

5th World Conference on Learning, Teaching and Educational Leadership, WCLTA 2014

Examination of the Predicting Effect of the Resiliency Levels of Parents on the Resiliency Levels of Preschool Children

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the predicting effect of the resiliency levels of parents on the resiliency levels of preschool children. The sample group of the study consisted of 110 children aged 5-6 receiving the preschool education, 110 mothers and 110 fathers in the province of Denizli. Data collection tools, used in the study, included The Children's Ego Resiliency Scale for children and the Family Resilience Scale-FRS for parents. The Children's Ego Resiliency Scale was filled out by teachers. The Family Resilience Scale-FRS, on the other hand, was filled out by parents separately. Simple Linear Regression Analysis was used to analyse the data. According to results, mothers' self-efficacy levels significantly predicted children's resiliency levels. Mothers' challenge commitment to life and control levels didn't not significantly predicted children's resiliency levels. Also fathers' challenge commitment to life and self-efficacy levels significantly predicted children's resiliency levels. Fathers' control levels didn't not significantly predicted children's resiliency levels.

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Peer-review under responsibility of Academic World Education and Research Center

Keywords: Resiliency, preschool children, mother, father.

1. Introduction

Resiliency is a personality trait aimed at complying with environmental changes and stress (Block & Block, 1980). Grotberg (1995) expressed the psychological resiliency as the ability of overcoming the difficulties in life and becoming stronger as a result of these difficulties. Individuals with a psychological resiliency could comply with life conditions in an easier way. Since they have developed the problem solving skills, they are more resistant to stress. Psychological resiliency starts to develop in the preschool period. It could be observed on behaviours as

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from the babyhood. There are a number of factors affecting the development of psychological resiliency in the preschool period. Family variables have important effects on the psychological resiliency. The relationships between parents and the child, parents' attitudes, genetic transfers, commitment, educational level of parents, family discord, good parenting traits, and the divorce or death of partners could be given as examples to these variables (Block & Block, 1980, 2006; Masten & Coastworth, 1998; Rutter, 1985). This study has tried to approach the effect of the psychological resiliency of children on the psychological resiliency of children as a factor of good parenting traits.

There has been an increase in the studies conducted about the psychological resiliency especially for the last 10 years in Turkey (Kaner & Bayraklı, 2010; Kaner, Bayraklı, & Güzeller, 2011; Toprak, 2014). However, there is a very limited number of studies conducted about the psychological resiliency of preschool children. At this point, there is a need for studies and assessment instruments examining the psychological resiliency of children in this period, which comes into prominence with the rapid development and its permanent effect, from different perspectives.

The purpose of this study is to examine the predicting effect of the resiliency levels of parents on the resiliency levels of preschool children. Sub-goals of the study are as follows

1. Do mothers' challenge levels predict pre-school children's resiliency level?
2. Do mothers' self-efficacy levels predict pre-school children's resiliency level?
3. Do mothers' commitment to life levels predict pre-school children's resiliency level?
4. Do mothers' control levels predict pre-school children's resiliency level?
5. Do fathers' challenge levels predict pre-school children's resiliency level?
6. Do fathers' self-efficacy levels predict pre-school children's resiliency level?
7. Do fathers' commitment to life levels predict pre-school children's resiliency level?
8. Do fathers' control levels predict pre-school children's resiliency level?

2. Method

2.1. Research design

A relational survey method was used for this study.

2.2. Participants

The sample group of the study consisted of 110 children aged 5-6 receiving the preschool education, 110 mothers and 110 fathers in the province of Denizli. Among 110 children in the sample group, 40 (45.5%) were girls and 60 (55.5%) were boys. The sample group comprised of children who belonged to families with low socio-economic levels in the city centre and showed a normal development. It was determined that mothers of all children in the sample group were housewives. On the other hand, 91.0 % (100) of fathers were workers and 9.0 % (10) were retirees. Parents of children lived together. While selecting those children, a list was received from the Provincial Directorate of National Education in Denizli concerning the kindergartens of primary schools where children with low socio-economic levels attended. Six schools were selected among schools on the list by lot and a permission note was obtained concerning those schools. When the schools were visited with the permission notes. Six schools were included in the study.

2.3. Instruments

The Children's Ego Resiliency Scale (Teacher form): Eisenberg and colleagues adapted Block's Q-Sort method in 1996 to develop the Children's Ego Resiliency Scale, which is a measuring instrument that identifies the resiliency level of children. The 12-item scale is used to assess the resiliency level of preschool-primary school children. Evaluation of the scale is scored between 1 and 9; where 1 is "not at all descriptive of resiliency" and 9 is "most descriptive of resiliency." The scale has no sub-scale. While the lowest score to be obtained from the scale is 12, the highest score is 108. A high score obtained from the scale indicates that children in the study group have a high resiliency level. Items of the scale measure the resiliency properties of children in various situations, their reactions and behaviours when faced with difficult stressful situations. For example: "When under stress, he/she

gives up and backs off”. Every item expresses reactions given towards different stressful situations, as the scale has no sub-scale. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the Teacher Version of the original scale form is .87, and .65 for the Mother-Father form. The test-retest reliability of the Teacher Version of the original scale form is .87, and .75 for the Mother-Father form (Eisenberg, Fabes, Guthrie et al., 1996). The adaptation of the scale into Turkish was conducted by Önder and Gülay-Ogelman in 2011. Within the scope of this study, the cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale was determined as .84 (Önder & Gülay Ogelman, 2011).

The Family Resilience Scale-FRS (Mother and father forms): It was developed by Kaner and Bayraklı (2010) in order to measure the psychological resiliency perceptions of parents. The scale consists of 37 items and four subscales as Challenge, Commitment to Life, Self-Efficacy, and Control. The subscale of Challenge consists of 17 items about struggling with difficult conditions, overcoming the difficulties, surviving despite the negative conditions and taking risks. The items in the subscale of Self-Efficacy express the traits that are required for individuals to efficiently sustain their lives. It consists of nine items. The subscale of Commitment to Life consists of eight items expressing the positive view of life and positive participation in life. Consisting of three items, the subscale of Control aims to evaluate the individual while controlling the life. Gaining a high score from FRS signifies the highness of resiliency in parents (it defines me very well-5 points, it does not define me at all-1 point). Within the scope of this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was determined as .82 in the subscale of challenge, .84 in the subscale of commitment to life, .90 in the subscale of self-efficacy, and .87 in the subscale of control.

2.4. Procedure

Data collection tools, used in the study, included The Children’s Ego Resiliency Scale for children and the Family Resilience Scale-FRS for parents. The Children’s Ego Resiliency Scale was filled out by teachers. The Family Resilience Scale-FRS, on the other hand, was filled out by parents separately.

2.5. Data analysis

A SPSS 18.0 package programme was used to analyse data obtained from the research. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient and Basic Linear Regression Technique were used to analyse data.

3. Results

Table 1. Descriptive statistic, means, standard deviations

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Preschool children’s resiliency levels	110	74.42	12.29
Mothers’ challenge levels	110	31.70	5.95
Mothers’ commitment to life levels	110	39.00	5.02
Mothers’ self-efficacy levels	110	10.80	2.67
Mothers’ control levels	110	10.80	2.67

Table 2. Correlations matrix between mothers’ resiliency variables and preschool children’s resiliency levels

Variables	Children’s resiliency levels	Mothers’ challenge levels	Mothers’ commitment to life levels	Mothers’ self-efficacy levels
Preschool children’s resiliency levels	-	-	-	-
Mothers’ challenge levels	.112	-	-	-
Mothers’ commitment to life levels	.139	.634**	-	-
Mothers’ self-efficacy levels	.206*	.741**	.655**	-
Mothers’ control levels	.005	.368**	.370**	.317**

*p < .05 **p < .001

As illustrated in table 2, there is a relationship between mothers’ self efficacy levels and their children’s resiliency levels ($r=.206, p< .05$). In other words, it can be said that as the self efficacy levels increased, the resiliency level increased. Also, the self efficacy levels decreased, the children’s resiliency levels decreased. According to table 2, there is not significant relationship between the scores that mothers challenge ($r=-.112$), commitment to life ($r=-.139$) control ($r=.005$) levels and children’s resiliency levels ($p> 0.05$).

Table 3. Simple Linear Regression Analysis results between mothers’ resiliency variables and preschool children’s resiliency levels

Variables	B	Standart Error	β	t
Children’s resiliency levels Mothers’ challenge levels R = .112 R ² = .013 F(1,108) = 1.370	.128	.110	.112	1.170
Children’s resiliency levels Mothers’ self-efficacy levels R = .206 R ² = .043 F(1,108) = 4.798*	.426	.195	.206	2.191
Children’s resiliency levels Mothers’ commitment to life levels R = .139 R ² = .019 F(1,108) = 2.132	.340	.233	.139	1.460
Children’s resiliency levels Mothers’ control levels R = .005 R ² = .000 F(1,108) = .003	.024	.443	.005	.055

Note: n = 110 * p < .05

Table 3 illustrates that mothers’ self-efficacy levels significantly predicted children’s resiliency levels ($\beta=.426, p<.05$). The level of significance was 0.05 and 0.001 for each basic linear regression analysis conducted in this study. The self-efficacy levels accounted for .04 % of the children’s resiliency levels. Mothers’ challenge ($\beta=.128, p>.001$), commitment to life ($\beta=.340, p>.001$) and control ($\beta=.024, p>.001$) levels didn’t not significantly predicted children’s resiliency levels.

Table 4. Descriptive statistic, means, standard deviations

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Preschool children’s resiliency levels	110	74.42	12.29
Fathers’ challenge levels	110	67.50	8.31
Fathers’ commitment to life levels	110	32.90	4.43
Fathers’ self-efficacy levels	110	39.42	3.91
Fathers’ control levels	110	10.59	2.70

Table 5. Correlations matrix between fathers’ resiliency variables and preschool children’s resiliency levels

Variables	Children’s ego resiliency levels	Fathers’ challenge levels	Fathers’ commitment to life levels	Fathers’ self-efficacy levels
Preschool children’s resiliency levels	-	-	-	-
Fathers’ challenge levels	.213*	-	-	-
Fathers’ commitment to life levels	.218*	.087	-	-
Fathers’ self-efficacy levels	.190*	.682**	.096	-
Fathers’ control levels	.063	.538**	.151	.507**

*p < .05 **p < .001

According to table 5, there is a relationship between fathers’ challenge ($r=.213, p< .05$), commitment to life ($r=.218, p< .05$) and self efficacy ($r=.190, p< .05$) levels and their children’s resiliency levels. In other words, it can be said that as the challenge, commitment to life and self efficacy levels increased, the resiliency level increased. Also, the challenge, commitment to life and self efficacy levels decreased, the children’s resiliency levels decreased. In table 5, there is not significant relationship between the scores that fathers’ control ($r=.063$) levels and children’s resiliency levels ($p> 0.05$).

Table 6. Simple Linear Regression Analysis results between fathers' resiliency variables and preschool children's resiliency levels

Variables	B	Standart Error	β	t
Children's resiliency levels Fathers' challenge levels R = .213 R ² = .045 F(1,108) = 5.143*	.316	.139	.213	2.268
Children's resiliency levels Fathers' commitment to life levels R = .218 R ² = .047 F(1,108) = 5.364*	.604	.261	.218	2.316
Children's resiliency levels Fathers' self-efficacy levels R = .190 R ² = .036 F(1,108) = 4.040*	.598	.297	.190	2.010
Children's resiliency levels Fathers' control levels R = .063 R ² = .004 F(1,108) = .436	.289	.437	.063	.660

Note: n = 110 * p < .05

Table 6 illustrates that fathers' challenge ($\beta=.316$, $p<.05$), commitment to life ($\beta=.604$, $p<.05$) and self-efficacy ($\beta=.598$, $p<.05$) levels significantly predicted children's resiliency levels. The level of significance was 0.05 and 0.001 for each basic linear regression analysis conducted in this study. The challenge and commitment to life levels accounted for .04 %, self-efficacy levels accounted for .03 % of the children's resiliency levels. Fathers' control ($\beta=.289$, $p>.001$) levels didn't not significantly predicted children's resiliency levels.

4. Discussion

According to the results of this study, while one of the psychological resiliency variables of mothers (self-efficacy) predicts the psychological resiliency of preschool children, the other three (challenge, commitment to life and control) do not predict. On the other hand, while three of the psychological resiliency variables of fathers (challenge, commitment to life, and self-efficacy) predict the psychological resiliency of preschool children, the other one (control) does not predict. According to the results, it could be asserted that the variables regarding the psychological resiliency of fathers have a predictor effect upon the psychological resiliency of children, compared to that of mothers. A study conducted by Gülay Ogelman (2014) in Turkey examined the effect of parental acceptance-rejection on the psychological resiliency of preschool children. According to the results of the study, the perceptions of parents regarding the approval and rejection of their children have a predictor effect on the resiliency levels of preschool children. In this study, the effect of fathers was observed to be higher and more dimensional compared to that of mothers (Gülay Ogelman, 2014). The fact that fathers are more effective on their children in terms of psychological resiliency compared to mothers is important as there has been an increase in the number of studies conducted about fathers in recent years. The family structure, the sociological and cultural values in Turkey make mothers the primary responsible for domestic work and child care and development. However, the studies have showed that fathers also are a very important and effective on the child development (Ünüvar, 2008).

Upon the literature review, we have encountered with no study in Turkey in parallel with this study and some studies approaching the effect of different variables regarding parents on the resiliency levels of preschool children abroad. For instance, a study that was conducted by Taylor et al. (2014) longitudinally examined the effect of parental behaviours and genetic factors on the ego-resiliency levels of children. 153 children in the study were followed from the 18th month until the 84th month. As a result of the study, it was observed that parenting had an effect on the ego-resiliency levels of infants in the 18th month. In addition, the transporter gene of serotonin was observed to be effective on the ego-resiliency levels throughout the study. In another study that was conducted by Taylor et al. (2013), it was determined that the intervening approaches of parents could negatively affect the psychological resiliency of children aged between 18th and 42nd months.

In line with the limitations of the study, it could be conducted with a more crowded sample group in a larger age group. Studies about the psychological resiliency of young children in line with different variables about the family could also be conducted. In accordance with the results of the study, the studies on the effect of fathers on the development of their children should be extended. It is also required to conduct studies revealing the reason for the greater effect of fathers in terms of variables, compared to mothers. As well as screening studies, the longitudinal

studies may enable us to follow the development of the psychological resiliency. It is suggested to inform parents and preschool teachers about the subject and guide children in developing and supporting these skills. It is also suggested to prepare relevant educational programs and apply them to families that face the risk factors.

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