ERGENLERDE SOSYAL DIŞLANMA VE OKUL DOYUMU ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİDE SALDIRGANLIĞIN ARACI ROLÜ

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Öz

Bu araştırmada ergenlerde sosyal dışlanma ile okul doyumu arasındaki ilişkide saldırganlığın aracılık rolü incelenmiştir. Çalışmaya toplam 343 ergen katılmıştır (172 erkek ve 171 kız, yaş$_{ort}$= 13.96 ± 1.56). Katılımcılar, Kapsamlı Okul Doyumu Ölçeği, Ergenler için Sosyal Dışlanma Ölçeği ve Çok Boyutlu Ergen Değerlendirme Ölçeği - Saldırganlık Alt Boyutunu tamamlamıştır. Model çalışması kapsamında aracılık rolünü belirlemek amacıyla verilerin analizinde yol analizi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma modeline göre sosyal dışlanma, saldırganlığın kısmi aracılığıyla okul memnuniyetini yordamaktadır. Sonuç olarak ergenlerin sosyal dışlanma düzeyleri arttıkça saldırganlık düzeyleri artabilmekte ve bu artış ile okul doyumu düzeyleri düşebilmektedir. Aynı zamanda sosyal dışlanmanın artması doğrudan okul doyumu düzeyini düşürebilmektedir. Son bölümde, araştırma bulgularıyla ilgili sonuç, tartışma, çalışmanın sınırlılıkları ve gelecekteki araştırmalar için önerilere yer verilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okul Doyumu, Sosyal Dışlanma, Saldırganlık, Ergenlik

The Mediating Role of Aggressiveness in the Relationship Between Social Ostracism and School Satisfaction in Adolescents

Abstract

This research examines the mediating role of agressiveness in the relationship between social ostracism and school satisfaction among adolescent. A total of 343 adolescent (172 males and 171 females, Age$_{mean}$ = 13.96 ± 1.56) participated in the study and completed Overall School Satisfaction Scale, Ostracism Experience Scale for Adolescents and Multidimensional Adolescent Assessment Scale-Agression Subdimension. Path analysis were used to analyse the data to determine the mediating role within the scope of the model study. According research model, social ostracism predicts school satisfaction through the partial mediation of agressiveness. As a result, as the social ostracism levels of adolescents increase, their aggressiveness levels can increase and school satisfaction levels can decrease with this increase. At the same time, the increase in social ostracism can directly decrease the level of school satisfaction. In the discussion and conclusion section, explanations related to the research findings, limitations of the study, and suggestions for future research were provided.

Keywords: School Satisfaction, Social Ostracism, Aggressiveness, Adolescence

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Introduction

Adolescence has a critical importance among psycho-social developmental periods (Erikson, 1968). The relationships established with the social environment during adolescence may have an impact on different areas of development such as personality development, psychological development and social development. In this context, it can be said that the positive development of social relations during adolescence will contribute to the psycho-social development of the person. It can be stated that being accepted by the social environment is important for adolescents' positive self-development. If adolescents do not perceive themselves as part of their social environment, they may experience negative emotions such as anxiety, sadness and anger (Inanç, 2017). It is also stated that if individuals perceive that they are not accepted by their social environment for a long time, their self-esteem will decrease, they will not feel that they belong to their social environment, and even serious consequences such as depression and suicide may occur (Baumeiser et al., 2005; Williams, 2007). In this context, it can be said that being excluded by the social environment can be a risk factor for individuals in adolescence.

Social ostracism is when an individual is rejected, ignored or excluded by a social group or a person (Williams & Nida, 2011). Social ostracism can refer to the excluding person or group not establishing any relationship with the excluded person, ending the existing relationship or excluding the excluded person from the group (Williams et al., 2005). Social ostracism may prevent individuals from fulfilling their needs such as being accepted by their social environment, belonging and maintaining social ties (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). It is even stated that social ostracism may be a threat to the individual's fulfilment of four important basic needs such as self-worth, belonging, control and existence (Williams, 2007).

It can be said that the process of social ostracism is often not a short-term or sudden process. Social ostracism generally refers to a long-term exclusion situation. In other words, for individuals to think that they are subjected to social ostracism, it is expected that they had an ongoing relationship with the individuals who exclude them. In this context, it can be considered that school is one of the places where individuals in adolescence have the high possibility of social ostracism. Because, considering the daily lives of individuals in adolescence, it is known that they spend a significant part of the day at school. In this respect, it can be stated that adolescents who create their social environment may consist of people in their schools. Therefore, it can be said that school is one of the social environments where adolescents have a high risk of social ostracism.

School is an educational environment for individuals in adolescence. In addition, when looking at the school environment from the perspective of an adolescent, it can be said that the meaning it carries is very important. Because in addition to receiving education at school, adolescents socialise, develop their self-identity and gain knowledge about the functioning of daily life. In other words, school has a critical role in the academic and psycho-social development of adolescents. A social ostracism that the adolescent will experience at school

can negatively harm both their educational and psycho-social development. As a matter of fact, it is stated that adolescents who experience social ostracism at school have lower academic achievement, engage in destructive behaviours towards themselves and the school environment and move away from the school environment (Wike & Fraser, 2009). In this context, it can be said that an adolescent who experiences social ostracism will have less satisfaction from school as a result of psychological or physical distancing from school. However, school satisfaction is considered to have an important role in the development of adolescents.

School satisfaction refers to the individual's cognitive evaluations about school life (Telef, 2014). The fact that, an individual's cognitive evaluations of school life are positive indicates that their level of school satisfaction is high. Also if individual's cognitive evaluations about school are negative it indicates that their level of school satisfaction is low. Each individual's evaluation of school satisfaction depends on his/her own subjective criteria. However, it can be said that the relationships with friends at school, the relationships with teachers and the classroom and school climate are among the subjective criteria in the evaluation of school satisfaction (Baker, 1998; Zullig et al., 2011). Considering these criteria, it is seen that social relations at school have an important role in the evaluation of school satisfaction. For this reason, it can be said that the adolescent's experience of social ostracism at school will negatively shape the school satisfaction. It is stated that adolescents with low school satisfaction may have consequences such as burnout, low subjective well-being, harmful substance use, school dropout and academic failure (Gündoğan, 2022; Sun, 2016). It is seen that adolescents with high school satisfaction have higher school attendance rates, higher academic achievement, feel that they belong to the society and have high life satisfaction (Hampden-Thompson & Galindo, 2017; Jiang et al., 2013; Ye et al., 2014). In this context, it can be said that high school satisfaction is important for the psycho-social and academic development of adolescents.

Mediating Role of Aggressiveness

Aggression is defined as physical, verbal or symbolic behaviours arising from situations such as frustration, competition, hostility, anger or fear and aiming to harm other people (Budak, 2003). In the light of the theoretical explanations in the literature, it is estimated that social ostracism predicts school satisfaction negatively. However, no research directly examining the mediating relationship between social ostracism and school satisfaction has been found in the literature. However, in previous studies (Warburton et al., 2006), it is seen that individuals who experience social ostracism engage in aggressive behaviours. As a result of social ostracism, aggressive behaviour may occur as a result of feelings such as anxiety, fear or anger (Köknel, 1999). In addition, as mentioned before, social ostracism is usually a long-term situation. In some studies, it is seen that adolescents who are exposed to long-term social ostracism engage in physical or armed aggression behaviours at school (Ren et al., 2018; Strachila & McMahon, 2010; Wike & Fraser, 2009). In addition, individuals who feel more lonely have higher levels of aggression (Solak, 2012; Yıldırım, 2007).

There is not found any direct research examining the relationship between aggressiveness and school satisfaction in adolescents. However, studies examining the relationship between aggressiveness and well-being in adolescents show that there are negative relationships (Gündoğan & Sargın, 2018). Based on this finding, it can be thought that as the level of aggressiveness of adolescents increases, their school satisfaction will decrease. It is thought that adolescents' low level of school satisfaction may have consequences such as low academic achievement and school dropout, which will directly affect their future later in life. For this reason, in this study, the mediating role of aggressiveness in the relationship between social ostracism and school satisfaction in adolescents was examined and it was aimed to put forward a model to explain adolescents' school satisfaction

Method

In this research, a quantitative research design was employed, utilizing a correlational survey approach, to investigate the mediating role of agressiveness in the relationship between social ostracism and school satisfaction.

Research Desing

In the study, various documents, including the informed consent form, personal information form, and the designated assessment scales, were initially created using the Google Forms website and made accessible to prospective participants. Within the framework of the study, participant recruitment was conducted exclusively online, utilizing internet-based methods. In this regard, the aforementioned documents, namely the informed consent form, personal information form, and the assessment scales, were made readily available to participants via Google Forms. During the data collection phase, participants were initially requested to complete the informed consent form. Those participants who successfully completed this initial step were then directed to fill out both the personal information form and the relevant research scales, which were presented on the subsequent pages of the Google Forms. A total of 364 sets of participant data were gathered for this study. It is important to note that data from a subset of participants, specifically, those who withdrew from the study (12 participants), as well as those who left more than three items of the each assessment scales incomplete (9 participants), were excluded from the final analyses. Consequently, the ensuing statistical analyses were conducted using data obtained from 343 participants, ensuring the integrity and robustness of the research findings.

Participants

This research was conducted with the participation of 343 voluntary adolescents in Turkiye. A total of 343 individuals (Age$_{range}$ = 11-17, Age$_{mean}$ = 13.96, Age$_{Sd}$ = 1.56) participated in the study, with 172 (50.1%) male and 171 (49.9%) female. The age range of the participants was between age 11 and 17 with a mean age of 13.96. The participants completed the scales used in the research via Google Forms on the internet. Convenience sampling method was employed in the study.

Data Collection Instruments

Overall School Satisfaction Scale.

The scale developed by Randolph et al. (2009) was adapted into Turkish by Telef (2014). The scale consists of 6 items and utilizes a 5-point Likert-type rating. Increasing scores on the scale indicate a higher level of school satisfaction for individuals. The single-dimensional structure of the scale accounts for 65% of the total variance, with factor loadings of the items ranging from .77 to .82. Confirmatory factor analysis results also indicate the adequacy of the goodness-of-fit indices for scale (χ2/sd = 3.45, GFI = .98, CFI = .99, NFI = .99; RFI = .99, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .01). In the adaptation study, the reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .89, and the test-retest reliability coefficient was .92. As a result of the analyses conducted in this research, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale was determined to be .86

Ostracism Experience Scale for Adolescents.

The scale developed by Gilman et al. (2013) was adapted into Turkish by Akın et al. (2016). The scale consists of 11 items and employs a 5-point Likert-type rating. Increasing scores on the scale indicate a higher level of social ostracism for individuals. Exploratory factor analysis, conducted to establish the construct validity of the scale, revealed a two-dimensional structure (neglect and exclusion) that accounted for 76.65% of the total variance and had factor loadings ranging from .77 to .90. Total scores are obtained from the scale. Confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated that the model consisting of 11 items and two sub-dimensions (neglect and exclusion) provided a good fit to the data (χ^2=80.64, df=41, RMSEA=.056, NFI=.96, NNFI=.97, CFI=.98, IFI=.98, RFI=.95, GFI=.95, SRMR=.048). The factor loadings of the scale ranged from .71 to .88, while item-total correlation coefficients ranged from .51 to .70. The internal consistency reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .89 for the overall scale, .93 for the neglect sub-dimension, and .90 for the exclusion sub-dimension. Furthermore, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale was determined to be .91 based on the analyses conducted in this study.

Multidimensional Adolescent Assessment Scale.

The scale developed by Hudson (1996) was adapted into Turkish by Özmete & Koğar (2015). The scale comprises a total of 16 sub-dimensions, each structured to independently measure distinct aspects. It utilizes a 7-point Likert-type rating. In this study, the aggression sub-dimension of the scale was utilized, which consists of 10 items. The model for the aggression sub-dimension demonstrated an adequate fit (χ^2/df=5.13, RMSEA=.073, NFI=.89, NNFI=.88, CFI=.88). Item-total correlations in the aggression sub-dimension ranged from .335 to .629. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all sub-dimensions of the scale ranged from .75 to .95. Based on the analyses conducted in this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale was determined to be .78.

Personal information form.

The personal information form, prepared by the researcher and it includes questions related to participants' genders, ages and in which city they live in.

Informed consent form.

In this form, participants have been informed about the purpose of the study. Additionally, it is emphasized that participation in the research is based on voluntary consent, and participants have the right to withdraw their participation at any time. Furthermore, the researcher's contact information has been provided.

Data Analysis

To begin the analysis, an initial step involved conducting a correlational examination to explore the associations among social ostracism, aggressiveness and school satisfaction. Additionally, descriptive statistical analyses, encompassing measures such as means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis, were executed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26. Furthermore, the mediating role of aggressiveness was scrutinized employing the bootstrapping technique. In accordance with the guidelines established by Preacher & Hayes (2008), to establish the significance of the mediation coefficients pertaining to the enhancement of school satisfaction influenced by ostracism through aggressiveness, a bootstrapping analysis was executed via 5,000 re-samplings utilizing Model. It is crucial to note that the indirect effect is deemed significant when the bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval does not entirely encompass zero (Satici, 2016).

Findings

Table 1 presents the summary statistics and correlation results. Social ostracism exhibited a positive association with aggressiveness ($r = .256$, $p < .001$) and demonstrated negative associations with school satisfaction ($r = -.338$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, aggressiveness exhibited negative correlations with school satisfaction ($r = -.234$, $p < .001$).

Table 1
Descriptive statistics and correlations among study variables

Variable	1	2	3
1. Ostracism	–		
2. Aggressiveness	.256**	–	
5. School satisfaction	-.338**	-.234**	–
Mean	35.27	28.97	20.69
SD	15.97	11.44	5.44
Skewness	.428	1.04	-.325
Kurtosis	-.419	1.09	-.246

** $p < .001$

Mediational Model

The examination of the mediating role was conducted through a bootstrapping procedure, which explored the relationship between ostracism and school satisfaction, with aggressiveness as mediator. The outcomes related to the regression pathways, as well as the

assessment of direct and indirect effects in the context of mediation, have been visually presented in Figure 1.
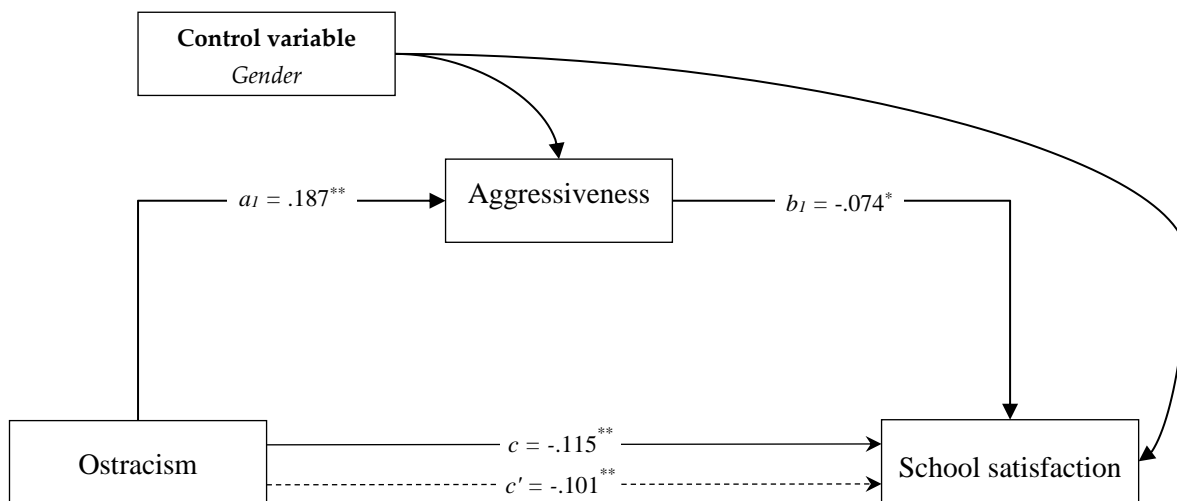

Figure 1. *Results for mediational model.* $^{*} p < .01,\ ^{**} p < .001$

When analyzing the direct effects, it is evident that ostracism significantly and positively predicted aggressiveness ($B = 0.187$, $t = 4.98$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, school satisfaction was predicted by aggressiveness ($B = -0.074$, $t = -2.99$, $p < .01$). Additionally, the results of the bootstrap analysis confirmed the indirect effects of ostracism on school satisfaction, with 95% confidence intervals that did not encompass zero. Consequently, aggressiveness (bootstrap value = -.041, 95% CI = -.077, -.011) was identified as mediator in the relationship between ostracism and adolescents' school satisfaction.

Result, Discussion and Suggestions

In this study, the mediating role of aggressiveness in the relationship between ostracism and school satisfaction among adolescents was examined. It was determined that aggressiveness plays a partial mediating role between social ostracism and school satisfaction in adolescents. Within this context, the paths in the model have been sequentially elucidated.

Firstly, the positive prediction of adolescents' social ostracism on aggressiveness is discussed. Adolescence period has an important place in every person's life. In this period, individuals establish important relationships with their social environment. It is known that social acceptance has an important role in terms of psycho-social development in adolescents. It is also stated that adolescents who are accepted by their social environment have higher levels of empathy, engage in positive social behaviours such as helping and cooperating, and have better social skills (Demir & Kaya, 2008). However, it is seen that individuals who are ostracised during adolescence feel more lonely (Eskin, 2001), have lower social skills (Keçialan & Ocakçı, 2013) and are more aggressive (Ayyıldız, 2021; Wentzel, 2003). In this context, it can

be said that the finding that social ostracism positively predicts aggressiveness is consistent with the existing studies in the literature.

Another finding obtained in the study is that social ostracism negatively predicts school satisfaction. According to this finding, as the social ostracism levels of adolescents increase, their school satisfaction decreases. It can be said that school is one of the important places that constitute the social environment of individuals in adolescence. Adolescents spend a significant part of their daily lives at school. An individual in adolescence can establish social bonds with teachers and classmates at school. As a matter of fact, it is stated that schools are the one of the most important place for adolescents to develop social relationships (Booker, 2004). It is also stated that social acceptance at school in adolescence increases school belonging (Akıncı et al., 2020). If the opposite of this situation is considered, it can be said that adolescents with high levels of social ostracism will have low school satisfaction. As a result, it can be said that the finding that adolescents experiencing social ostracism have low school satisfaction coincides with the literature and is an expected result.

Another finding in the research model is that aggressiveness predicts school satisfaction negatively. Although there is no research examining the relationship between aggression and school satisfaction in the literature, it is seen that there are significant negative relationships between aggression tendencies and school climate in adolescents (Küsmez, 2019). However, it is stated that students exposed to aggressive behaviours at school are a negative predictor of attitude towards school. In another study, it was found that there were significant negative relationships between students' aggression levels and their perceptions of school climate (Güçkıran, 2008). It is known that the concepts of school climate and school satisfaction are close and related concepts (Papsova et al., 2012). In this context, it can be said that the finding that aggressiveness is a significant negative predictor of school satisfaction is a consistent result.

In the literature, there are studies examining the relationship between school satisfaction and various variables. However, in this study, a model to explain school satisfaction, which is known to be important for adolescents, was put forward by addressing three concepts whose relationships with each other have not been directly examined before. The last discussion about the model examined within the scope of the research is related to the mediating role of aggressiveness between social ostracism and school satisfaction. In the study, it is seen that there is a partial mediating role between social ostracism and school satisfaction. This finding shows that social ostracism is a significant predictor of school satisfaction both through aggressiveness and on its own.

Social ostracism is an undesirable situation that causes discomfort to the person. Individuals exposed to social ostracism may react differently. Although experiencing social ostracism is an undesirable situation for the individual, the behaviours that people will show as a result of social ostracism can be negative behaviours as well as positive behaviours (Williams, 2007). As a result of social ostracism, an individual may exhibit positive behaviours

such as trying to re-establish communication with the people who exclude him/her, trying to establish cooperation or helping them. With these positive behaviours, the individual makes an effort to be a part of the social environment again. Especially individuals who attach great importance to the social relations they have established with their environment can give priority in their lives to restore deteriorating social relations. In this direction, it can be thought that the adolescent experiencing social ostracism will engage in positive behaviours instead of aggressive behaviours. For example, in order to re-establish relationships with schoolmates who exclude them, adolescents may efforts to improve their social relations at school and out-of-school times instead of taking actions that will affect their academic success such as studying, preparing for exams or doing homework. However, social ostracism is a situation related to those who are exposed to this exclusion as well as those who are exposed to it. For this reason, adolescents who experience social ostracism may continue to experience exclusion despite all their efforts. In this case, it can be said that continuing to experience social ostracism despite all the positive efforts of the adolescent experiencing social ostracism in the school environment will decrease school satisfaction.

Individuals who experience social ostracism may also prefer to withdraw from social environments and retreat into their own inner world instead of engaging in positive or negative behaviour. In this context, it is also possible that an adolescent who experiences social ostracism at school does not engage in any positive or negative behaviour in lessons and extracurricular activities. However, it can be said that this situation may negatively affect school satisfaction. Because for an individual in adolescence, school also means a social life. However, it can be said that school life will be a disturbing experience for an individual who does not show any response against social ostracism.

It can be said that the mediating role of aggressiveness in the relationship between social ostracism and school satisfaction in adolescents is activated by the individual's desire to engage in negative behaviours against social exclusion. However, it is stated that the rate of aggressive behaviours in adolescents who experience peer rejection is as high as 50% (Cole & Dodge, 1998). It can be predicted that adolescents who engage in aggressive behaviours at school due to social ostracism will feel restless at school, will not be able to focus on their lessons and their academic success will decrease. In various studies, it is seen that adolescents who experience social ostracism show an increase in aggressive behaviours at school and accordingly, situations such as suspension from school and school dropout are experienced (Staff & Kreager, 2008; Warburton et al., 2006). As a result, it can be said that the partial mediating role of aggression in the relationship between social ostracism and school satisfaction is a plausible finding and consistent with the literature.

Limitations and Suggestions

This research, which explores the mediating role of aggressiveness in the relationship between adolescents' social ostracism and school satisfaction, has several limitations. The first limitation is the use of self-report measurement tools for data collection. Due to the acquisition

of data through self-report measures, it should be noted that variables can only be explained within the scope of the measurement tools, and participants' social desirability biases should be taken into account. In future research, to overcome this limitation, in addition to self-report measurement tools, different methods and techniques such as observation, interviews and peer assessments could be utilized.

An additional limitation concerns the sampling methodology and the diversity of participants. The use of convenience sampling in the study raises caution regarding the generalizability of the findings. In future research, a more detailed sampling method can be selected to represent the adolescent population.

In addition to these limitations, some suggestions can be made for future studies and school psychological counselors. The findings from this study can be utilized in the development of psycho-educational programs aimed at addressing school satisfaction. Seperately, longitudinal studies can be conducted to explore the mediating role of aggressiveness in the relationship between social ostracism and school satisfaction. Furthermore, it can be investigated whether there are different mediator variables in the relationship between social ostracism and school satisfaction.

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