

Adolescents' Parents' Metaphorical Perceptions Toward Adolescents

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Research Article
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the metaphorical perceptions of parents with adolescent children towards adolescents and being the parent of an adolescent. The qualitative study participants consisted of 102 parents whose children were at the 8-12 grade level in Ankara. The data were collected in the spring term of the 2019-2020 academic year. The parents were asked to fill in the blanks: "I think today's adolescents are like ... because" and "Being the parent of an adolescent is like ... because" The themes that described adolescents involved egocentrism, sense of self and identity, storm and stress view, autonomy seek, and the effects of technology. The themes associated with being the parent of an adolescent included patience, parents as a guide/supervisor, and negative affectivity. The findings were discussed in light of different views in the relevant literature.

Keywords: Adolescent, parents with adolescent children, metaphor

Ergenlik Döneminde Çocuğu Olan Anababaların Ergenlere ve Ergen Anababası Olmaya Yönelik Metaforik Algıları

ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı ergenlik döneminde çocuğu olan anababaların ergenlere ve ergen anababası olmaya ilişkin metaforik algılarını incelemektir. Çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın araştırma grubu Ankara'da ikamet eden, çocukları 8-12. Sınıfa devam eden 102 anababadan oluşmaktadır. Araştırma verileri 2019-2020 yılı bahar döneminde toplanmıştır. Araştırmada anababalara "Günümüz ergenleri bana göre ... gibidir çünkü" ve "Ergen anababası olmak ... gibidir çünkü....." ifadeleri verilerek boş bırakılan yerleri tamamlamaları istenmiştir. Ergenleri tanımlamaya yönelik benmerkezcilik, benlik anlayışı ve kimlik, fırtına ve stres görüşü, özerklik arayışı, teknolojinin etkisi temaları, ergen anne/babası olmaya yönelik sabır taşı, rehber/yönetici olarak anababa, olumsuz duygulanım temaları öne çıkmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Ergen, ergen anababası, ergenlik, metafor

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INTRODUCTION

The oldest debate on adolescence concerns whether adolescence is a stressful period (Steinberg, 2007). Socrates described adolescents as inclined to "contradict their parents" and "tyrannize their teachers." In the 18th century, Jean-Jacques Rousseau proposed a more intellectual perspective of adolescence, stressing that being a child or adolescent is different from being an adult, and described adolescence using the stormy metaphor (Rousseau, 1962; Santrock, 2012).

According to Hall, adolescence is a period of storm and stress, and adolescents experience emotional conflicts and mood disruptions (Dolgin, 2014). Psychoanalytic theorists suggest that adolescent storms and stress stem from oedipal conflicts of early childhood (Erikson, 1968; Freud, 1958). When adolescents are defined with the stereotypes as lazy, egocentric and having everything easily, they are considered as displaying destructive and conflictual behaviors. (Santrock, 2012). The essence of adolescent storm and stress is the idea that adolescence is a troubled period of life (Buchanan et al., 1990). It results from growing stress triggered by many simultaneous changes, such as physical maturation, sense of autonomy, socialization, peer interactions, and brain development (Spear, 2000).

Adolescence is considered a challenging period for adolescents as well as for the people around them. It can be suggested that adolescence is a troubled period in three aspects (Arnett, 1999). The first aspect refers to conflict with parents. Adolescents tend to be rebellious and resist adult authority. Secondly, adolescents tend to have mood disruptions and be more emotionally volatile than children and adults. Finally, adolescents are more likely to demonstrate recklessness, non-normative, and antisocial behaviors and have the potential to hurt themselves and those around them than children and adults. According to Holmbeck and Hill (1988), scholars studying the adolescent storm and stress view generally focused on the conflicts between parents and adolescents.

Many systematic studies in the late 1970s began to question this unfavorable view of adolescence. The studies conducted on both typical and troubled adolescents proved that many assumptions and stereotypes about adolescence were incorrect (Steinberg, 2020, Santrock, 2012). Hall's (1904) view of adolescent storm and stress was reconsidered, and its universal and inevitable nature was rejected (Steinberg, 2007).

Positive youth development is a field that approaches adolescence from a positive perspective. The approach appreciates adolescents' observable potentials rather than focusing on their problems, conflicts, and failures (Damon, 2004). Recent studies have shown that although adolescents are exposed to rapid developmental changes, they generally adopt a positive lifestyle than a negative one (Berk, 2009). Lerner (2007) challenges the societal consensus of "inevitably troubled adolescents" and suggests that "most adolescents have an undeserved bad reputation" (Jackson-McLain, 2010). Anthropologist Mead (1928) opposed the view that adolescent storm and stress are universal and biological tendencies. Mead provided examples of more peaceful adolescence in non-Western cultures.

One of the critical contexts for adolescence is the family and home environment. As the fundamental context for physical and psychological growth, the family is the basic unit of society in which children engage in social life (Schaffer, 1997). System theorists underline the network of interconnected relationships in a family system and state that family members mutually influence each other (Berk, 2006). Parental behaviors influence adolescent behaviors and vice versa (Santrock, 2012).

The parent-adolescent relationship during adolescence is similar to a partnership in which the senior (parent) is much more experienced and willing to take over the responsibility for the care of the less senior (adolescent) in life (Steinberg, 2020). Adolescents' questioning behaviors are signs of cognitive development, but parents may perceive them as rebellious, conflictual, and norm-breaking behaviors (Santrock, 2012). Despite individual autonomy efforts, adolescents also need the support and trust of their families (Kulaksızoğlu, 2000; Yavuzer, 2005). An optimal parental support and control level is necessary for a healthy relationship between adolescents and parents (Noller, 1994). During adolescence, intimacy and power relations between adolescents and parents are reorganized and evolve towards an equal sharing with age (Akün, 2013). It is likely to establish positive relationships with parents as well as negative ones (Karataş et al., 2016).

Adolescence is characterized by turbulent times, negative moods, and problematic parental relationships (Op de Beeck, 2009). There are many sources of stress in adolescents' lives, such as puberty, academic performance and homework expectations, domestic violence, death, love relationships, relationships with peers and teachers, and bullying at school (Simuforosa, 2013). In addition to the mentioned stress factors experienced

by adolescents, parents see adolescence as a challenging period, perceive adolescent behaviors as problematic and conflict with adolescents, which might risk positive adolescent development.

Although the number of studies examining the adolescent-parent relationship is high in Turkey, they have primarily focused on adolescent attitudes and habits and the developmental effects of parenting styles and parental attitudes on adolescents (Bayraktar, 2007; Totan and Yöndem, 2007; Hamarta et al., 2010; Sezer, 2010; Özyürek and Nehir, 2021). Some studies determined adolescents' perceptions of their parents (Karataş et al., 2016). However, no study has examined the parents' perceptions towards adolescence and being a parent of adolescents. In this sense, it would be beneficial to see the projections of adolescence debates on parents' daily life.

This study aimed to investigate parents' perceptions towards today's adolescents and to be a parent of an adolescent by using metaphorical expressions. Therefore, answers to the following questions were sought:

- What are the metaphorical perceptions of parents with adolescent children towards today's adolescents?
- What are the metaphors that parents with adolescent children create about being a parent of an adolescent?
- Which categories can be created for the parents' metaphors about today's adolescents and being parents of an adolescent?

METHOD

Method section may include research design, the study group or participants of the study, data collection tools, data analysis.

Research Design

The metaphors were used to determine the participants' perceptions of adolescents and being parents of adolescents. The study employed a phenomenology design, one of the qualitative research methods, and the data were analyzed using content analysis techniques. Phenomenology design focuses on daily phenomena we are familiar with but do not have in-depth and detailed information or opinion. In phenomenology designs, data sources are the individuals or groups who experience and express the phenomenon (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011), and the subjective nature of participant experiences matters (Harper, 2012).

Study Group

The study group consisted of 102 parents with adolescent children between the ages of 9-18 in Ankara. An accessible sampling method was used to determine the participants. The participants' responses were examined, and the expressions that did not have a metaphorical sense or were left blank were excluded from the analysis. At the end of the assessment, we obtained 80 metaphors for today's adolescents and 89 metaphors for being the parent of an adolescent.

The parents' age ranged from 31 to 55. In the data set, 63 (78.8%) mothers and 17 (21.3%) fathers produced metaphors for today's adolescents, and 68 (76.4%) mothers and 21 (21.6%) fathers produced metaphors for being the parent of an adolescent theme. The education status of the participant parents that produced metaphors for "today's adolescents" and "being the parent of an adolescent" themes was as follows: primary school (7.5% and 6.7%), secondary school (6.3% and 5.6%), and high school (20% and %). 15), associate degree (12.5% and 10%), undergraduate (41.3% and 40%) and postgraduate (12.5% and 13%). The number of participants' children ranged from 1 to 4.

Data Collection

The school counselors working in secondary education institutions collected the data. They were informed about the purpose and content of the research and asked to send the data collection tool to the parents. The survey was on voluntary participation, and a consent form was obtained from the parents before the study. After the demographic information form, parents were asked to complete this statement: "I think, today's adolescents are like ... because" and "Being the parent of an adolescent is like ... because"

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed in four steps: coding, classification, organizing the codes and themes, and interpreting the findings (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). Firstly, irrelevant metaphors, false analogies, and expressions that were not logically associated with the themes were excluded from the analysis. Examples of excluded expressions are given below.

- I think today's adolescents are a little mature because we live in the age of science.

- Being the parent of an adolescent cannot be described but only experienced because it is impossible to make sense of their reactions and requests.

After removing irrelevant metaphors, the researchers reviewed others and numbered the forms. In coding the metaphors, the F code was used for fathers, the M code was used for mothers, and a sequence number was added to each parent code. Two researchers did the coding separately according to their implications, such as negative, positive, and neutral. The metaphorical expressions were categorized as positive, negative, or neutral according to their meanings in the explanation parts. The meaning in which the parents used the word was evaluated along with the word's plain meaning, and an explanation of a positive metaphor was expected to be positive. For example, the expression "Love is like a moth, and it demands attention" was considered positive, while "Love is like a planet, it has many different worlds" was considered neutral as it did not have a positive or negative meaning.

Then, the explanations regarding the metaphors were examined, and the themes that best explained the pattern were determined. A coding framework proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1990) was followed in the process (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006). The coding framework was created considering the characteristics of adolescence (e.g., self-see, adolescent storm and stress, egocentrism), and subsequent characteristics (e.g., energetic and unpredictable nature of adolescents) were added to the coding. In such a coding process, categories or themes can be determined in advance, and new ones can be added to the procedure.

Two researchers reviewed the categories to ensure that the responses were related to the given categories. Miles and Huberman's (1994) reliability formula "Reliability= consensus/consensus + disagreement x 100" was also used. It was calculated as 93% for the "today's adolescents" theme, in which the number of metaphors that the two researchers agreed on was 74, and the number of conflicting metaphors was 6. Six conflicted metaphors were recorded following a literature review and feedback from two experts. For the theme of "being the parent of an adolescent," the consensus was reached in 77 except for the 12 metaphors. The reliability coefficient was 87%.

Validity is an essential component of reliability. Besides, the presentation of the data collection process and methods are of significance for validity (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). According to Miles and Huberman (1994), data collection, analysis, and interpretation procedures should be consistent, and it is also essential to explain how this consistency is achieved. The analysis and interpretation processes are compatible with the previous conceptual frameworks. In this sense, the current study is valid and reliable as it meets all the requirements of a scientific study.

Research Ethics

Parents voluntarily participated in the study. The authors followed the principles of research ethics in the planning, data collection, data analysis, and findings phases of the current research.

FINDINGS

This section involves the findings related to the parents' metaphors and themes about "today's adolescents" and "being the parent of an adolescent."

Parents' Metaphors For "Today's Adolescents" and "Being The Parent of An Adolescent."

Parents created 80 metaphors for "today's adolescents" and "being the parent of an adolescent" themes. Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage distributions of the metaphors related to "today's adolescents," and Table 2 presents the metaphors of "being the parents of an adolescent" below.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Metaphors Related to "Today's Adolescents"

Item No	Metaphor	f	%	Item No	Metaphor	f	%	Item No	Metaphor	f	%
1	Bomb/A powder barrel ready to explode A ticking time bomb	3	3.8	25	Egypt	1	1.3	49	Volcanic eruption	1	1.3
2	Heavy, rough sea/sea wave	3	3.8	26	Peacock	1	1.3	50	Grinder	1	1.3
3	Closed box	2	2.5	27	Three-wheeled car	1	1.3	51	Ice sculpture	1	1.3
4	Child	2	2.5	28	Hillside	1	1.3	52	Sun	1	1.3

Table 1 (continued)

5	Jackanapes/spoiled child	2	2.5	29	Crab	1	1.3	53	Greedy	1	1.3
6	Robot	2	2.5	30	Top model car	1	1.3	54	Prison inmate	1	1.3
7	Horse	1	1.3	31	Stubborn goat	1	1.3	55	Confused duck/goofy	1	1.3
8	Uncontrolled flowing water	1	1.3	32	Blind	1	1.3	56	Technology addicted	1	1.3
9	Demanding manager	1	1.3	33	Hour	1	1.3	57	Flood	1	1.3
10	Capitalism	1	1.3	34	Cheetah	1	1.3	58	Dictator	1	1.3
11	Crazy	1	1.3	35	Inexperienced fish	1	1.3	59	Priggish	1	1.3
12	Cactus	1	1.3	36	Garfield	1	1.3	60	A different planet	1	1.3
13	Electricity	1	1.3	37	Fragile and pitiless	1	1.3	61	Donkey	1	1.3
14	Fish in the jar	1	1.3	38	Madcap	1	1.3	62	The art of exaggeration	1	1.3
15	Broken clock	1	1.3	39	Evolution theory	1	1.3	63	Rose thorn	1	1.3
16	Flower blossom	1	1.3	40	Tsunami	1	1.3	64	Tortoise	1	1.3
17	Recklessness	1	1.3	41	Virtual game	1	1.3	65	Ice floe	1	1.3
18	WIFI devices	1	1.3	42	Impatient	1	1.3	66	Rough stream	1	1.3
19	Asocial	1	1.3	43	Water wave	1	1.3	67	Coffee foam	1	1.3
20	Smartphone	1	1.3	44	Dairy philosopher	1	1.3	68	Ship without a compass	1	1.3
21	Ungrateful cat	1	1.3	45	Dependent	1	1.3	69	Cloud on a lofty mountain	1	1.3
22	Tourist	1	1.3	46	Kite	1	1.3	70	Actias Luna/Moth	1	1.3
23	Divan poetry	1	1.3	47	Movie frame	1	1.3	71	Iron	1	1.3
24	The man who saved the world	1	1.3	48	Chatty	1	1.3	72	Platonic lover	1	1.3
Total										80	100

As seen in Table 1, parents created 72 different -totally 80- metaphors to describe today's adolescents. The most frequently used metaphors are bomb/a powder barrel ready to explode/a ticking time bomb (3.8%), rough/heavy sea (3.8%), closed box (2.5%), child (2.5%), jackanapes/spoiled child (2.5%) and robot (2.5%).

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Metaphors Related to “Being the Parent of an Adolescent”

Item No	Metaphor	f	%	Item No	Metaphor	f	%	Item No	Metaphor	f	%
1	Be patience itself	15	18.8	26	As timid as a mouse	1	1.3	50	Saint	1	1.3
2	Chameleon	2	2.5	27	Expertise	1	1.3	51	Conductor	1	1.3
3	A ticking time bomb/Bomb	2	2.5	28	Blowing on cold water	1	1.3	52	Rock	1	1.3
4	Football match	2	2.5	29	Monkey	1	1.3	53	Surprise box	1	1.3
8	Big test	1	1.3	30	Earthquake victims	1	1.3	54	Bunch of grapes	1	1.3
6	Deaf and dumb	1	1.3	31	Play ostrich	1	1.3	55	Rescue team	1	1.3
7	TV audience	1	1.3	32	Neurotic	1	1.3	56	Tightrope walker	1	1.3
8	Eternal payment plan	1	1.3	33	Frontline friend	1	1.3	57	Cooking on a high heat	1	1.3
9	Parsley	1	1.3	34	Psychological counselor	1	1.3	58	Carry the world on your shoulder	1	1.3

Table 2 (continued)

10	Cotton harvest	to	1	1.3	35	Climbing mountain	a	1	1.3	59	Radar	1	1.3
11	Tabasco pepper		1	1.3	36	Referee		1	1.3	60	Gardener	1	1.3
12	Trauma		1	1.3	37	A field full of mines		1	1.3	61	Gnawing a stone	1	1.3
13	Adventure		1	1.3	38	Fruit		1	1.3	62	Detective	1	1.3
14	Difficult and Lengthy Process	and	1	1.3	39	Sandbag		1	1.3	63	Driving in snow	1	1.3
15	Melting candle		1	1.3	40	Trapped in a maze		1	1.3	64	Computer game	1	1.3
16	Puppet		1	1.3	41	Marathon run		1	1.3	65	Guitar spring	1	1.3
17	Stress ball		1	1.3	42	Spoon to stir milk		1	1.3	66	Tumbler/roly-poly	1	1.3
18	Panic attack		1	1.3	43	Matryoshka doll		1	1.3	67	Life coach	1	1.3
19	Adolescent		1	1.3	44	A Tough sport		1	1.3	68	Student	1	1.3
20	Spring		1	1.3	45	Referee		1	1.3	69	Unknown path	1	1.3
21	Privileged		1	1.3	46	A field full of mines		1	1.3	70	Making a snowman in the sun	1	1.3
22	Dungeon		1	1.3	47	A tough sport		1	1.3	71	Planetree	1	1.3
23	Playing with fire	with	1	1.3	48	A bottomless well		1	1.3	72	Migraine	1	1.3
24	Sun		1	1.3	49	Heavy, rough sea		1	1.3	73	Heroic commander	1	1.3
25	Raising a goat		1	1.3									
	Total											89	100

As seen in Table 2, parents used 73 different -and a total of 89- metaphors about being the parent of an adolescent. The most frequently used metaphors are being patience itself (18.8%), chameleon (2.5%), bomb/a ticking time bomb (2.5%), and football match (2.5%).

Semantic Reviews of Metaphors

Parents created 72 different metaphors for today's adolescents and 73 metaphors for being the parent of an adolescent. The metaphors were categorized semantically, considering their explanations. Of the metaphors for today's adolescents, 5 (6.3%) were positive, 66 (82.5%) were negative, and 9 (11.3%) were neutral. Of the metaphors for being the parent of an adolescent, 12 (15%) metaphors were positive, 41 (46.1%) were negative, and 36 (40.4%) were neutral. Examples of positive metaphors are as follows:

"Today's adolescents are like moths flying around the light because they fly there wherever they find light, love, and attention (M4)."

"Being the parent of an adolescent is like a sun because its heat and brightness expands an adolescent's world and makes them stronger (F31)."

Examples of negative metaphors are as follows:

"I think today's adolescents are like stubborn goats because they never listen to you; they only follow their noses by laughing in your face (M33)."

"Being the parent of an adolescent is like patience itself because their demands, moodiness, and stubbornness can barely be tolerated (F32)."

Examples of neutral metaphors are as follows:

"I think today's adolescents are like different planets because they have a very distinctive world. (M69)."

It can be seen that the negative metaphors (n=57) about today's adolescents are generally concerned with the unstable mood states and conflictual behaviors of adolescents. The number of positive metaphors was low (n= 6), and the number of neutral metaphors was 17. The metaphors used for being the parent of an adolescent

predominantly consisted of negative and neutral metaphors. The negative metaphors mainly emphasized the challenging aspects of adolescence.

Conceptual Themes

The metaphors created by parents for today's adolescents were grouped under 11 themes. The frequency and percentage distributions are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Conceptual Categories Related to Today's Adolescents

Item No	Conceptual Themes	Metaphors	f	%
1	Egocentrism	Grinder, demanding manager, the man who saved the world, hillside, jackanape/spoiled child, impatient, greedy, dictator, tortoise, cloud on a lofty mountain, peacock	13	16.25
2	Sense of Self and Identity	Cactus, fragile and cruel, water wave, rough/heavy sea, volcanic eruption, ice sculpture, sun, priggish, ice floe, platonic lover, child, flower blossom	13	16.25
3	Adolescent Storm and Stress	The evolution theory, electricity, broken clock, ungrateful cat, bomb/a ticking time bomb ready to explode, tsunami, horse, rose thorn, coffee foam	11	13.75
4	Autonomy Seek	Crazy, fish in a jar, recklessness, iron, stubborn goat, dairy philosopher, kite, movie frame, chatty, a different planet, donkey	11	13.75
5	Effects of Technology	Closed box, WIFI devices, smartphone, asocial, tourist, robot, virtual game, addict, prison inmate, technology addict	10	12.5
6	Inexperience	Three-wheeled car, blind, crab, inexperienced fish, confused duck/goofy, a ship without a compass	6	7.5
7	Unpredictability	Egypt, closed box, divan poetry, madcap, heavy sea/sea wave	5	6.25
8	Macro changes/external factors	Uncontrolled flowing water, capitalism, robot, flood	4	5
9	Energy/Vigor	Cheetah, top model car, rough stream	3	3.75
10	Need for love and attention	Actias Luna/moth, clock	2	2.5
11	Recklessness	Child, Garfield	2	2.5
			n=80	100

As seen in Table 3, the metaphors for today's adolescents were grouped under the themes "macro changes/external factors", "sense of self and identity", "adolescent storm and stress", "autonomy seek", "identity development", "egocentrism", "inexperience", "need for love and attention", "energy/vigor", "unpredictability", "recklessness", "effects of technology", and "body focus".

It was found that the main emphasis was placed on "egocentrism" (f=12). The metaphors in this theme stressed the demandingness of adolescents, such as grinder, demanding manager, and greedy; but also underlined the withdrawal and inaccessibility of adolescents such as dictator, cloud on a lofty mountain, and hillside metaphors. Furthermore, some metaphors indicated certain behaviors such as jackanapes/spoiled child and impatience. A peacock metaphor also suggested their focus on body images. A group of metaphors in the "sense of self and identity" theme pointed out adolescents' impulsivity and moody behaviors. The metaphors in this theme were corn, cactus, heavy/rough sea, water wave, volcano, and sun, which indicated fluctuations in adolescent behaviors. Other metaphors were a priggish and platonic lover, which stressed the ideal self of adolescents.

Examples of the themes of "egocentrism" and "sense of self and identity" are given below.

"I think today's adolescents are like the man who saved the world because they think they know everything and can handle everything by themselves (M25)." (Egocentrism)

"To me, today's adolescents are like waves; sometimes they get excited, sometimes they calm down (M46)." (Sense of self and identity)

The parents created conflictual behavior and moodiness metaphors such as evolution theory, electricity, a broken clock, an ungrateful cat, a bomb/a ticking time bomb ready to explode, a tsunami, a horse, a rose thorn, and coffee foam for the theme of "adolescent storm and stress." The parents' metaphors regarding the "autonomy seek" included the fish in the jar, the reckless, and a different planet which indicates withdrawal and separation from parents, and the metaphors of iron, stubborn goat, the dairy philosopher, chatty, and donkey suggesting adolescents' capacity to express and defend their views. It is seen that there are metaphors such as donkey. Similar expressions are given below.

"I think today's adolescents are like bombs because they generally give a sudden burst of anger." (M78)." (Adolescent Storm and Stress).

"To me, today's adolescents are like the fish in the jar, as they live in their worlds (M15)." (Autonomy seek)

In the theme of "the effects of technology," parents described adolescents considering Internet-related tools and used metaphors such as WIFI device, smartphone, virtual game, addict, prison inmate, technology addict, and robot. However, certain metaphors stressed isolation and self-closure, such as closed box, asocial, and tourist. Examples of this theme are given below.

"I think today's adolescents are like devices operating on WIFI because they are unavailable without internet (M19).

"I think today's adolescents are like tourists because they do not live in this world, but in the world of social media (M23)."

The metaphors in the theme of "inexperience" involved a three-wheeled car, a blind crab, an inexperienced fish, a confused duck/goofy, and a ship without a compass, underlining the lack of life experiences. Example statements are given below.

"I think today's adolescents are like three-wheeled cars because they are likely to stumble while trying to manage their lives without experience (F29)."

"I think today's adolescents are like inexperienced fish; they have no experience in life (M37).

The parents produced metaphors of corn, closed box, divan poetry, madcap, and rough sea/sea waves for the "unpredictability" theme that signaled emotional and behavioral fluctuations in adolescents. For instance:

"I think today's adolescents are like corn because it is unclear when they will burst (M3)".

The metaphors in the theme of "macro changes/external factors" were uncontrolled flowing water, capitalism, robot, and flood that, emphasized adolescents' vulnerability to the influences of the near and far environment.

"I think today's adolescents are like uncontrolled flowing water because many factors affect and confuse them (F1)".

The "energetic" theme referred to adolescents' physical energy, and some parents said: "Today's adolescents are like cheetahs because they tend to move in any direction quickly (M6)". For the theme "need for love and attention," some parents stated that "I think today's adolescents are like moths flying around the light because wherever they find light, love, and attention, they go there (M4)". In the "recklessness" theme, parents described adolescents as comfort-seekers, stating that "I think today's adolescents are like Garfield; they are self-indulgent and lazy (M38)".

Parents' metaphors for "being the parent of an adolescent" are grouped under seven themes. The frequency and percentage distributions of them are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Conceptual Categories Related to "Being The Parents of An Adolescent"

Item No	Conceptual Themes	Metaphors	f	%
1	Being patience itself	Deaf and dumb, being patience itself, referee, spoon to stir milk, rough sea, saint, stone, gnawing a stone, raising a goat	22	24.72
		Being patience itself, sun, expertise, playing ostrich, frontline friend, counselor, football match, trapped in a maze, sandbag, marathon run, a demanding sport, conductor, bunch of grapes, rescue team, tightrope walker, radar, detective, computer game, guitar spring, tumbler/roly-poly, life coach	22	24.72
2	Parents as a Guide/Supervisor			
		Melting candle, eternal payment plan, being patience itself, trauma, bomb/ticking time bomb, puppet, stress ball, panic attack, dungeon, playing with fire, as timid as a mouse, monkey, earthquake survivor, neurotic, climbing a mountain, a field full of mines, football match, Matryoshka doll, migraine	21	23.60
3	Negative Affectivity			
		Chameleon, Tv audience, Tabasco pepper, Difficult and lengthy process, adolescent, spring, privileged, carry the world on your shoulder, driving in snow, making a snowman in the sun, plane tree, fruit	13	14.60
4	Developmental Outcomes			
		Adventure, a bottomless well, a surprise box, cooking on high heat, an unknown path	5	5.61
5	Uncertainty/Ambiguity			
		Heroic commander, cotton to harvest, parsley, gardener	4	4.50
6	Parenting Style			
7	Parents' Big Test	Test Process, student	2	2.24
			89	100

As shown in Table 4, the metaphors related to "being the parent of an adolescent" are grouped under the themes of "parenting style," "negative affectivity," "developmental outcomes," "parents as a guide/supervisor," "uncertainty/ambiguity," "parents' big test," and "being patience itself."

The analysis results revealed that most metaphors were in the themes of "being patience itself" ($f=22$) and "parent as a guide/supervisor" ($f=22$). The metaphors in the "being the patience itself" theme included saint, a patience stone, and a spoon to stir milk, suggesting patience. Besides, some metaphors in the theme indicated keeping calm under pressure, such as gnawing a stone, raising a goat, and being deaf and dumb. The metaphors in the theme of "parents as a guide/supervisor" were characterized by occupations and professions such as expert, psychological counselor, life coach, orchestra conductor, detective, and rescue team.

There were also metaphors associated with sports activities such as football matches, marathon runs, demanding sports, and tightrope walkers. Several metaphors are referred to guide adolescents (e.g., psychological counselor, orchestra conductor, and life coach), manage their behaviors (e.g., being as timid as a mouse, sandbag), and be strategists (e.g., trapped in a maze, guitar spring). The 21 metaphors in the "Negative Affectivity" theme highlighted parental burnout, such as melting candle, eternal payment plan, being patience itself, and neurotic, and indicated parental inadequacy and helplessness, such as puppet, football match, and matryoshka doll. Moreover, dungeon, playing with fire, as timid as a mouse, and migraine metaphors emphasized that parents were under stress and pressure. Example expressions are given below.

"Being the parent of an adolescent is like being patience itself. You always have to be well-controlled and patient (M14)." (Being Patience Itself)

"Being the parent of an adolescent is like being a psychological counselor; you should always communicate with your child so that s/he gets through adolescence with few problems (M40)." (Parent as guide/supervisor)

"Being the parent of an adolescent is like a football match; you watch the goals over and over, but the match result does not change (M44).

"Being the parent of an adolescent is like a matryoshka doll; no matter how much we strive and create a new self, we are not enough for them (M54).

There were 13 metaphors in the "developmental outcomes" theme, such as chameleon, adolescent, complicated and lengthy process, which indicated parental development and change, as well as the metaphors such as tabasco pepper and steam, suggesting the changing experiences. Besides, the TV audience metaphor pointed out the decreasing importance of parents during adolescence. Example statements in this theme are presented below.

"Being the parent of an adolescent is like being a chameleon as we constantly change according to our child's mood (M4)."

The metaphors in the "uncertainty/ambiguity" theme referred to the vague nature of adolescence. This theme has five metaphors: adventure, a bottomless well, and an unknown path. The four metaphors in the "parenting style" theme were heroic commander, the cotton to harvest, parsley, and gardener. Lastly, in the theme of "Parent's Big Test," there were two metaphors: exam process and student. Example expressions are given below.

"Being the parent of an adolescent is like going on an adventure because it is difficult to predict what will happen next (M15)." (Uncertainty/ambiguity)

"Being the parent of an adolescent is like a bottomless well; you do not know what is at the bottom of it; it is dark (M57)." (Parents' Big Test)

"Being the parent of an adolescent is like being parsley because parents want to interfere in anything about the child (M9)." (Parenting style)

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

This study was carried out to determine parents' metaphorical perceptions of today's adolescents and being the parent of an adolescent. The participant parent created 74 metaphors for "today's adolescents" and 77 for "being the parent of an adolescent." The most commonly used metaphors to describe today's adolescents involved bomb/a ticking time bomb ready to explode, rough/heavy sea/sea wave, closed box, child, jackanape/spoiled child, and robot.

The metaphors of today's adolescents were categorized under 11 themes: "egocentrism", "sense of self and identity", "adolescent storm and stress", "autonomy seek", "the effects of technology", "inexperience", "unpredictability", "macro changes", "energetic", "need for love and attention", and "recklessness". The most frequent metaphors regarding being the parent of an adolescent were being patience itself, chameleon, bomb/a ticking time bomb, and football match. The metaphors of being the parent of adolescents were grouped under seven themes: "being patience itself", "parents as a guide/supervisor", "negative affectivity", "developmental outcomes", "uncertainty/ambiguity", "parenting style", and "parents' big test".

It can be inferred that the metaphors that parents created for "today's adolescents" and "being the parent of an adolescent" had substantially negative meanings and connotations. Similarly, much research in the literature signaled the challenging aspects of adolescence (e.g., Buchanan & Holmbeck, 1998; Laursen, Coy & Collins, 1998; Casey et al., 2018). For instance, Buchanan et al. (1990) found that teachers and parents believed adolescence was a challenging period and that adults could influence this process.

Hines and Paulson (2006) revealed that the stereotypical beliefs of parents and teachers about adolescence were still strong and stated that adults might be under the influence of such beliefs in their relations with adolescents. Larson and Ham (1993) investigated the daily mood changes among 5th and 9th-grade students and found that older students were more likely to be exposed to adverse life events at school and home and that more than one negative experience daily was closely correlated with emotional moodiness.

When the parents' metaphors for today's adolescents were examined, it was determined that they primarily stressed adolescent egocentrism. It was followed by the themes regarding adolescents' sense of self and identity, stormy and stressful nature, seeking autonomy, and relationships with technology. They are primarily consistent with adolescent development. The study findings regarding emotional changes under the theme of a sense of self and identity overlap with the literature findings.

The claim of a strong bond between adolescence and negative affectivity is perhaps the oldest and strongest assumption of the adolescent storm and stress view. Hall (1904) defines adolescence as "the age of rapid fluctuation of mood," with euphoria and depressive mood extremes. Contemporary studies report more frequent and extreme changes in mood among adolescents compared to children and adults. Rosenberg's "barometric self-concept" (1979; 1986; Santrock, 2012), characterized by the short-term fluctuations in the adolescent self, also points out the sharp transition from joy to anxiety.

The themes with less harmful metaphors for today's adolescents referred to adolescents' inexperience, unpredictability, recklessness, physical energy, need for love and attention, and the effects of macro changes and external factors. However, the number of metaphors in these themes was significantly less, which might stem from adolescents' unpredictable and stormy, and stressful natures. All those themes for today's adolescents are the normative developmental characteristics of adolescents. However, parents acknowledge such developmental characteristics as problems. The inquiry behaviors may be viewed as irritable and conflictual behaviors by parents (Santrock, 2012).

Of the metaphors regarding being the parent of an adolescent, most parents emphasized certain concepts such as patience, guidance, and negative affectivity. Dishion and McMahon (1998) point out parental motivation to care, observe, and guide children in their parenting model. The researchers also address parents' changing and decreasing importance and roles during adolescence. Parents are considered supervisors who guide adolescents to reach their true potential, and they play important roles in monitoring adolescents' social relationships and managing opportunities (Hoghughi, 2004; Santrock, 2012; Stattin & Kerr, 2000). Therefore, parents' perceptions of "guide/supervisor" are consistent with the developmental process.

In addition to the negative and biased views of adolescence, some perspectives focus on positive youth development. This approach treats young people as a resource for society rather than a problem. Positive youth development mainly focuses on developing young people instead of their emotional disorders, antisocial behaviors, or learning problems stemming from past misfortunes. The positive youth development approach targets the education, training, and active involvement of children in productive activities (Damon, 2004) and promotes psychological resilience, social, emotional, cognitive, and moral competence, self-efficacy, self-determination, positive identity, and prosocial norms (Benson et al., 2007). Similarly, Adelson (1979, cited in Holmback and Hill, 1988) argues that adolescents are not in turmoil, do not tend to be irritable, impulsive, and resistant to their parents, and do not demonstrate political and rebellious attitudes.

Gilliam and Bales (2000) proposed the concept of "framing" to describe the problem of youth investment. The media has focused on framing only the problematic nature of youth, emphasizing excessive violence, impulsivity, sexuality, and risk-taking behaviors. This continuous and biased framework associated "youth" with "problem." Most studies in the literature and the results of this metaphorical study conducted with parents emphasized that adolescence was a stormy and stressful period. However, the number of studies on positive adolescent development has increased, and there is a need for more informative studies on the nature of adolescence.

Adult perceptions of adolescents, including parents and teachers, influence their relationships with adolescents and their expectations. Instead of seeing adolescence as a stormy and stressful period, sincere efforts to understand and acknowledge it as a developmental process would improve the relationship between adolescents and parents.

The stereotypic beliefs about adolescence negatively affect the relationship between adolescents and families. Therefore, psychoeducational programs and seminars can benefit both adolescents and families in changing those stereotypes and negative thoughts. There is also an urgent need for the media to review and change their messages about adolescence. In the media, portraying adolescents as sensible individuals would help them channel their energies to positive works and prefer positive role models. In this context, it is crucial to consider the opinions of different groups (e.g., teachers) and variables such as the number of children, education, and socio-economic status that may affect parents' opinions about adolescence.

This research has limitations. The first limitation is the small number of fathers participating in the study. Father involvement in research should be increased. The second limitation is data loss due to the difficulties experienced by the participants in understanding the metaphor method. More metaphorical explanations and examples can be given. The third limitation is that this study collected information from parents only through metaphors. In addition to metaphorical expressions, individual or group interviews would yield in-depth information.

Statements of Publication Ethics

The authors declare that this study has no unethical problem considering research publication ethics. The study approval was granted by the Bartın University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee.

Researchers' Contribution Rate

The first author contributed to writing the problem statement and data collection. All the authors contributed to the literature review and examined the data. The first author contributed data analysis. All the authors contributed to interpreting the results, reporting, and checking the final form of the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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