

THE REVIEW OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHILDREN'S ATTACHMENT STYLES AND THEIR SOCIAL BEHAVIORS

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ABSTRACT

This study is conducted to investigate the relationship between the attachment styles of 60 months old and above children receiving pre-school education, and their social behaviors. Within this scope; 47 children, who are 60 months and above, attending the pre-school education in the Private Tevfik Fikret Kindergarten located in the city center of Ankara and affiliated to the Ministry of National Education, has constituted a sample group. In this study, "General Information Form for Children" has been used in order to obtain the demographic data of children, "Incomplete Toy Baby Stories Scale" has been used in order to determine the attachment levels of children and "The Pre-School Social Behavior Scale- Teacher Form" has been used in order to determine social behaviors of children. The obtained data has been analyzed by SPSS 20 packet program. As a result of the study, it has been proved that there is no significant difference between the attachment levels of children to their mothers and their demographic properties. A statistically significant difference has not been determined among conditions of children, who previously attended another pre-school education institution, in terms of relational aggression score. The relational aggression score of children, who previously did not attend another pre-school education institution, has been understood to be significantly lower than children, who previously attended another pre-school education institution. It has been found that there is a statistically negative relationship between physical aggression score and attachment score.

Keywords: Attachment, social behavior, pre-school education.

INTRODUCTION

Bowlby describes the attachment concept as "a tendency to seek and maintain intimacy in particularly stressful situations against a certain figure". Briefly, attachment is characterized as "long-term attachment between humans" (Seven, 2006).

Sense of attachment starts when the baby is born and continues during the affectionate interaction process between mother and baby. If this affectionate interaction starting at birth continuously repeats, baby's feeling of trust develops. Bowlby emphasizes that satisfying the child's physical needs such as eating and sleeping and establishing a safe and affectionate bond is very important. The mother-infant relationship is very important since mother is first person to whom infant feels closeness. Infant's mother or primary caregiver is the person who contributes to the development of the infant's cognitive, behavioral and emotional capacities that will affect the whole life of the infant (Akkoca, 2009).

Development of sense of attachment is important. Because, the strength of the relationship between the child's caregiver and the child protects the child against the dangers that may stem from environment. The child begins with this strong bond to the process of discovering the environment with curiosity. The child discovers the environment, feeling confident oneself. For this reason, it is very important to establish a safe connection with the mother or

the person who looks after him/her so that child can take firm steps forward in safe areas of his/her social life (Alan, 2011).

According to Bowlby and Ainsworth, sense of attachment is an innate behavior and every individual needs it in order to survive. When an individual needs, he/she develops intimacy with people who are important for him/her and this intimacy makes him/her happy. The child is protected and satisfied his/her basic needs by the person with whom he or she establishes an emotional bond. This is very important for the child's safety. The individual continues the sense of attachment in order to ensure that the sense of safety and peace continue (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2002).

According to Freud, feeling pleasure from attachment fulfills with satisfying of physical needs. If the physical needs of the child, such as nutrition and sucking is satisfied, sense of attachment develops. The person who feeds the infant and meets his/her physical needs, in other words the mother has a very important role in the development of the establishing bond of the infant. According to Freud, the infant has no role in this attachment. Because the infant cannot meet his/her own needs. That infant's primary caregiver establishes a safe bond between infant and her is very important for infant's development in the future. The infant reflects the emotional attachment he/she established with his/her mother to his/her social and emotional relationships with other people in the future. People who exhibit healthy, curious and skilled behaviors in their social and emotional relationships are those establishing a safe bond with their mother in the past (Miller, 1993).

The family, the first place where the child's education begins, is responsible for transferring the cultural values of society from generation to generation. The family, as well as its basic educational function, undertakes an effective socializing task especially in the life of the child in preschool period (Sözer Çapan, 2005).

Social development consists of all continuous and positive changes that the individual has shown throughout his / her life in terms of social behavior, emotions, attitudes, values, etc. (Giren, 2008). Social behavior is a pattern of behavior found suitable and recognized by society (Dinç, 2002). Social development, which has the most important place in the development of the individual, helps the individual to carry out his/her relations easily, not to have problems and not to cause other people to have problems in his/her social behaviors. Even if an individual's physical, cognitive and language development become at very good levels, he/she can have significant deficiencies in terms of social and life skills. In order to avoid these shortcomings in social terms, the most effective time is early childhood years (Şen, 2009).

The period when social and emotional development is fast is early childhood years. Children acquire a significant portion of their social and emotional traits during this period and these traits guide them in their lives. In order to motivate children in an easier way, it is very important to know their social and emotional development as well as their attachment conditions. For the development and support of children's social skills in early years, it is very important to know the role of attachment (Seven, 2006).

The most important element that improves the social relationships and positive peer relationships of children in preschool period is their speech skill. Through speech, children get information from each other, share their feelings, and discuss on a certain topic. They need to acquire the right speech skills to develop positive relationships with their friends. It is important to reinforce these behaviors in preschool period in order to gain positive social behaviors such as cooperation, kindness and charity while talking. Verbal aggression behavior may increase in the children who exhibit physical aggression, when they gain

speech skill. In such cases of disagreement, adults should positively support children to find compromise solutions (Ladd, Kochenderfer & Coleman, 1996).

Children are self-centered in pre-school period. They love themselves and admire themselves. They constantly compare themselves to other children. The family has a great influence on the positive development of the child's own image. Families enable the child to know the right from wrong. They become positive models for them. They support children's positive socialization process by helping the development of their empathy skills (Graig & Marguaeerite, 1998).

It is believed that this study will provide an opportunity to debate the effects of pre-school children's attachment styles to their mothers on social behaviors and it is assumed that this study will be important as it shows the effect of attachment between mother and child on child's social behaviors.

METHOD

Purpose

This study is aimed to investigate the relationship between the attachment styles of 60 months old and above children receiving pre-school education and their social behaviors.

Model of This Study

The model of this study is a descriptive model, in which the relationship between attachment styles of 60 months old and above children receiving pre-school education, and their social behaviors, is examined. Descriptive researches are defined as researches that contain the characteristics of an event and condition. The current situation or problems from the past are examined. It is usually intended to reveal the possible relationships between events. By means of descriptive studies, opportunity to understand the events better and to group are provided and thus the relations among them are revealed. Natural conditions do not deteriorate in descriptive studies and no changes are made in the environment (Baştürk, 2013).

Working Group

Target population of this study consists of 47 children, who are 60 months old and above, attending the pre-school education in the Private Tevfik Fikret Kindergarten located in the city center of Ankara and affiliated to the Ministry of National Education in 2014-2015 academic year.

Data Collection Tools

In this study, "General Information Form for Children" has been used in order to obtain the demographic data of children, "Incomplete Toy Baby Stories Scale" has been used in order to determine the attachment levels of children and "The Pre-School Social Behavior Scale-Teacher Form" has been used in order to determine social behaviors of children.

General Information Form for Children:

The general information form for children, which will be completed by the families, includes information such as the age of the children (in months), their sex, the number of their siblings, the order of birth, the number of years received in the pre-school education, whether they received pre-school education before, family togetherness, parent's education status and

the family type of the child.

Incomplete Toy Baby Family Stories Scale (TOBAH):

The Incomplete Toy Baby Family Stories Scale (TOBAH) has been developed by Cassidy (1988). This scale has been adapted to Turkish by Seven (2006). It is a scale type where the child completes 6 stories, each of which lasts about 3 minutes, with respect to infant family. Through these stories, the child is expected to express his/her the mental representations related to his/her attachment condition. By means of using this scale, the trust relationship between the child and himself/herself and his mother can be discovered. As a result of the validity and reliability study conducted by Seven (2006), the Alfa Reliability coefficient (α) has been found as .83. The results of the AFA carried out on scores obtained from the TOBAH scale indicate that this is a single factoral scale. This structure accounts for 56% of the total variance. The common variance explained by the factor in the articles varies between approximately 39-73%. It has been found that factor load values of the scale vary between .60 and .85. In this study, the Alfa Reliability coefficient (α) of the TOBAH attachment scale has been defined as .88. Applications for the TOBAH scale have been recorded on a camera and it has been coded by two coders by giving scores ranging from 1 to 5 and by taking the children's answers into consideration. The highest score that can be obtained from the scale is 30 and the lowest score is 6. A high score indicates a high level of attachment safety and a low score indicates a low level of attachment safety. In this study, for reliability of the scores obtained from coding made by researcher, the correlation of these scores with scores given by a second independent coder has been considered. The correlation coefficient between the total scores of the two coders has been calculated as .94 (Seven, 2006).

The Pre-School Social Behavior Scale- Teacher Form (OÖSDÖ-ÖF):

The original scale was developed by Nicki R. Crick, Juan F. Casas and Monique Mosher in 1997 based on teacher evaluation of pre-school children's social behavior in the United States. The Pre-School Social Behavior Scale-Teacher Form was translated into Turkish by Müge Şen and later necessary corrections were made on this form. It has been determined that the version adapted to Turkish language and culture consist of 4 factors, in other words open / physical aggression, positive social behavior, relational aggression and depressive affection. The names of the factors defined accordingly and their content is indicated in the following sentence: It has been determined that the first (open / physical aggression) factor of the scale consists of 8 items (2, 5, 7, 12, 14, 17, 20, 23), the second (positive social behavior) factor of the scale consists of 7 items (1,3, 6, 10, 18, 24, 25), the third (relational aggression) factor of the scale consists of 6 items (4, 8, 11, 15, 21, 22) and the fourth (depressive affection) factor of the scale consists of 3 items (9,16,19). While the load values of the factors in the first factor ranged from .974 to .652., these values ranged from .804 to .563 for 7 items in the second factor, .828 to .613 for 6 items in the third factor and .863 to .506 for 3 items in the fourth factor (Şen, 2009).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the relationship between the scores obtained from the Incomplete Toy Baby Family Stories Scale and Social Behavior Scales and age and sex variables of the child has been reviewed and they have been presented in tabular form. In addition, the correlation relationship between the scores of Incomplete Toy Baby Family Stories Scale and Social Behavior Scale has been examined.

Table 1. Conclusions Regarding the Difference Between Children's Age Groups in Terms of Scores Obtained From TOBAH Scale

		Age					Mann Whitney U Test			
		n	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Ss	Mean Rank	z	P
Attachment	60-66 months	13	21,15	21	10	29	4,83	25,88	-0,586	0,558
	67-72 months	34	20,53	21	9	25	3,68	23,28		
	Total	47	20,7	21	9	29	3,98			

When Table 1 is examined, it has been determined that the attachment levels (X = 21,15) of children, who are aged 60-66 months, is higher than the attachment levels (X = 20,53) of children, who are aged 67-72 months. However, when the table is viewed, it has been found that the attachment styles of children did not create a significant difference according to their age groups (p> 0,05).

When the attachment levels of children, who are aged 60-66 months and 67-72 months, are examined, it is understood that both age groups have an avoidant style of attachment. Avoidant attachment is a despised relationship considered to be unimportant between the child and person who looks after him/her (Seven, 2006). Being close to each other of the attachment levels of both groups may be linked to being close to each other of maternal attitudes. Being close to each other of maternal attitudes can result from social childrearing attitude. Although there is no significant difference, exhibiting a higher attachment safety of children, who are aged 60-66 months, than those of children, who are aged 67-72 months, may be due to their orientation towards their mothers when they are a small child and their increased awareness of the environment as long as they grow.

In the literature, there are studies that show that there is no significant relationship between age and attachment styles as in this research [Tanış (2014), Yıldız (2005), Turan Cebeci (2009)]. These studies support the research data.

Table 2. Conclusions Regarding the Difference Between Children's Genders in Terms of Scores Obtained From TOBAH Scale

		Gender					Mann Whitney U Test			
		n	Mean	Median	Min	Max	ss	Mean Rank.	z	P
Attachment	Female Child	24	21,92	22,5	17	29	2,8	27,17	-1,628	0,104
	Male Child	23	19,43	21	9	25	4,66	20,7		
	Total	47	20,7	21	9	29	3,98			

When Table 2 is examined, it has been found that the attachment levels of female children (X = 21,92) are higher than the attachment levels of male children (X = 19,43). However, there is no statistically significant difference between the sexes of the children in terms of scale scores of incomplete toy baby family stories (p> 0,05).

Although there is no significant difference between the attachment levels of female children and male children, it has been proved that female children show a higher attachment safety to their mothers than those of male children. This situation may lead female children to take more their mothers as a model, to strengthen the mother-daughter relationship and to have a positive impact on attachment. Moreover, it is believed that the reason of the absence of any significant difference may be the fact that mothers give love and confidence towards their children without discrimination of gender.

According to the findings of research conducted by Seven (2008), it has been understood that there is no significant difference between attachment and sex and that female children's scores are higher than male children's scores in terms of average scores. In the same way, the studies of Tanış (2014) and Turan Cebeci (2009) showed that attachment scores did not change according to sex scores. This supports the findings of this study.

Table 3. *Conclusions Regarding the Difference Between Children's Age Groups in Terms of Scores Obtained From OÖSDÖ-ÖF Scale*

		Age					Mann Whitney U Test			
		n	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Ss	Mean Rank	z	P
Physical Aggression	60-66 months	13	11	8	8	24	5,08	26,69	-0,968	0,333
	67-72 months	34	9,47	8	8	17	2,73	22,97		
	Total	47	9,89	8	8	24	3,55			
Positive Behavior	60-66 months	13	27,31	28	19	35	5,56	24,19	-0,06	0,952
	67-72 months	34	27,38	27,5	20	35	4,01	23,93		
	Total	47	27,36	28	19	35	4,43			
Relational Aggression	60-66 months	13	10,62	10	6	20	4,75	22,96	-0,324	0,746
	67-72 months	34	11	10	6	25	4,61	24,4		
	Total	47	10,89	10	6	25	4,6			
Depressive Affectionate	60-66 months	13	6,23	7	3	11	2,59	19,27	-1,484	0,138
	67-72 months	34	7,21	7,5	3	10	1,77	25,81		
	Total	47	6,94	7	3	11	2,05			

When Table 3 is examined, it has been determined that children's physical aggression scores ($p=0,333$), positive behavior scores ($p = 0,952$), relational aggression ($p = 0,746$), depressive affectionate scores ($p=0,138$) and social punishment scores ($p=0,063$) don't show statistically a significant different among children's age groups ($p < 0,05$).

Since there is only moon difference among children's age groups, their social developments may be closer to each other.

Although there is no significant difference, physical aggression scores of children, who are aged 60-66 months, are higher than those of children, who are aged 67-72 months. Their relational aggression scores are lower. This shows us that with age and maturation, children try to solve their problems through communication and when they cannot solve their problems, they begin to verbally threaten and to harm. In the child who develop socially with age and maturation, language development also develops in parallel with this situation. The progress of language development can lead children to communicate more and to improve their vocabulary. The child who learns to solve his/her problems through communicating also learns to harm through communication.

In Dinç's study (2002), where the views of teachers about the effects of preschool education on the social development of 4-5 year-old children are examined, it has been found that children in the 5-year-old group make more progress than the children in the 4-year group. This result supports the research data. In Eminoglu's study (2007), where the relationship between parental behaviors and social behaviors of children between four-five years old are examined, it has seen that there was no statistically significant difference in the average

scores of children in terms of both cooperation and social relations dimensions. This result supports the research data.

Table 4. *Conclusions Regarding the Difference Between Children's Genders in Terms of Scores Obtained From OÖSDÖ-ÖF*

		Gender					Mann Whitney U Test			
		n	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Ss	Mean Rank.	Z	P
Physical Aggression	Female Child	24	8,67	8	8	14	1,49	20,02	-2,363	0,018*
	Male Child	23	11,17	9	8	24	4,54	28,15		
	Total	47	9,89	8	8	24	3,55			
Positive Behavior	Female Child	24	28,42	28,5	19	35	4,3	27,67	-1,88	0,06
	Male Child	23	26,26	26	19	35	4,37	20,17		
	Total	47	27,36	28	19	35	4,43			
Relational Aggression	Female Child	24	10,04	9	6	20	4,25	21,42	-1,333	0,182
	Male Child	23	11,78	11	6	25	4,87	26,7		
	Total	47	10,89	10	6	25	4,6			
Depressive Affectionate	Female Child	24	6,96	7	3	11	1,99	23,85	-0,076	0,94
	Male Child	23	6,91	7	3	10	2,15	24,15		
	Total	47	6,94	7	3	11	2,05			

*p<0,05

When Table is was examined, there is a statistically significant difference between the sexes of the children in terms of physical aggression (p = 0,018) score (p <0,05). When the averages of the points are examined, it is found that the physical aggression scores of male children are higher than physical aggression scores of female children. There is no statistically significant difference between the sexes of the children in terms of positive behavior (p = 0,06) scores, relational aggression (p = 0,182) scores and depressive affectionate (p = 0,94) scores (p> 0,05).

Female children's physical aggression score is significantly lower than that of male child. According to this result, it has been determined that female children show less physical aggression in the solving their problems than male children. The child-rearing attitude of the society can be shown as the cause of this result. While male children are expected to grow stronger than female children, male children can be directed to the violence. In addition, male children play the violent games by using toys such as weapon etc. when playing the game and this situation unavoidably directs them to the violence. Also children who play the violent games solve their problems by using violence. Since the families grow their female children more politely, they avoid the violence. In addition, female children avoid the physical violence because they prefer quiet games such as playing house etc. in their games.

In Dinç's study (2002), where the opinions of teachers about the effects of preschool education on the social development of 4-5 year-old children are examined, it is determined that children's social development levels have been affected by the gender variable and that female children have shown more development than male children. In Şen's study (2009), where the social behavior of children between 3-6 age groups is examined in terms of some variables, it has been found that open / physical aggression behaviors showed a significant difference according to sex and also it has been determined that this significant difference

arises because of the fact that the average scores of male children is higher than the average scores of female children.

Table 5. Correlation Test Results Regarding Relationship Between Scores Obtained From Incomplete Toy Baby Family Stories Scale and Scores Obtained From Pre-school Social Behavior Scale

	Attachment	
Physical Aggression	r	-,305*
	p	0,037
	n	47
Positive Behavior	r	0,249
	p	0,092
	n	47
Relational Aggression	r	-0,122
	p	0,413
	n	47
Depressive Affectionate	r	-0,086
	p	0,567
	n	47

* p<0,05

The relationship between the scores of children's incomplete toy baby family stories scales and the physical aggression dimension, one of pre-school social behavior scale dimensions, has been defined as $r = -, 305$. This coefficient, while it is meaningfulness, indicates a negative and low relationship. As long as the attachment score increases, physical aggression score decreases ($p < 0.05$).

The relationship between children's scores of incomplete toy baby family stories scales and positive behavior dimension, one of pre-school social behavior scale dimensions, has been defined $r = 0,249$; the relationship between relational aggression dimension, one of pre-school social behavior scale dimensions, has been defined $r = 0,122$; the relationship between depressive affectionate dimension, one of pre-school social behavior scale dimensions and depressive affect dimension has been defined as $r = -0,086$. Although these coefficients are not significant, they are quite close to zero. It can be said that there is not any relation between these variables ($p > 0,05$).

According to research findings, there is a negative, significant relationship between children's attachment levels and physical aggression dimension, one is social behavior dimensions. As long as attachment score increases, physical aggression score decreases. The high level of confidence bond that the child establishes with his/her mother in the 0-6 age period increases the child's confidence towards the environment. A child, who approaches the environment safely, approaches with positive attitudes and behaviors he/she learned from his/her mother with whom he/she first established an emotional bond in his/her life, when solving the problems he/she encountered with them. When the mother's approach mode towards her child becomes to communicate, the child's approach mode also becomes to communicate towards the environment. It is also very important that communication is established in a

positive way. The positive communication that the mother makes with her child becomes an example for the child and child tries to solve his/her problems through positive communication way while solving the problems.

Cohn (1990) has researched the relationship between attachment and peer social competence in children who are 6 years old. The results shows that the male children with insecure attachment are less loved by their peers and their teachers and also they act more aggressively against their peers and have more problematic behaviors. In the study conducted by Rose-Krasnor et al. (1996), they have noted that attachment status is a messenger of children's behaviors towards their peers. Also it has reached the conclusion that the maternal instructions are associated with children's social problem solving behaviors. In Yigit's study (2015), it has been expressed that the levels regarding quarrelsome / aggressive, anxious / plaintive and excessive mobile / carelessness of children with insecure attachment are higher than those of children with secure attachment. These studies support the research findings.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of this study, it has been determined that there is no statistically significant difference between the age groups and sexes of the children in terms of attachment scores and it has been seen that female children show higher attachment safety than those of male children. When the social behavior scores are examined, there is no a statistically significant difference among the age groups of children in terms of physical aggression, positive behavior, relational aggression and depressive affectionate scores. But there is statistically significant difference among the genders of children in terms of physical aggression score. The female children's physical aggression score is a lower at a significant level than those of male children. Moreover, there is no a statistically significant difference among the genders of children in terms of positive behavior, relational aggression and depressive affectionate scores. According to findings of this study, there is negative, significant relation between children's attachment levels and physical aggression, one of social behavior dimensions. As long as attachment score increases, physical aggression score decreases.

Mothers and fathers should take care to keep their children away from violent games and physical harms. Parents have the chance to improve themselves by participating in activities such as various courses, symposiums, panels and conferences related with their children's development. On the other hand, they can have the opportunity to get more education by following television and radio programs and newspaper articles regarding these subjects. Training activities to support children's social skills should be increased. The lessons should also include the practices specifically designed to enhance children's expressive skills. In order to protect children from the adverse effects of social media, children's media awareness training should be presented. In order to protect children from the adverse effects of social media, trainings developing media awareness in the children should be presented.

By means of applying scales used in the study at the beginning and ending of the academic year, the levels of attachment of children to their mothers and the change in their social behaviors and relationship among them during the year can be investigated.

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