



The Relationship Between Family Communications and School Adjustment Levels of Male Adolescents Aged 14-19

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ABSTRACT

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This study was conducted to descriptive the relationship between family communication and school adjustment levels of male adolescents aged 14-19. This descriptive and correlational study was conducted. The sample of the study consisted of 347 male students. 80% of the universe has been reached. Data were collected using an information form, a family evaluation scale to measure their intra-family communication and a school adjustment scale to measure their school adjustment level. Data were collected from male students by face-to-face survey method. Data were summarized as mean, standard deviation, number, and percentage. T test, One Way ANOVA, Pearson Correlation test were used in the analyses. Obtained results were tested at $p < 0.05$ significance level. 35.4% of the students were in the 10th and the mean age was 15.87 ± 1.18 . It was determined that the communication skills of the families of 40.3% of the students were not functional, the Communication Sub-Dimensional score average was 1.94 ± 0.48 and the School Adjustment Scale average score was 23.49 ± 6.41 . It was determined that there was a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.206$, $p < 0.000$) between the Communication Sub-Dimension Scale and the School Adjustment Scale. In the study, a weak negative correlation was found between the family communication of adolescents and their level of school adjustment. It is recommended to intensify studies on this group in order to determine the factors that affect the school adjustment of adolescents aged 14-19, which corresponds to the high school age.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period beginning with puberty and ending with the end of body growth, and is a period of intense physical, social, mental and emotional developments. This is a period in which the individual questions his/her identity and begins to find himself/herself, and it can also be defined as a transition period from childhood to adulthood (Gökalp & Yöndem, 2021; Baysal et al., 2021). In adolescents between the ages of 14-19, as there are behaviours such as separation from parents, efforts to emotionally distance themselves from parents during the individuation process, focusing on peer relations (especially the opposite sex), underestimating risks and requiring autonomy cause conflicts with parents. Another situation that causes conflict is the communication disorder within the family (Güler, 2013; Elkin, 2016). It is possible only by establishing a positive communication network for family members to respond warmly and emotionally to each other, to show the necessary attention sincerely, and to solve the problems that arise within the family without harming the health of the family. Balanced, open and healthy communication within the family is effective in the development of the adolescent's identity and social skills (Savi, 2008; Küçük Biçer, 2014). Although the environment outside the family begins to affect the child as he/she grows up, the role of his/her family is very important for him/her to be an individual who can behave and adapt in accordance with the rules required by the environment he/she lives in (Kalyencioğlu & Kutlu 2010; Demirkalp Kaya, 2021). While children who grow up in families with good family relations and communication pass their developmental stages successfully, it is seen that children experience adaptation and behaviour problems in families where family relationships are not strong (Durmuşoğlu Saltalı, 2019; Demirkalp Kaya, 2021). The results of many studies in the literature have shown that family processes are determinative on adolescents' behaviours and adaptability (Kalyencioğlu & Kutlu, 2010; Ateş & Akbaş, 2012). While adolescents complete their social, emotional and cognitive development within the family in the first years of their lives, their socialization processes go beyond the family in later ages and continue rapidly in the axis of school environment and friend groups (Küçük Biçer, 2014).

School is known as the first socialization area outside the family (Kaya, 2014). In addition to the educational activities that the school provides as an educational institution, it also has important contributions to the social and emotional development of the individual with its network of relations (such as teacher-student, student-student). School adaptation is an important factor for the student to benefit from the educational, instructional and developmental contributions of the school at the maximum level (Ateş & Akbaş 2012; De la Barrera et al., 2019; Gökalp & Yöndem 2021). School adjustment is a structure involving active participation in school activities, compliance with rules and relationships with people in the school environment, and it is a multidimensional concept that includes the adaptive success and social behaviors of the student. (Yılmaz et al., 2017; Gutiérrez et al., 2021). Although students try to adapt to the different environments (school, teacher, friends, difficulty of studies, new rules, academic expectation, etc.) in all educational transitions such as preschool, primary school, secondary school, high school and university; the periods between the ages of 14-19, which coincide with high school years, are one of the most difficult times that requires adaptation. It is important for students to have healthy transition periods in order to avoid risky behaviours, fulfill their academic responsibilities, and continue their education process successfully and happily (Kalyencioğlu & Kutlu 2010; Adimora et al., 2015; Demirkalp Kaya, 2021). As a matter of fact, studies show that adaptability in educational transitions has an effect on mental health and academic success (Özen Altinkaynak & Akman 2019; Noona Kiuru et al., 2020; Demirkalp Kaya, 2021). Going through this process in a healthy way depends on being in harmony with their environment and establishing good relations. Because people have to adapt to themselves and their environment in order to make their lives easier and realize themselves (Aydoğdu & Gürsoy 2020). Considering that the socialization process of the individual starts in the family and the risks that the adolescence period involves in terms of relations with the family, it is thought that parent-child relationships may have an important place in the school adjustment process of adolescents (Ateş & Akbaş 2012; Koç, 2014). In addition, Dockett and Perry

(2003) found in their research that there are eight different situations that affect the adaptation process of the individual to school, and family problems are the leading of these situations (Akt. Demirci, 2019). In many academic studies, important findings were determined by examining adolescents' school adaptation processes and their communication with their families. Coe et al. (2018) showed in a study that children's negative internal representations of family relationships mediate the relationships between family instability and school adjustment problems. In a study conducted by Kaya (2021), it was determined that positive family relations significantly predict secondary school students' school adjustment in a positive way. When the national and international literature is examined, it has been understood in many other studies that family-related factors are determinant on school adjustment (Arabacıoğlu & Kahraman 2021; Hershberger & Jones 2018; Özen Altınkaynak & Akman 2018; Türker & Tunç; 2021; Wu et al., 2021; Yılmaz et al., 2017). Therefore, it can be said that the family, which is the first place of development of the individual, and the communication of individuals within the family with each other are important in the process of adaptation to school. When the studies in Turkey are examined, it is seen that the subject of school adjustment is especially concentrated at the pre-school, primary and secondary school levels (Altınkaynak & Akman 2018; Gülay, 2011; Bulut 2019; Dinler & Hacifazlıoğlu 2020; Arabacıoğlu & Kahraman 2021; Türker & Tunç 2021; Usta et al., 2021), and that school adjustment is limited in adolescents between the ages of 14-19, which coincides with the high school period (Dağ, 2018; Çetinkaya et al., 2019). The results of the study show that especially male students have more adaptation and behaviour problems. Therefore, this study was conducted as a relationship seeker in order to determine the relationship between the family communication and school adjustment levels of male adolescents between the ages of 14-19. The search sought answers to the following questions:

- What is the family communication of male adolescents between the ages of 14-19?
- What is the school adjustment level of male adolescents aged 14-19?
- Is there a relationship between the family communication and school adjustment levels of male adolescents aged 14-19?

METHOD

Type of Research

The research was conducted as descriptive and correlational.

Location and Features of the Research

The research was carried out at a male anatolian imam hatip high school, which is affiliated to the Ministry of National Education (MEB), and it is located in the city center of Konya. This high school started its educational activities in 2016. A total of 434 male students are being educated in the building, which consists of a single block, and there are currently no female students. The school has a total of 19 classes, four of which are grade 9, five grade 10, six grade 11, and four grade 12. The joint Anatolian Imam Hatip High School curriculum is being followed in the 9th grades, and students are divided into special areas in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades. The school, which has three floors, has a teachers' room, a conference hall, a library, a canteen, a health room, a prayer room and a software workshop. It also has a large garden, and offers a game room where students can spend their free time (table tennis, chess, foosball) and a sports field where they can do sports activities.

The Universe of the Research

The universe of the research consists of 434 students attending at a male anatolian imam hatip high school in the city center of Konya, affiliated to the Ministry of National Education, in the 2021-2022 academic year.

Sample of the Study

No sample was chosen from the universe and the entire population was accepted as a sample. The sample consists of 347 male students and 80% of the universe was reached.

Inclusion Criteria for Participants in the Study

Students who received written consent from their parents and agreed to participate in the study were included in the study.

Exclusion Criteria for Participants in the Study

Foreign students were not included in the study in order not to experience Turkish communication problems and to carry out the study with a homogeneous group.

Data Collection Technique and Tools

The data were collected in the form of a face-to-face survey. The Personal Information Form to describe the personal characteristics of the students, the Communication Sub-Dimension of the Family Assessment Device adapted to Turkish by Bulut (1990) to measure the family communication of the students, and the School Cohesion Scale adapted into Turkish by Durnalı et al. (2018) were used.

Personal Information Form: At the entrance of the form created by the researcher as a result of literature review, a brief information about the research and why the data was collected were given. The form contains 11 questions to describe features such as personal factors like age, grade level, reason for choosing high school, academic success, coexistence of parents, education level of mother and father, occupation of mother and father, how many siblings they have, whether they have any health problems in themselves or in the family, and perceived income status (Arabacıoğlu & Kahraman 2021; Hershberger & Jones 2018; Özen Altınkaynak & Akman 2018; Türker & Tunç; 2021; Wu et al., 2021; Yılmaz et al., 2017).

Family Assessment Device (FAD): Developed by Epstein et al. (1983) and adapted into Turkish by Bulut (1990), it measures family functions with its healthy and unhealthy dimensions. The scale, which has 7 sub-dimensions including problem solving, communication, roles, emotional responsiveness, emotional participation, behaviour control, and general functions, consists of 60 items. It is a four-point Likert-type scale involving statements such as "I strongly agree", "I agree", "I somewhat agree", "I do not agree at all" and is scored between 1 (healthiest) and 4 (unhealthiest). Bulut (1990) determined the score of 2 as distinctive and the scores above 2 are determined as an indicator of poor health in family functions. In this study, the communication sub-dimension of the scale, which evaluates communication between family members, was used. The sub-dimension of communication consists of nine items and the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient calculated for this sub-dimension is .71 (Bulut, 1990). The scores that can be obtained from the communication dimension range from 9 to 36.

School Cohesion Scale (SCS): Turkish version of SCS, developed by Springer et al. (2009) in order to determine the school adjustment level of adolescents, was adapted by Durnalı et al. (2018). It is a 4-point Likert-type scale that includes statements such as 1. I never think, 2. I sometimes think, 3. I often think, 4. I always think. It consists of a total of ... items and the lowest score that can be obtained from the scale is 10, and the highest score is 50. A high score from the scale, which does not have a reverse-scored item, indicates high school adjustment, and a low score indicates low school adjustment.

Data Collection

The Parent Consent Form was delivered to the parents through the students the day before. The data was collected face-to-face by the researcher by distributing data collection tools to the students, whose parents gave written consent. It was collected during the course hours deemed appropriate by the school administration covering a maximum of one course hour. In the reliability study of the scale, the

Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be .84 (Durnali et al., 2018).

Variables of the Study

Dependent variables: SCS Score

Independent variables:

- Descriptive Features
- FAD communication sub-dimension score

Ethical Dimension of Research

Written permission for the research was obtained from the Necmettin Erbakan University Health Sciences Scientific Research Ethics Committee (decision dated 02.03.2022 and numbered 2022/20-175). Necessary permissions were obtained from the authors of the scales used in the study via e-mail. An interview was held with the school administration of the school and necessary information was provided. Written consent form was sent to the families one day before the questionnaire forms were distributed, and verbal consent was obtained for volunteering to participate in the study by giving information about the study to the students whose written consent was obtained from the families.

Limitations of the Research

The research is limited to the male students in the high school where the data was collected.

Statistical Evaluation of Data

In line with the general purpose of the research, the data collected from the Personal Information Form, the FAD intra-familial communication sub-dimension and the SCS for the basic questions were analyzed in a computer environment by using the SPSS program. In the evaluation of the data and in order to determine the validity and reliability of the scales, frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean, standard deviation and Pearson correlation test were used. The results were tested at $p < 0.05$ significance level. In the study, the relationship between the variables was interpreted as .00-.19 very weak relationship, 0.20-0.39 weak relationship, 0.40-0.69 moderate relationship, 0.70-0.89 high level relationship, and 0.90-1.00 very high relationship. Write down the method of your research without changing the format. Write down the method of your research without changing the format. Write down the method of your research without changing the format.

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RESULTS

In this part of the study, the results of the statistical analysis carried out within the scope of this research will be included. First of all, descriptive data regarding the definition of the research sample are presented in Table 1. Write the findings about your work without disrupting the formatting. Write the findings about your work without disrupting the formatting. Write the findings about your work without disrupting the formatting.

Table 1. Data distribution by demographic features

Socio-demographic characteristics	Number (n)	Percent (%)
Class		
9th Class	111	32.0
10th Class	123	35.4
11th Class	85	24.5
12th Class	28	8.1
Choice of high school		
My own decision	227	65.4

My parents' decision	103	29.7
My teachers' wish	16	4.6
My friends' wish	1	0.3
Your grade score average in previous semester		
Under 50	2	0.6
Between 50-60	34	9.8
Between 60-70	73	21.0
Between 70-80	92	26.5
80 and above	146	42.1
Presence of mental/physical illness		
Yes	32	9.2
No	315	90.8
Cohabitation status of parents		
Yes	334	96.3
No	13	3.7
Mother's education level		
Primary school	129	37.2
Middle School	70	20.2
High school	78	22.5
University and above	70	20.2
Father's education level		
Primary school	62	17.9
Middle School	51	14.7
High school	107	30.8
University and above	127	36.6
Family's Monthly Income Level		
Income less than expenses	39	11.2
Income equals expense	177	51.0
Income more than expenses	131	37.8
Mother's occupation		
Housewife	304	87.6
Labourer	17	4.9
Official	26	7.5
Father's occupation		
Not working	17	4.9
Employee	164	47.3
Official	9	2.6
Farmer	97	28.0
Other (own business, tradesman, contractor)	60	17.3
Number of siblings		
1	11	3.2
2	88	25.4
3	161	46.4
4	67	19.3
5	20	5.8
Age	Mean±SD: 15.87±1.18	Median:16
		Min-Max:14-18

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that 32% of the students are in the ninth, 35.4% in the tenth, 324.5% in the eleventh and 8.1% in the twelfth grade. The mean age of the adolescents is 15.87 (± 1.18). The choice of high school was determined by the wishes of 65.4% of the students, the wishes of their families in 29.7%, and the wishes of their friends or teachers in 4.9%. 42.1% of them had a grade point average of 80 and above in the previous semester. 9.2% have a physical or mental illness. Parents of

96.3% are married and together. The mothers of 37.22% are primary school graduates, and the fathers of 36.6% are university graduates. The income of 51% is equal to their expenses. The mothers of 87.6% are housewives and the fathers of 47.3% are employee, 46.4% of them have 3 siblings.

In Table 2, information on the FAD intra-familial communication sub-dimension and the mean scores of the School Cohesion Scale, standard deviations and the minimum-maximum scores obtained from the scales of the adolescents participating in the research are presented. Only the first letter of the table number and table name must be capitalized. The table number should be bold and the table text should normally be written above the table and left aligned. No text should be written to the left or right of the tables.

Table 2. FAD communication sub-dimension and SCS score averages, standard deviation and min-max values

	Mean (SD)	Min	Max
FAD communication sub-dimension	1.94±0.48	1.00	3.78
SCS	23.49±6.41	10.00	40.00

The participants' FAD communication sub-dimension score mean was determined as 1.94±0.48. Considering the criterion of accepting healthy communication as below 2 points determined by Bulut (1990), it can be said that most of the adolescents participating in the research have a healthy communication with their families. The mean score of the adolescents' School Cohesion Scale was determined as 23.49±6.41 (Table 2). Considering the minimum and maximum scores that can be obtained from the scale (10-40), it can be said that the school adjustment of the adolescents is moderate.

In Table 3, the comparison results of the level of adjustment to school according to the healthy/unhealthy communication status of the adolescents with their families are presented.

Table 3. Comparison of school adjustment levels according to family communication status

	n (%)	Mean±SD	t value	Significance level
Healthy communication	207 (59.7)	24.15±6.39	t=2.36	p=0.018
Unhealthy communication	140 (40.3)	22.50±6.34		

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that the school adjustment scores of the students who have healthy communication within the family are statistically significantly higher than their peers who have unhealthy communication with their families (t=2.36; p<0,05).

Table 4 presents the statistical analysis results of the relationship between adolescents' family communication and school adjustment.

Table 4. The relationship between family communication and school adjustment (n=347)

	School adjustment
Family communication	-.206**

**p<0.01

When Table 4 is examined, it is found that there is a statistically significant negative correlation (r= -0.206. p<0.01) between the adolescents' family communication scores and school adjustment scores. The detected relationship is weak due to its r value between .20 and .39.

DISCUSSION

The adolescence period, where growth, development and change is very rapid, brings many new roles and problems for individuals. Social environment is important for a healthy adolescent period. The components of the social environment provide support for the growth, development and change of adolescents. Social environment components include school, family, health services and external factors. The functionality of the family, which is known as the most effective social structure, is effective on adolescents' behaviours and adjustment levels (Kulaksızoğlu, 2011). In this study, adolescents' FAD communication sub-dimension mean score was determined as 1.94 ± 0.48 , and it was found that 40.3% of the students perceived their families' communication skills as unhealthy. The results are consistent with the literature (Karaağaç & Erbay, 2015). The forms of communication established with adolescents enable them to express their feelings and thoughts and to form future-oriented behaviours (Elkin, 2016). Therefore, establishing functional communication within the family is important for adolescents. The communication models used according to the systems approach direct the interactions of individuals within the family. Families are defined as healthy and unhealthy families according to their communication functions within the family. Inability to fulfill communication functions in families defined as unhealthy families causes stress and conflicts (Bulut, 1990). On the contrary, it is stated that the supportive relationships of parents towards adolescents increase school welfare and academic success (Kiuru et al., 2020). It is considered important to organize remedial programs by school management, teachers, psychiatric nurses, school health nurses and psychologists for adolescents' intra-family communication.

As a result of the research, it was determined that the students' SCS score average was 23.49 ± 6.41 . Considering the min-max values of the score obtained from the scale, this score was interpreted as the students' adaptation to the school at a moderate level. In a longitudinal study conducted in Korea, it was determined that the school adjustment level of students from 7th to 11th grade was moderate, similar to our study (In, 2022). Adapting to a new environment involves varying degrees of difficulty in all age groups and developmental stages. Especially, adaptation to school can be difficult for young people (Akhan & Karamık, 2019). High school adjustment enables children to develop in many areas such as mental health, personality development, and academic success. It is also important for the adolescent to express himself better, gain strength and motivation (Pathak, 2022). Since adaptation to school may also affect adaptation to society, necessary measures should be taken in order for children to adapt to the education system (Kaya & Akgün 2016). It is thought that the psychological empowerment of students and the inclusion of activities in the curriculum by people who are competent in the field of mental health in schools will contribute to increasing the level of adaptation.

In the study, it was determined that there is a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.206$, $p < 0.01$) between FAD communication sub-dimension scores and SCS scores. In a previous study in the literature, it was determined that the most important factor affecting the level of school adjustment is the family after teachers (Fernández et al., 2021). This result supports our study as well. Students who perceive their family functions as unhealthy experience adaptation problems in many subjects, including school (Kalyencioğlu & Kutlu 2010). Family conflicts and the level of aggression in adolescents negatively affect the level of school adjustment (Lee, 2020). Basharpour and Heidari (2022) reported that adaptive and supportive family systems have a direct effect on school adjustment levels. Mok et al. (2019) determined in their study that positive parenting behaviours of the mother will help improve adolescents' school adjustment by increasing the level of ego-resilience. It is seen in the studies that the functional and compatible families have an effect on the level of school adjustment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the study, a weak negative relationship was found between the family communication of adolescents and their level of school adjustment. Considering that adolescents go through complex processes in their developmental period, both in-school and out-of-school environments can affect their adaptation to school. It is recommended to intensify studies on this group in order to determine the factors that affect the school adjustment of adolescents between the ages of 14-19, which corresponds to the high school age. Future studies should also focus on other factors such as teachers, peers, and school management that determine adolescents' school adjustment.

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Conflict of Interests

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