncü (2013) with fourth and sixth grades, no age-related difference was found in the perceptions of family relationships among students. It is observed that bullying behaviours started to increase in the period when students perceive family relationships as a hindrance. Jaeger (2002) stated in his study that while bullying behaviours were high at the sixth grade, they became more common at the seventh and eighth grade levels.

Peer bullying is one of the most important problems in schools that is difficult to cope with. In both cases of being a bully or victim, students are negatively affected in the long term (Ahmed & Braitwaite, 2004). Research abroad on this subject is much more than domestic research. Peer bullying research conducted domestically, on the other hand, is generally aimed at the adolescence period. However, peer bullying attitudes are also very common in primary school age. In the research findings of Ahmed and Braitwaite (2004), it was found that 40% of children attending fourth and fifth grades of primary education were exposed to bullying in some way. Moreover, this study did not include students with a bullying attitude, except for the victims.

When the literature is examined, there are various national and international studies on peer bullying. However, studies conducted until recently have shown that the effect of parents on peer relationships is mostly evaluated in terms of parenting attitudes or parent-child relationships (Bowers, Smith, & Binney, 1992; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Totan & Yöndem, 2007). The third stage of this research makes the research original. In this study, it was examined how the perception levels of primary and secondary school students' inhibitive and supportive family relationships make a difference on their peer bullying attitudes. Accordingly, the relationship between family relations perceptions of primary and secondary school students in fourth, fifth and sixth grades and their peer bullying attitudes were predicted. According to the findings, it has been determined that the perception of inhibitive family relationships increases students' attitudes towards bullying or being exposed to bullying. On the other hand, it has been determined that students' perception of supportive family relationships decreases their attitudes towards bullying and being exposed to bullying. Lack of sufficient research on how the perception of family relationships directly affects children's peer relationships limits the discussion. In Ergün's (2015) study with 550 students studying in fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades, it was found that being bullied or being exposed to peer bullying is closely related to variables such as perceived father acceptance, violence in the family or witnessing violence.

In another study, it was determined that the oppressive and authoritarian attitudes that middle school seventh and eighth grade students experience in their families, indifference to the family, indifference to problems, inconsistent behaviours in family members, inconsistency in the relationship between parents, health problems in the family and disorder in the home environment were effective on students' displaying bullying behaviours. (Şimşek & Palancı, 2014). In a study conducted with adolescents, it was found that bully and victim adolescents have lower family support than adolescents who do not participate in bullying. Similarly, when findings of the studies on bullying and family relationships were examined, it was found that the parents of students who did not have bullying attitudes were more concerned with the school and out-of-school problems of their children (Holmes & Holmes Lonergan, 2004), and that the families of students with bullying / victim status displayed oppressive and rejecting behaviours (Bowers & Holmes)., Smith & Binney, 1994) support the research.

When the data obtained from the research are examined, the perception of preventive family relationships among the participant students explains 10% of the exposure to peer bullying, while it explains 19% of showing peer bullying. Accordingly, it was found that children who have inhibitive family relationships in terms of family relationships have been bullied and

exposed to bullying in various ways against their peers in order to communicate with their families and to ensure that their families take care of them.

As a result, it has been determined that there is a significant difference according to gender in the perception levels of the students that prevent or support family relationships. It was determined that there is only a significant difference between fourth and sixth grades according to grade levels. Finally, it is observed that the high perceptions of students' inhibiting family relationships cause students to be victims of bullying behaviour or to be exposed to bullying. For this reason, it is observed that establishing positive relationships with their children is an important factor that can change the situation of children being bullied or being exposed to bullying. The fact that insufficient sample was collected in this study group and that the criteria examined as demographic variables were not taken at a sufficient rate constitute the limitation of the study.

Focusing on guidance efforts to increase supportive family relationships in schools is important in terms of preventing and intervening children's bullying attitudes. Recommendations are presented based on the findings obtained as a result of the research.

- ✓ Psycho-education programs can be organized regularly for children and families in primary and secondary schools where peer bullying is observed.
- ✓ Informative in-service training programs can be organized for classroom teachers and classroom counsellors to support students who are bullied and exposed to bullying.
- ✓ With the guidance and psychological counselling services of the school, preventive group guidance studies or group counselling practices can be carried out and these studies can be tested in an academic framework.
- ✓ Academic research can be conducted on the results obtained by holding psychodrama group sessions that can be conducted in parallel with students and their families who have been exposed to peer bullying.

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