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Determining the relationship between adolescents' perceived parental attitudes and their psychological problems and irrational beliefs

Ergenlerin algıladıkları ebeveyn tutumları ile ruhsal sorunları ve akılcı olmayan inançları arasındaki ilişkinin belirlenmesi

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ABSTRACT

Aim: This descriptive study was conducted to determine the relationship between adolescents' perceived parental attitudes, mental problems, and irrational beliefs.

Methods: The study sample consisted of a total of 341 participants. The study was conducted between April 2022 and June 2022, and the data were collected using The Perceived Helicopter Parenting Attitude Scale, Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and Irrational Belief Scale-Adolescent Form in addition to The Personal Information Form.

Results: As a result of the analysis, the mean total score of the mother perceived helicopter parent attitude scale was 55.32 ± 11.35 , and the mean total score of the father perceived helicopter parent attitude scale was 46.62 ± 11.34 . the mean total score of the adolescents' irrational belief scale - adolescent form was 55.32 ± 11.35 . the mean total score of the strengths and difficulties questionnaire was 15.66 ± 5.73 , and the mean score was on the borderline.

Conclusion: It was found that there was a strong negative relationship between the irrational belief scale of the adolescents included in the study and the mother's perceived helicopter parental attitude. There was no significant relationship between adolescents' irrational belief scale and difficulties and difficulties scale and its subscales. There was a significant relationship between adolescents' difficulties and difficulties total score and emotional problems subscale total score and father's perceived helicopter attitudes. As a result of the study, it was revealed that the helicopter parent attitude that adolescents perceived from their parents could create psychological problems and irrational beliefs in the adolescent.

Keywords: Adolescent; attitude parenting; helicopter parent; irrational beliefs; mental problems

ÖZET

Amaç: Bu çalışma, ergenlerin algıladıkları ebeveyn tutumlarının ruhsal sorunları ve akılcı olmayan inançları arasındaki ilişkinin belirlenmesi amacıyla tanımlayıcı olarak yapılmıştır.

Yöntem: Çalışma örneklemi, toplam 341 katılımcıdan oluşmaktadır. Araştırma Nisan 2022-Haziran 2022 tarihleri arasında yapılmış olup; veriler, Kişisel Bilgi Formunun yanı sıra Algılanan Helikopter Ebeveyn Tutum Ölçeği, Güçler ve Güçlükler Anketi ve Akılcı Olmayan İnanç Ölçeği-Ergen Formu kullanılarak toplanmıştır.

Bulgular: Yapılan analizler sonucunda anne algılanan helikopter ebeveyn tutum ölçeği toplam puan ortalaması 55.32 ± 11.35 , baba algılanan helikopter ebeveyn tutum ölçeği toplam puan ortalaması ise 46.62 ± 11.34 olduğu saptanmıştır. ergenlerin akılcı olmayan inanç ölçeği -ergen formu toplam puan ortalaması 55.32 ± 11.35 olduğu görülmüştür. Güçler ve güçlükler anket toplam puan ortalamalarının 15.66 ± 5.73 olduğu ve puan ortalamasının sınırda olduğu görülmüştür.

Sonuç: Araştırmaya dahil edilen ergenlerin akılcı olmayan inanç ölçeği ile anne algılanan helikopter ebeveyn tutumu arasında negatif yönde güçlü ilişkiye sahip olduğu saptanmıştır. Ergenlerin Akılcı olmayan inanç ölçeği ile güçlük ve güçlükler ölçeği ve duygusal alt boyutları arasında anlamlı bir ilişkinin olmadığı tespit edilmiştir. Ergenlerin güçler ve güçlükler toplam puanı ve duygusal sorunları alt ölçeği toplam puan ile baba algılanan helikopter tutumları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki tespit edilmiştir. Çalışma sonucunda ergen bireylerin ebeveynlerinden algıladıkları helikopter ebeveyn tutumunun ergen bireyde ruhsal sorunlar yaratabileceği ve akılcı olmayan inançlar oluşturduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ergen; ebeveynlik; helikopter ebeveyn tutumu; akılcı olmayan inançlar; ruhsal sorunlar

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Introduction

The adolescent period was first considered by Stanley Hall in 1904 as a separate period in the individual's life cycle. Adolescent is the Turkish equivalent of the word "adolescent," which means growing and maturing in Latin and means an individual in a permanent and permanent developmental stage (Yavuzer, 2013). During adolescence, which is a challenging process, the individual gains the behaviors that will last until the end of his/her life, establishes his/her position in society, and experiences many physiological, psychological, emotional, cognitive, and social changes (Kulaksızoğlu, 2019).

Adolescents need a friend with whom they can discuss the physical and sexual changes in their bodies or share their emotional states (Kulaksızoğlu, 2019; İnanç et al., 2008). In this case, the influence of the family on the individualization and inclusion of the adolescent in society is very important. In this process, healthy communication within the family should be established. The basis of this healthy communication is the parental attitudes of the mother and father on the adolescent (Avcı, 2006; Yazgan et al., 2005).

Lifelong parenting offers all the necessary opportunities for forming and shaping their children's personality development. While providing these opportunities, parents develop their own attitudes towards their children, consciously or not, by developing their own behavioral patterns with the culture and lifestyles of the place where they live. These attitudes have a very important role in shaping all developmental areas of adolescents and in adapting to the society in which they live in later years (Kulaksızoğlu, 2019; Alisinanoğlu, 2003; Kasatura, 1988). If the attitudes exhibited by parents are negative, it causes many social, emotional, mental, and behavioral problems (Canbek & Sarıoğlu, 2007). According to Kahraman and Polat (2003), adolescents who grow up in families where pressure and authority are dominant may be more anxious, less confident in themselves and their environment, quarrelsome and incompatible, unable to control their emotions, touchy, and sudden and flashy individuals (Kahraman & Polat, 2003). On the other hand, in other studies, it has been observed that children in families where democratic attitudes prevail are individuals with developed social relations and academic achievements and who take responsibility in all areas (Bee & Boyd, 2009; Cüceloğlu, 2016; Şirin, 2019).

The problems encountered by adolescents and the psychological disorders they experience have three components: thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. According to Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy, individuals' emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in the face of emotions and thoughts affect each other (Ellis, 2003; Nordlund, 2013). However, the individual's thought process has a special importance among these processes in the problems that exist in the adolescent's life and the incompatibilities he/she experiences (Ellis, 2003). The attitudes of parents towards their children from the moment they are born determine where and how their children are shaped by their parents. In the studies conducted in the literature, the attitudes that parents show to their children, consciously or unconsciously, can cause the child to become a maladjusted person and develop irrational beliefs when they are negative (Çekiç et al., 2016; Yörükoğlu, 2012).

In this regard, it is thought that parents of adolescents have an important place in adolescence. In our study, the effect of this situation will be revealed with the title of "Examining the Relationship Between Adolescents' Perceived Parental Attitudes and Their Mental Problems and Irrational Beliefs." For this purpose, the research focuses on the following research questions.

- Is there a relationship between adolescents' perceived parental attitudes and mental problems?
- Is there a significant relationship between adolescents' perceived parental attitudes and irrational beliefs?

Methods

Purpose/Design of the Study

This descriptive study was conducted to determine the relationship between adolescents' perceived parental attitudes, mental problems, and irrational beliefs

Place and Time of the Study

The research was conducted in a high school in Şanlıurfa between April 2022 and June 2022.

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consists of high school students in adolescence. The sample consists of 350 students attending a high school in Haliliye district of Şanlıurfa in the 2021-2022 academic year. Of the students, nine who did not want to participate in the study and were absent when the questionnaires were administered were excluded. In selecting the students, all individuals who met the inclusion criteria were included in the study without any selection method.

Inclusion Criteria

- Education and training activities continuing in the schools where the study was conducted
- Adolescents who agreed to participate in the study
- Students who did not have any hearing, speech, or comprehension problems that would prevent communication during the sessions and completion of the data collection tools were included in the study.

Data Collection Tools

In the study, the Personal Information Form, Perceived Helicopter Parental Attitude Scale (PHPAS), Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), and Irrational Belief Scale-Adolescent Form (IBS-A) were used to obtain general information about adolescents' perceived parental attitudes.

Personal Information Form

This form, prepared by the researchers, consists of 14 questions to obtain data on the sociodemographic characteristics of adolescents and their families.

Perceived Helicopter Parent Attitude Scale (PHPAS)

The Perceived Helicopter Parental Attitude Scale was adapted into Turkish by Yılmaz (2019) to measure democratic, neglectful, authoritarian, and tolerant parental approaches under the dimensions of acceptance/affection and supervision. The 4-point Likert-type scale consists of 21 items (Yılmaz, 2019).

In the scale, the mother and father sections are scored separately. The highest score that can be obtained from the mother or father section of the scale is 84, while the lowest score is 21. There are no reverse items in the scale. The Cronbach Alpha value for the mother form of the Perceived Helicopter Parent Attitude Scale was found to be $\alpha = .83$, and the Cronbach Alpha value for the father form was found to be $\alpha = .82$ (Kayış, 2018).

Irrational Belief Scale-Adolescent Form (IBS-A)

The scale was created by Türküm (2003) by adapting the Irrational Belief Scale, which was previously developed for university students, to adolescents. The scale consists of 16 items and is a 5-point Likert type.

Scoring is in the form of Completely Favorable (5), Fairly Favorable (4), Undecided (3), Somewhat Favorable (2), Not Favorable at All (1). The lowest score obtained from the scale is 25, and the highest score is 125. A high score indicates a high tendency towards irrational beliefs (Goodman et al.,1998).

The construct validity of the scale was examined by applying factor analysis. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was .70 (Türküm et al., 2005).

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

It is a scale developed by Goodman to screen mental and behavioral problems in children and adolescents and is widely used worldwide. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire consists of 25 items and five sub-dimensions, some of which question positive and some negative behavioral characteristics. There are five sub-dimensions: attention deficit hyperactivity, behavioral problems, emotional problems, peer problems, and social behavior problems. The questions are scored as 0,1, and 2 according to the degree of accuracy. Each dimension is evaluated within itself, and the sum of the first four dimensions gives a total difficulty score. The social behavior subscale measures positive behaviors and is not included in the total problem score (Goodman, 1997; Goodman et al., 1998).

The validity and reliability study of the questionnaire in Turkey was conducted by Güvenir et al. The internal consistency value of the questionnaire was found to be between 0.84 and 0.22. The lowest Cronbach's alpha value was calculated in the peer problems subscale (Güvenir et al., 2008).

Data Collection

The data were collected through face-to-face interviews with the participating students. After informing them about the purpose of the study through individual interviews in the classroom environment, the "Personal Information Form," "Perceived Helicopter Parent Attitude Scale (PHPAS)," "Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire" and "Irrational Belief Scale-Adolescent Form (IBS-A)" prepared by the researcher were used for the adolescents who agreed to participate in the study. It took approximately 15-20 minutes to collect the questionnaires.

Statistical Evaluation of Data

Data analysis was performed with the SPSS 23.0 package program. Kurtosis and Skewness values were used to evaluate the conformity of the data to normal distribution. The relationships between the variables were analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficient when the data fit the normal distribution and Spearman's correlation coefficient when the data did not. Comparison of means (averages) in two groups was performed using Student's t-test when the data were normally distributed. The linear regression model was used when the data were normally distributed. $p < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Ethical Aspects of the Research

Written permissions were obtained from Harran University Ethics Committee (Date: 16.02.2022 No: 107340) and Haliliye District Directorate of National Education (Date: 18.03.2022 No: 45976087). Informed consent was also obtained from the participants.

Limitations of the Study

The lack of school attendance obligations due to the pandemic conditions of the period when the research was conducted is a factor that reduces participation and constitutes a limitation

Results

As a result of the analysis, data on some sociodemographic and personal characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1. The mean age of the adolescents participating in the study was 15.55 ± 1.05 , and the number of siblings was 4.33 ± 2.23 . It was determined that 59.9% of the adolescents included in the study were male, and 72.7% lived in a nuclear family structure. It was determined that 24.9% of the mothers of the adolescents in the study were illiterate, and 51.9% of the fathers had primary education. When the economic status of the families was analyzed, it was determined that 57.5% of them had income equal to their expenses.

Table 1. Distribution of adolescents' sociodemographic characteristics

Demographic Characteristics		Mean±Sd	Median (Min-Max)
Age		15.55 ± 1.05	16 (13 - 18)
Number of Siblings		4.33 ± 2.23	4 (0 - 12)
		n(341)	%
Gender	Male	194	56.9
	Female	147	43.1
Family Type	Nuclear Family	248	72.7
	Extended Family	93	27.3
Mother Education Status	Illiterate	85	24.9
	Primary education	199	58.4
	High School	29	8.5
	University and above	26	8.2
Father Education Status	Illiterate	34	10
	Primary/Secondary Education	177	51.9
	High School	67	19.6
	University and Above	63	18.5
Economic Status of the Family	Income Less than Expenses	109	32
	Income Equals Expenses	196	57.5
	Income Exceeds Expenses	36	10.5

As a result of the analysis, the participants' scores from the scale and subscale scores are presented in Table 2. The IBS-A total score of the adolescents participating in the study was observed to be 55.32 ± 11.35 . The mean total score of MPHPAS was 55.19 ± 12.81 , and the mean total score of FPHPAS was 46.62 ± 11.34 . The mean score of the adolescents included in the study was 4.1 ± 2.34 for emotional problems, 3.31 ± 2.07 for behavioral problems, 4.6 ± 1.98 for attention deficit and hyperactivity, 3.65 ± 1.97 for peer problems, and 7.06 ± 2.45 for prosocial behaviors. It was observed that the mean total score of the adolescents was 15.66 ± 5.73 , and their mean scores were on the borderline.

Table 2. Adolescents' demographic characteristics and scale mean score

	Mean±Sd	Median (Min-Max)
IBS-A	55.32 ± 11.35	57 (22 - 80)
MPHPAS	55.19 ± 12.81	54 (21-82)
FPHPAS	46.62 ± 11.34	46 (21-81)
SDQ	15.66 ± 5.73	15 (3 - 33)
SDQ Emotional Problems Subscale	4.1 ± 2.34	4 (0 - 10)
SDQ Behavioral Problems Subscale	3.31 ± 2.07	3 (0 - 10)
SDQ Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Subscale	4.6 ± 1.98	5 (0 - 9)
SDQ Peer Problems Subscale	3.65 ± 1.97	4 (0 - 10)
SDQ Prosocial Behaviors Subscale	7.06 ± 2.45	7 (0 - 10)

As a result of the analysis, it was found that IBS-A and MHPAS had a strong negative relationship ($p < 0.001$). It was determined that there was no statistically significant relationship between IBS-A and FPHPAS ($p > 0.005$). It was determined that there was no significant relationship between IBS-A and SDQ and SDQ sub-dimensions of adolescents ($p > 0.005$). There was a significant negative correlation between FPHPAS and SDQ total score ($p = 0.023$) (Table 3).

Table 3. Investigation of the Relationship Between the Mean Scores of PHPAS, IBS-A, SDQ, and SDQ Subscales

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	r	1.000	-.295**	-0.004	-0.008	-0.022	-0.023	0.043	-0.015	-0.006
	p		0.000	0.945	0.889	0.688	0.668	0.424	0.781	0.905
2	r			.325**	-0.042	-0.034	-0.046	-0.040	0.007	-0.017
	p			0.000	0.444	0.533	0.395	0.465	0.891	0.759
3	r				-.125*	-.188**	-0.065	-0.037	-0.034	-0.027
	p				0.023	0.001	0.238	0.503	0.538	0.624
4	r					.783**	.722**	.589**	.627**	-.228**
	p					0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
5	r						.394**	.374**	.300**	0.036
	p						0.000	0.000	0.000	0.513
6	r							.193**	.384**	-.356**
	p							0.000	0.000	0.000
7	r								0.061	-0.094
	p								0.264	0.082
8	r									-.236**
	p									0.000

1- IBS-A Total Score; 2- MHPAS Total; 3- FPHPAS Scale Total; 4- SDQ Total; 5- Emotional Problems Subscale; 6- Behavioral Problems Subscale; 7- Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Subscale; 8- Peer Problems Subscale; 9- Prosocial Behaviors Subscale; *Pearson Correlation

Discussion

The data obtained from our research with adolescents revealed that the mean total score of the mother's perceived helicopter parenting attitude scale was 55.32 ± 11.35 . The mean total score of the father's perceived helicopter parent attitude scale was 46.62 ± 11.34 . According to Gençer (2020), the mean total score of the mother's perceived helicopter parental attitude scale was 45.49 ± 10.78 , and the mean total score of the father's perceived helicopter parental attitude scale was 40.30 ± 8.67 (Gençer, 2020). In the study conducted by Akman and Demir (2023), it was found that the mean total score of the mother perceived helicopter parent attitude scale was 46.50 ± 10.92 and the mean total score of the father perceived helicopter parent attitude scale was 40.90 ± 9.94 (Peker & Demir 2023). As a result of the analyses and comparisons, it was observed that the scores were generally parallel to each other, but mothers had more helicopter parenting attitudes than fathers. It is thought that this situation may have been affected by the difference in the roles of mothers and fathers in society (Johnston et al., 2017). It is thought that mothers show more helicopter parenting attitudes as a result of the fact that mothers have more responsibility for the upbringing of adolescents in the social structure, spend more time with adolescents, and have more anxiety about their future (Powell & Karraker, 2017).

It was determined that the total mean scores of the difficulties questionnaire and the mean scores of the sub-dimensions of emotional problems, behavioral problems, and peer problems sub-dimensions of the adolescent individuals in our study were on the borderline. When the literature is examined, when the results of our study are compared with the results of Çeri and Özer (2018), Yavuz and colleagues (2019) and Gördeles Beşer and Çam (2009) studies, it was found that the mean scores of the total score and sub-dimensions of the difficulties and difficulties questionnaire were in parallel with the results and the mean

scores were found to be on the border (Çeri & Özer, 2018; Yavuz et al., 2019; Canbek & Sarioğlu, 2007). Adolescents experience problems in emotional, behavioral, and peer relationships due to the general characteristics of adolescence(30). For this reason, disagreements may arise with their parents and peers during this period. In the face of these situations, the individual may experience the desire to be alone, peer discussions, anxiety, and hopelessness (Yavuzer, 2013; Kulaksızoğlu, 2019). These borderline scores obtained in the sub-dimensions in our study are thought to be related to these life crises.

It was determined that the total scores of the irrational belief scale of the adolescents participating in the study were 55.32 ± 11.35 . When the literature was examined, Uzun et al. (2020) found that the total score of irrational beliefs in adolescents was 61.40 ± 9.16 (Uzun et al.,2020). Uygur (2018) found that the total score of irrational beliefs in adolescents was 41.41 ± 19.99 (Uygur, 2018). Differences were found when the total score of the irrational belief scale of adolescents in our study was compared with the results of other studies in the literature. In addition, the differences in the family life of adolescents are more frequently controlled by their families, and exposure to some prohibitions and strict rules seriously affects the development of irrational beliefs (Kulaksızoğlu, 2019; Çivitci, 2006). The reason for these differences is thought to be related to the social and cultural differences in the regions where the studies were conducted and the different educational levels of the parents.

In our analysis results, a significant relationship was found between the total score of strengths and difficulties, the total score of emotional problems subscale, and father's perceived helicopter attitudes. There was no significant relationship between the total score of the strengths and difficulties, the total score of the emotional problems subscale, and the mother's perceived helicopter attitudes. When the studies in the literature are examined, it is reported that approximately 15-25% of adolescents have mental disorders and psychiatric problems in future life stages starting in adolescence (Kim-Cohen et al., 2003; Romano et al., 2006).

In the study conducted by Aboobaker et al. (2019), parents' over-authoritarian and inconsistent attitudes were found to be important predictors of emotional and behavioral problems seen in adolescents (Aboobaker et al., 2019). Looking at these problems, Tolan and Aygaz (2022) concluded that there was a significant negative relationship between the emotional warmth perceived by adolescents from their parents and the emotional problems and total difficulty they experienced (Tolan & Aygaz, 2022). According to Benk (2006), children who describe their parents as caring, warm, and understanding are less likely to experience emotional problems (Benk, 2006). In this respect, it is thought that the perception of parents as understanding is protective for adolescents and positively affects their emotional problems (Bao et al., 2016). According to Bao et al. (2016), perceived intrusive/protective parental attitude was defined as risky. Parents' protective and punitive strategies constitute a source of the formation of peer problems (Bao et al., 2016).

The adolescents included in the study were found to have a strong negative relationship between the irrational belief scale and the mother's perceived helicopter parental attitude.

Parenting had a positive relationship with irrational beliefs and that as the scores obtained from the helicopter parenting style increased, the scores of individuals with irrational beliefs increased. In other words, individuals with helicopter parents were found to have high levels of irrational beliefs (Yurdakul, 2021). Regarding regional and cultural influence, when fathers exhibit harsher and stricter attitudes towards adolescents, adolescents may establish more relationships with their mothers, which may eventually lead to a dependent relationship between the mother and the individual (Arker, 1984). In this context, it is thought that although mothers exhibit an attitude that cannot be considered normal, such as helicopter attitude, adolescent individuals may create a negative relationship due to evaluating this perceived attitude as a healthy relationship tool

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study, the relationship between adolescents' perceived parental attitudes, mental problems, and irrational beliefs was examined;

It was found that there was a strong negative relationship between the irrational belief scale of the participant adolescents included in the study and the mother's perceived helicopter parental attitude. In our analysis results, a significant relationship was found between the total score of adolescents' difficulties and emotional problems subscale total score and father's perceived helicopter attitudes. In addition, it was determined that the findings of the participant adolescents from the difficulties scale and subscales were on the borderline. Based on these results, the following suggestions are considered to be important:

- Conducting the study with adolescents studying at the high school level with different samples (e.g., at the primary school level) and with individuals of different age groups,
- Many studies indicate that parental behaviors and irrational beliefs of parents are effective in the irrational beliefs of adolescents. Therefore, research on parents' irrational beliefs should be conducted to compare with adolescents' irrational beliefs,
- Conducting experimental studies to reduce irrational beliefs in adolescents,
- Organizing training for parents about the characteristics of parental attitudes and the mental problems that these attitudes may cause in adolescents and
- Since there is little research on this subject in the literature, it is recommended that the same research be examined in different regions or increase the number of participants.

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