AN INVESTIGATION ABOUT THE ATTITUDES OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TOWARDS FRIENDSHIP WITH OPPOSITE GENDERIN TERMS OF SOME VARIABLES

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Abstract - The main purpose of this research is "The investigation about the attitudes of high school students towards friendship with opposite gender in terms of some variables". The universe of the research is all high school students in Küçükçekmece District in İstanbul. 453 students voluntarily participated in the study from all the class levels (High School 1,2,3,4) of three different high schools selected randomly from lower, middle and upper socioeconomic statuses constitute the sample of this research. In order to reveal the demographic information of the students who answered "The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender" developed by Erdoğdu, the researcher also developed an information form. Since the scores obtained from the scale showed normal distribution, one-way ANOVA was used for the significance of the difference among the averages of more than two variables and independent t-test was used for the difference between the averages of two variables. According to the results obtained from the research, male students' attitudes towards opposite gender are more positive than those of female students are. The scores of students whose parents live together are higher than those whose parents are separate. As the education level of the parents increases, scores of the Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender also increase. The attitudes of the 2nd grade high school students towards friendship with opposite gender are higher than those of 1st and fourth grade high school students. As a result, having positive attitudes towards friendship with opposite gender is thought very important in terms of social and emotional development of students.

Keywords - Attitude, Opposite gender, Attitude towards opposite gender

I. INTRODUCTION

As a social and psychological being, man's purpose is to create intimate relations with his surroundings. The appearance and quality of these relations are related to the social and emotional development of the individual. While the relation affects the psychological development of the individual, the opposite is also true. In early childhood,friendship interactions appear while playing together, and as a result of the culture, same gender friendships are more common. That is also the case in the elementary period and opposite gender relations appear especially in puberty. While there are manyincentivesto this, it can be said that hormonal changes andexpectations towards marriage are significantly affective. So even though opposite gender friendships in childhood are not emotional, romantics relations are observable especially in puberty.In this regard, opposite gender friendships, despite having different inducements, are for the desires of intimacy of individuals with different genders.

Psychological theories ground opposite gender friendships with various incentives. According to the psychoanalysis theory, while until the phallic stage, there are efforts to be close with the same gender parent, after the phallic stage, the effort turns to the opposite gender parent (1). According to Sullivan (2), the intimacy to the opposite gender is a developmental function of puberty and is important regarding the individual's development, and to Erikson (3), friendship with the opposite gender, is an important part of interpersonal relations in puberty and development of identity and is important for the pubescent regarding trying different relationships and being successful in future adult life.

In puberty, single gender friend-groups are by various degrees affected by groups of the opposite gender and form a wide pubescent crowd (4). According to Dunphy, the main incentive of opposite gender friends group is to ease the relations between the two genders. Therefore, heterosexual behavior is learned and conducted (5).

Opposite gender friendships are acknowledged to be more important in terms of emotional and social development of the individual in puberty. According to Ünlü (6), the starting, continuation and ending of interest to and relations with the opposite gender is important in terms of development. To Rizzo and Gunderson (7), in the development of opposite gender relations in adulthood, puberty stage relations are significantly decisive, and opposite gender relations in puberty also affect the mental health of the pubescent. Throughout puberty, opposite gender friendships contribute the pubescents sense of self and heathy development and close friendships start to replace family which was the social support until then. Majority of pubescents remark that they are more intimate to their flirts than their parents or siblings (8). While opposite gender friendships make it easy for the pubescent senses of belonging, it also helps the skill that help in interpersonal relations such as intimacy, sharing, getting along and self-disclosure (Feiring 1996). According to Özabacı, opposite

gender friendships significantly affect mate selection and is important in terms of two genders experiences of getting to know each other(10).

While until puberty, interaction and togetherness of family members are more common, with puberty, friendship relations and opposite gender interactions are observably more intense. However,incentives in opposite gender friendship attempts differ to genders. In a research by Underwood and Rosen (11), it has been identified that in puberty, while females in their relations with the opposite gender are more friendship-oriented, male are more prone to physical violence. In another research by Reifman (12) about the features partners look for in an opposite gender relationship, it has been identified that; females look for social status and high income; and males look for physical attractiveness and sexual satisfaction more than other features.

With regard to the information given above, it is apparent that opposite gender friendship is important in pubescents emotional and personal development. In this sense, it is important to determine the variables affecting opposite gender relations of pubescents, and to determine the positive and negative effects of opposite gender friendships in individual's development. With this research, by putting forth variables related to the opposite gender attitudes, we aimed, both to put forth important data to the literature and to raise awareness of research on such topics.

II. METHOD

The purpose of this research is to deliver "The investigation about the attitudes of high school students towards friendship with opposite gender in terms of some variables". Therefore, this research has been conducted in a descriptive relational model.

2.1.Universe and Sample

The universe of the research is all high school students in Küçükçekmece District in İstanbul. 453 students voluntarily participated in the study from all the class levels (High School 1,2,3,4) of three different high schools selected randomly from lower, middle and upper socio-economic statuses constitute the sample of this research. The percentile and frequencies regarding the classes and genders of the participant students are given in Table 1.

Table 1. The Frequencies and Percentiles of Gender and Classes of the Students

Classes	Gender				Total
	Female		Male		
	N	%	N	%	
High School 1	111	80	27	20	138
High School 2	73	72	29	28	102
High School 3	79	75	27	25	106
High School 4	82	77	25	23	107
Total	345	76	108	24	453

As observable in Table 1, 138 of the students were in high school 1, 102 of them were high school 2, 106 of them were high school 3 and 107 of them were high school 4 students. While 345 of the students who were on the research were females (76%), 108 of them were males (24%)

2.2.Data Collection Tools

Developed by Erdoğdu, "The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender" was used with a 5-pointLikert. The scale consists of 26 items and the maximum point obtainable is 130. Explanatory factor analysis was used for validation, and it has been observed that the 26 items were gathered under one factor that has an eigenvalue greater than 1. The variance this one factor represented was 53,13%. It was observed that the mutual variances this one factor identified about the items differed between 0.321 and 0.614. The KMO values, Bartlett test and the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the final state of the scale was calculated. The fact that the Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) was greater than .60 indicated that the Bartlett test was significant (13). As the result of the repeated factor analysis, the Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) was calculated as .94, and the Bartlett test of Sphericity was calculated as 4144,45. For validity, Cronbach Alpha value was calculated, and the value acquired was .95. In order to support the construct validity, item discriminators were calculated, and every item was found to be significant in value in terms of item discrimination.

A survey was developed by the researcher for acquiring the socio-demographic information of the students.

2.3.Data Analysis

SPSS Windows 22.0 was used in the evaluation of the data obtained. Kolmogorov Smirnov test was conducted for the normality of the scores and the distribution was normal for the score of the scale was greater than .05.Therefore, in the evaluation of the data, one-way analysis of variance was used for the significance of the difference between the means of more than two variables, andindependent t-test was used for the difference between the means two variables.

In the research, the assessment tools were conducted on the sampled students on 2 lesson hours, and the students answered the scale and the survey questions themselves.

III. FINDINGS

The maximum score obtainable from The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender is 130. According to the data acquired from the sample, the calculated mean and standard deviation of the

scale for the research were respectively 91,59, and 20,03. The minimum score obtained was 30 and the maximum was 130.

The t-test results of the scores of The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender in terms of gender, whether they have an opposite gender sibling and whether theirparents are not separated were given in Table 2.

Table 2. The T Test Results of The Scores of The Scale of Attitude Towards Friendship with Opposite Gender in Terms of Some Variables

Variables		N	$\bar{X}$±S	df	t	sig
Gender	**Female**	345	89,36±20,22	451	4,31*	.000
	Male	108	98,72±17,710			
Opposite gender sibling	**Yes**	288	91,62±20,38	449	,070	,944
	No	163	91,48±19,33			
Parents not separated	**Yes**	352	90,40±19,81	441	2,35**	,036
	No	96	97,41±20,35			

*p<.01 **p<.05

As observable in Table 2, The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender scores of the students differ significantly in terms of gender [t (451) =4,31, p<.01]. The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender scores of male students are higher($\bar{x}$=98,72) compared to female students ($\bar{x}$=89,36).

The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender scores of the students do not significantly differ in terms of having an opposite gender sibling [t (449) =,070, p>.01].

The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender scores of the students significantly differ in terms of whether their parents are separated [t (441) =2,35, p<.05]. The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender scores of the students whose parents are separated are higher ($\bar{x}$=97,41), compared to those whose parents are not separated ($\bar{x}$=90,40).

The one-way analysis of variance results of the scores ofThe Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender in terms of perceived success and class are given in Table 3.

Table 3. The One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)Results of The Scores of The Scale of Attitude Towards Friendship with Opposite Gender in Terms of Some Variables

Variables		N	$\bar{X}$ ± S	Source of variances	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Class	High School 1	138	86,23±21,64	Between	9401,47	3	3133,82	8,18*	,000
	High School 2	102	98,57±15,25	Within	17202,6	449	383,12		
	High School 3	106	93,20±20,94	Total	1814,0	452			
	High School 4	107	90,25±18,99						
Perceived success	Successful	121	91,61±20,25	Between	8,47	2	4,23	,010	,990
	Medium	287	91,54±19,75	Within	18134,1	448	404,78		
	Unsuccessful	43	92,17±24,00	Total	18135,3	450			

*p<.01

According to the analysis resultsThe Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender results differ significantly in terms of students classes [f (3-449)=8,18, p<.01]. The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender results, respectively from highest to lowest are; High School 2 ($\bar{x}$=98,57), High School 3 ($\bar{x}$=93.20), High School 4 ($\bar{x}$=90,25), High School 1 ($\bar{x}$=86,23). Scheffe test was used in order to identify whether there was a significant difference between the groups, The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender results of the High School 2 students were significantly higher than those of High School 1 and 4.

The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender results do not show significant difference in terms of success students perceive [f (2-448) =,010, p>.01]. The one-way analysis of variance results of the scores of The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender in terms of parent's level of education and perceived parenting style are given in Table 4.

Table 4. The One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)Results of The Scores of The Scale of Attitude Towards Friendship with Opposite Gender in Terms of Some Variables

Variables		N	$\bar{X} \pm S$	Source of variances	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Mother Education	Primary	242	85,17±19,04	Between	10714,1	3	3383,1	8,85	,000
	High School	172	96,05±19,18	Within	17020,2	447	380,77		
	University	37	96,65±18,46	Total	18035,8	450			
Father Education	Primary	176	86,20±13,31	Between	5202,2	3	1734,2	4,45	,004
	High School	218	93,91±19,76	Within	17448,2	448	389,48		
	University	58	95,96±17,35	Total	17969,0	451			
Parenting style.	Authoritative	57	91,75±20,12	Between	1868,5	4	467,14	1,16	,326
	Democratic	95	94,26±19,42	Within	17942,2	447	401,40		
	Protective	193	89,61±20,53	Total	18129,5	451			
	Perfect	85	93,68±19,84						

According to the analysis results The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender results differ significantly in terms of mother's level of education [f (3-447) =8,85, p<.01]. The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender results, in terms of mother's level of education, respectively from highest to lowest are; University Graduate ($\bar{x}$=96,65), High School Graduate ($\bar{x}$=96,05), Primary School Graduate ($\bar{x}$=85,17). Scheffe test was used in order to identify whether there was a significant difference between the groups, and only whose mothers were university graduates had a significantly higher score than whose mothers were primary school graduates. According to the analysis results The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender results differ significantly in terms of father's level of education [f (3-448) =4,45, p<.01]. The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender results, in terms of father's level of education, respectively from highest to lowest are; University Graduate ($\bar{x}$=95,96), High School Graduate ($\bar{x}$=93,91), Primary School Graduate ($\bar{x}$=86,20). Scheffe test was used in order to identify whether there was a significant difference between the groups, and whose fathers were university or high school graduates had a significantly higher score than whose fathers were primary school graduates.The Scale of Attitude towards Friendship with Opposite Gender results do not show significant difference in terms of perceived parenting style [f (4-457) =1,16, p>.01].

DISCUSSION RESULTS AND SUGGESTION

According to the findings, males attitude towards friendship with opposite gender results are higher compared to the females. In other words, males are more positive towards the opposite gender. It is under consideration that the reason for this is that in Turkey, it is believed that it is not culturally susceptible for female children to befriend male children. In a recent research it has been observed that male students have more faith in romantic relationships than females (14). In another research by Çevik (15), it is apparent that families play a major role in pubescents romantic and friendly relationships. It has been identified that the families are negatively reacting to the flirting/dating acts of pubescents. More than half the pubescent stated that their families interfered with their relationships and that females are more restricted by their parents that males. In a research by Başaranoğlu (16), it is stated that males score higher than females in terms of starting a relationship in an opposite gender relation. Andin another research by Savin, Williams and Berndt (17), it is common that there is a want for a relation with people from the opposite gender in high school period for females. On a similar research was carried out by Taş and friends (18) it is found that perception of women's gender role is higher than perception of men's gender roles. Having a sibling of the opposite gender is not significant in terms of attitudes towards the opposite gender. Therefore, the attitudes towards the opposite gender are not related to having a sibling of the opposite gender. According to the research findings, pubescents whose parents are separated are more positive towards the opposite gender. In Turkey, the father is especially perceived as an authoritative figure and it is a regular case for the father to be firmly againstto opposite gender friendships. Generally, the absence of a father in the family causes the pubescent to behave more freely and thus, easing the process of having opposite gender friendships. In as research by Demir (19), it is indicated that those who are not satisfied with the relationship they have with their parents are more prone to feeling loneliness. The females who perceive their parents as uninterested, tend to feel closer to groups with behavior that would not be approved by adults. It has also been detected that males who perceive their parents as complaisant, are more active in groups that are fond of entertainment culture (5). Noting the want for evading loneliness as a reason for tendencies of opposite gender friendship would certainly support the findings obtained. According to the research findings, the attitudes of high school 2 students are more positive compared to other high school students. It is considered that in high school 2 the students get

oriented and they are not in a rush of studying for their university exams, they have more time to spend with opposite gender friends and thus they are more positive towards opposite gender friends that the other classes. The attitudes of pubescents towards the opposite gender, significantly vary between groups of different success levels. Stating that there was not a similar study in the literature, in a research by Kılınç and Sevim (20) it is stated that pubescents who experience loneliness have lower self-esteem. There are several researches with findings regarding the facts that, pubescents who have opposite gender friends are more popular, and more popular pubescents develop more both cognitively and socially, and thus being academically more successful (21,22,23). As the research finding indicated, it is clear that the attitudes towards the opposite gender positively increase with the levels of education of the parents. In a research by Doğan et al. (24), it is observed that in predicting the friendship relations of the pubescents, parent's levels of education and the fact that whether they are separated are quite effective. Generally, it is thought that the pubescents qualities of the friendship relations rise with the father's level of education. Even though there are differences in terms of perceived parenting styles with pubescents attitudes towards the opposite gender, these differences are not significant. It would be expected that in a country like turkey where authoritarian parenting is in abundance, pubescents who perceive their parents as democratic would be more positive towards the opposite gender. It is considered that the absence of this difference is because of the pubescents inability to differentiate various parenting styles. In a research in Turkey by Demir et al. (25)it is indicated that in pubescents relations with peer groups, one of the social environment factors, family, does not play a major role. Even though it is not much, the findings do overlap. In another research by Field, Diego and Sanders (26), it is clear that the pubescents who have a heathy relationship with their parents have more friends, and those who do not have a healthy relationship have a limit in friendship relations. The generalization of the research findings is possible through conducting similar research with diverse groups.

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