THE EFFECT OF THE "I CAN BE MORE POWERFUL" PROGRAM ON THE RESILIENCE OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN UNDER RISK: DISCOVERY OF RESILIENCE AS THE FIRST STAGE

[1]MELTEM EMEN PARLATAN, [2]DURMUŞ ASLAN

[1,2]Early Childhood Education Department, University of Çukurova, Turkey
Email: [1]meltememen.cu@gmail.com, [2]durmaslan@gmail.com

Abstract - In this study, the factors affecting the resilience of children at risk of poverty were examined from an ecological perspective. The effect of the Parent-child relationship, teacher-child relationship on resilience, and the effect of the child's social competence, emotional competence, and self-concept on resilience were tested. Teachers and parents of children attending kindergarten in the five age group participated in the study. Structural equation modeling is used in the work. The analysis of the research still continues.

Keywords - Resilience, Early Childhood, Mental Health, Risk Factors, Poverty

I. INTRODUCTION

The experiences of children in the early period, and the opportunities or disadvantages they have played a fundamental role in their development and adaptation. The variability, quality, and inequality of these experiences, opportunities, or disadvantages create different contexts for children and these contexts are not always supportive of their development. In particular, the existence of a relatively permanent disadvantage such as poverty can bring different risks. On the other hand, the effects of these negative situations in the early period are not final. Many of the children who grow up in adverse conditions are able to reveal their potential and adapt well. It is possible for children to have the power to recover despite the difficult conditions they have, and even to use these situations for development and learning. The skill of "resilience" lies behind children's ability to achieve this. This study aimed to examine the factors affecting resilience in children living under the risk of poverty. Resilience refers to a dynamic process that also includes the interaction of risks and protective factors. Protective factors are expressed as effects that reinforce and improve the reaction of children to difficulties when they face difficulties (Rutter, 1985). These factors may originate from the child's own structure (inside), family, or wider environment (teacher, peers, distant social environment) (Werner, 1995). For example, the child's high IQ and easy temperament are among the protective internal characteristics. In addition, the ability to make friends and the ability to empathize can be given as examples of learned protective individual characteristics. The quality relationships that parents establish with their children can be given as an example of familial protective factors. In addition, the risks are; In addition to being of individual origins, such as being born with low birth weight, having a difficult temperament, and special needs (Gizir, 2007; Zolkovski& Bullock, 2012); Familial (Brooks, 2006) and unsupportive education environments such as poverty, single parenthood, authoritarian parents, having problems in accessing health services, lack of social support and isolation can also be caused by wider environmental sources. In particular, having a relatively persistent risk factor such as poverty creates an environment for children to be exposed to other risks.

Considering the studies on resilience, it is seen that studies are conducted in different risk contexts, generally focusing on middle childhood and adolescence (Hunter & Chandler, 1999; Polo-Tomas & Taylor, 2007; Masten, 2004). Studies on the early childhood period are relatively limited. In addition, the first studies on resilience have mostly focused on examining the permanent characteristics of individuals, families, schools, and other environmental factors (Fraser, 1997; Garmezy, 1993). In these studies, the basic characteristics of children such as gender, age, temperament, and skills; family's attitude, behavior (temperature), and the existence of various environmental risk factors and protective factors were examined within the framework of resilience. The results reveal that girls and children with easy temperaments show more resilience (Smith & Prior, 1995) and that resilience increases with age (Ungar, 2008). In addition, in the latest research, rather than hereditary features; It is seen that the individual characteristics that can be learned and developed come to the fore more.At this point, researchers discussed the characteristics of resilient children and examined the role of children's being socially and emotionally competent, being able to solve problems, being critical, feeling hope in resilience (Alvord&Grodos, 2005; Brooks & Goldstein, 2001). In addition to the individual characteristics of the children, the family they live in and the characteristics of their parents are also considered as important determinants. Studies show that characteristics such as the warm relationship that parents have with their children, their democratic

attitude, and the family's resilience also play a role in children's resilience (Boughton& Lumley, 2011; Hill, Stafford, Seaman, Ross, & Daniel, 2007). Finally, they investigated the number and diversity of environmental factors that were directly and indirectly exposed to and discussed the contribution of these factors to resilience. The supportive aspect of the school environment, the quality of the program, and the role of the teacher (Nolan, Taket, &Stagnitti, 2014), as well as the cultural environment and access to resources, are examples of factors that affect resilience (Huffman et al., 2011) In Turkey, it is seen that researches on resilience, especially in early childhood, are quite new and the variables related to resilience are discussed in a limited way. In current studies, resilience characteristics of children were investigated in the context of their demographic characteristics (Erata&Özbey, 2020), temperament characteristics (Önder, Dağal&Bayındır, 2018), and protective factors (Erdem&Ersay, 2017). Studies have focused on examining the effects of variables on resilience one by one, not simultaneously. In addition, it is seen that the studies were designed in the relational screening model, and there are studies that include program adaptation (Ünsal&Uyanık, 2016) and scale development (Özbey, 2019). Moreover, the theoretical aspect and methodological structure of these studies remain weak. In conclusion, with research on resilience in early childhood, available information is still quite limited. All these make the development of resilience in early childhood and the interaction of the variables that play a role in this development a matter of curiosity. In addition, considering the methods of existing research, the need for multiple perspectives and different research designs is seen; the table in question indicates the need to develop and examine a comprehensive model that addresses the factors that play a role in an individual's resilience.

II. METHOD

This study is part of a larger two-step study. This section has a design using quantitative research methods. In this regard, in the first step, the structural equation model was established and tested. The dependent variable of the study is the psychological resilience of preschool children. Independent variables are children's social competencies, emotional competencies, self-concepts, parent-child and teacher-child relationships.

2.1. SEM

Structural equation models (SEM) are frequently used to test the relationships between observed and latent variables based on a certain theoretical basis (Kline, 2015). Thus, it is tested whether the structure created based on the theory is verified by the data (Şimşek, 2020). The fact that it allows the simultaneous use of more than one measurement tool in testing the variables also plays a role in the use of this model. According to this model, children's social competencies, emotional competencies and self-perceptions directly affect resilience; Parent-child and teacher-child relationships are also expected to affect resilience through children's social competencies, emotional competencies and self-perceptions.

2.2. Materials and Procedures

2.2.1 Data Collection Tools

In the study, data on demographic and measured structures were collected from both parents, children and teachers.The Social Emotional Well-Being and Psychological Resilience Scale for Preschool Children (PERİK) was used to measure the resilience of children (Özbey, 2019). Kindergarten and Kindergarten Behavior Scale (Özbey, 2009) to measure social skills as a function of social competencies, Emotion Regulation Scale (ERC) to measure emotion regulation skills as a function of emotional competencies (Batum &Yağmurlu, 2007) and Sullivan For Children for empathy skills The Short Empathy Scale was used. DeMoulin Self-Perception Scale (Kuru-Turaşlı, 2006) was used to learn about children's self-perceptions as a function of their self-concepts. All the above scales have been adapted to Turkish by the aforementioned authors. In addition to these, the Child Parent Relationship Scale (Akgün&Yeşilyaprak, 2010) was used to understand the Parent-Child Relationship and the Teacher-Child Relationship Scale (Şahin, 2014) was used to reveal the teacher-child relationship.

2.2.2 Data Collection Process

First of all, the researcher determined the kindergartens to apply the necessary measurement tools to test the structural equation model that he had established. The purpose of the research was explained to teachers, parents, and school administrators. In this study, both teachers and parents filled in the given scales, and the researcher applied one-on-one with the children for the two scales. In the first place, consent forms were signed by parents and teachers, and children whose parents gave permission were interviewed. The data collection process took 4 months in total.

2.2.3 Data Analysis

The data obtained from the scales were transferred to SPSS. The distribution and normality of the measurements were checked. Afterwards, it was tried to test whether the structure constructed with the AMOS program was verified or not. The data analysis process continues.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis process is still ongoing in this study, which examines the factors affecting the resilience capacity of children at risk of poverty.

According to the results obtained, suggestions will be presented to the literature, early childhood education experts and program developers. In addition, in line with the information to be revealed in the analysis, an intervention program will be designed and implemented by taking into account how much the factors discussed affect resilience.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the information to be obtained as a result of the study, a contribution will be made in the literature in terms of the factors affecting the resilience of children living at risk of poverty. In addition, suggestions will be made in order to shape the awareness of parents and teachers on this issue and their practices. Finally, recommendations will be made to future researchers to examine resilience in depth.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, we are grateful to parents, teachers and dear children who voluntarily participated in this study.This study was supported as a Scientific Research Project within the scope of the first author's doctoral thesis at Çukurova University (Project code: SDK-2022-14722).For this reason, we would like to thank Çukurova University Scientific Research Project Unit.

REFERENCES

[1] Rutter, M. “Resilience in the face of adversity: Protective factors and resistance to psychiatric disorder”, British Journal of Psychiatry,vol.147,pp.598–611, 1985.

[2] Gizir, C. A. “Psikolojiksağlamlık, risk faktörlerivekoruyucufaktörlerüzerinebirderlemeçalışması”,TürkPsikolojikDanışmaveRehberlikDergisi ,vol.3,no.28,pp.113–128, 2007.

[3] Zolkoski, S. M., andL. M. Bullock. “Resilience in children and youth: A review”, Children and Youth Services Review, vol.34,no.12,pp.2295-2303, 2012.

[4] Brooks, J. E. “Strengthening resilience in children and youths: Maximizing opportunities in the schools”, Children and Schools, vol.28,no.2,pp.69–76,2006.

[5] Hunter, A. J., andG. E. Chandler.“Adolescent resilience”, Image: The Journal of Nursing Scholarship, vol.31,no.3,pp.243-247,1999.

[6] Masten, A.S. “Global perspectives on resilience in children and youth”, Child Development, vol.85,no.1,pp.6–20,2014.

[7] Fraser, M. W. “Risk and resilience in childhood: An ecological perspective.”, Washington, DC, NASW press, 1997.

[8] Garmezy, N. “Children in poverty: Resilience despite risk”, Psychiatry, vol.56,no.1,pp.127-136,1993.

[9] Smith, J., andM. Prior.“Temperament and stress resilience in school-age children: A within-families study”, Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, vol.34,no.2,pp.168-179,1995.

[10] Ungar, M. “Resilience across cultures”, The British Journal of Social Work, vol.38,pp.218- 235,2008.

[11] Alvord, M. K., andJ. J. Grados. “Enhancing resilience in children: A proactive approach”, Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, vol.36,no.3,pp.238,2005.

[12] Brooks, R., andS. Goldstein. “Raising Resilient Children: Fostering Strength, Hope, and Optimism in Your Child”, Contemporary Books, Lincolnwood, IL 60712-1975, 2001.

[13] Boughton, K., andM. Lumley. “Parent prediction of child mood and emotional resilience: The role parental responsiveness and psychological control”, Depression Research and Treatment, vol.2011,pp.1–9,2011.

[14] Hill, M., A., Stafford, P., Seaman, N., Ross, and B., Daniel.“Parenting and resilience”,York, England, The Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2007.

[15] Nolan, A., Taket, A., &Stagnitti, K. Supporting resilience in early years classrooms: The role of the teacher. Teachers and Teaching, 20(5), 595-608.(2014).

[16] Huffman, L. C., S. L., Mehlinger, A. S., Kerivan, D. A., Cavanaugh, J., Lippitt and O. Moyo. “Off to a Good Start: Research on the Risk Factors for Early School Problems and Selected Federal Policies Affecting Children's Social and Emotional Development and Their Readiness for School”,Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC, 2001.

[17] Erata, B. U. F., andS. Özbey.“Okulöncesieğitimkurumunadevamedençocuklarınpsikolojiksağlamlıkdüzeylerininbazıdemografikdeğişkenlereg öreincelenmesi”,Pearson Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities, vol.5,no.9,pp.125-151, 2020.

[18] Önder, A., A. B., Dağal, andD. Bayındır.“Okulöncesidönemçocuklarınmizaçözelliklerivean nelerininebeveynlikstillerininçocukların ego sağlamlıkdüzeyleriüzerindekiyordayıcıetkisi”,EğitimveBilim, vol.43,no.193, 2018.

[19] Ersay, E., andE., Erdem.“New developed protective factors scale for early childhood resilience in Turkey”,UluslararasıOkulÖncesiEğitimKongresi, Ankara, Turkey, 2017.

[20] Ünsal, F. Ö., andG. U., Balat.“The effects of “Resilience Program for preschool Children on 5-year-old children’s socıal skills”, EğitimKuramveUygulamaAraştırmalarıDergisi, vol.2,no.2,pp.1-11, 2016.

[21] Özbey, S. “Okulöncesiçocuklariçinsosyalduygusaliyioluşvepsikolojiksağlamlıkölçeğinin (PERİK) geçerlikgüvenirlikçalışması”, OPUS UluslararasıToplumAraştırmalarıDergisi, vol.10,no17,pp.756-786,2019.

[22] Kline, R. B. “Principles and practice of structural equation modeling”, Guilford publications.2015.

[23] Şimşek, Ö. F. “Yapisaleşitlikmodellemesinegiriş: Temelilkelerve LISREL uygulamalari”,ÖmerFarukŞimşek, 2020.

[24] Batum, P., andB. Yagmurlu.“What counts in externalizing behaviors? The contributions of emotion and behavior regulation”, Current Psychology: Developmental Learning Personality Social, vol.25,no.4,pp.272-294, 2007.

[25] Kuru-Turaşlı, N. “6 yaşgrubuçocuklardabenlikalgısınıdesteklemeyeyöneliksosyal-duygusalhazırlıkprogramınınetkililiğininincelenmesi”, DoktoraTezi, İstanbul, Marmara ÜniversitesiEğitimBilimleriEnstitüsü., 2006.

[26] Akgün, E., &Yeşilyaprak, B. “ÇocukanababailişkiölçeğiTürkçeformunungeçerlikvegüvenirlikçalışması.”BalıkesirÜniversitesiSosyalBilimlerEnstitüsü Dergisi, vol.13,no.24,pp.44-53, 2010.

[27] Şahin, D. “Öğrenci-öğretmenilişkiölçeği’nintürkçeyeuyarlanmasi”, Journal of Educational Sciences & Practices, vol.13,no.25,2014.

★★★