PEER BULLYING FROM THE START OF GENERATION Z'S SCHOOLING TO THE PRESENT: A DOCUMENTARY REVIEW[*]

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Abstract

This study systematically analyzes academic studies conducted in Turkey between 2006 and 2024 that examine peer bullying during the period when Generation Z starts and continues school. In this study, Generation Z is accepted as individuals born in 2000 and after. Document analysis, which is one of the qualitative research methods, was conducted in the study. Within the scope of document analysis, the types of publications, types of methods used, sample sizes, educational levels at which the studies were conducted, and publication years were classified with descriptive analyzes. The findings revealed that the most common publication type was master's theses, the most frequently preferred method was quantitative research, the sample size in the studies was at most 201-500 participants, the majority of studies were conducted on middle school and high school students, and the most studies were conducted between 2021 and 2024. As a result of the study, the researchers; It is recommended that studies with parent participation be conducted at the preschool level, the number of studies conducted with qualitative and mixed methods be increased, studies that will be a guide to reduce peer bullying be included, and more doctoral thesis level research be conducted on peer bullying.

Key Words: Generation Z, School, Peer Bullying, Document Analysis

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Z KUŞAĞININ OKULA BAŞLAMA YILINDAN GÜNÜMÜZE AKRAN ZORBALIĞI: BİR DOKÜMAN İNCELEMESİ

Özet

Bu çalışma, 2006–2024 yılları arasında Türkiye'de yürütülmüş ve Z kuşağının okula başlayıp devam ettiği süreçte akran zorbalığını inceleyen akademik araştırmaları sistematik biçimde analiz etmektedir. Z kuşağı bu çalışmada 2000 yılı ve sonrası doğan bireyler olarak kabul edilmiştir. Çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan doküman analizi yapılmıştır. Doküman analizi kapsamında çalışmalardan yayın türleri, kullanılan yöntem türleri, örneklem büyüklükleri, araştırmaların yapıldığı eğitim kademeleri ve yayın yılları betimleyici analizlerle sınıflandırılmıştır. Bulgular, en çok yapılan yayın türünün yüksek lisans tez çalışmaları, en sık tercih edilen yöntemin nicel araştırmalar, çalışmalarda örneklem büyüklüğünün en çok 201-500 katılımcı olduğu, ortaokul ve lise düzeyindeki öğrenciler üzerinde yürütülen çalışmaların ağırlıklı olduğunu, en çok çalışmanın ise 2021 ile 2024 yılları arasında yapıldığını ortaya koymuştur. Çalışma sonucunda araştırmacılara; okul öncesi kademesinde veli katılımlı çalışmaların yapılması, nitel ve karma yöntemler ile yapılan çalışma sayısının artırılması, akran zorbalığını azaltıcı rehber olacak nitelikte çalışmalara yer verilmesi ve akran zorbalığı ile ilgili daha fazla doktora tezi düzeyinde araştırmaların yapılması önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Z Kuşağı, Okul, Akran Zorbalığı, Doküman Analizi

INTRODUCTION

The school environment, which plays an important role in the social development of individuals during childhood and adolescence, may also contribute to a range of interrelated psychological and social problems. At the forefront of these problems is peer bullying. Defined by negative, unwanted, and repetitive behaviors, peer bullying is based on power imbalances between individuals and usually manifests itself in the form of systematic physical, verbal, or psychological aggression (Olweus, 1993). The desire to stand out—particularly among adolescents influenced by their social environment—can increase both the prevalence and impact of bullying.

Peer bullying refers not only to a single aggressive act, but also to a persistent threat directed at the psychological well-being of the victim. According to Rigby (2002), bullying occurs when an individual consciously harms another individual and this harmful behavior is repeated many times. This situation often leads to consequences such as lack of self-confidence, academic failure, and social isolation in the victim.

Bullying behaviors can manifest in various forms. The literature generally classifies types of bullying as physical, verbal, relational (exclusionary or manipulative), cyber, and sexual bullying (Beran & Li, 2007; Kowalski et al., 2014). Physical bullying involves direct physical attacks such as pushing and hitting, while verbal bullying involves attacks through language, such as teasing, belittling, and threatening. Relational bullying, on the other hand, is carried out indirectly, such as by excluding the victim from the social circle or spreading negative rumors about them. Technological advances have led to an increase in cyberbullying among children and adolescents, enabled by mass media and social media applications (Tokunaga, 2010).

Academic studies on peer bullying have revealed that this issue varies across different age groups, genders, school types, and social and economic variables. Research conducted in Turkey, in particular, shows that bullying behaviors are prevalent at all school levels, from elementary school to high school (Pişkin, 2010). Similarly, the international literature indicates that peer bullying has long-term effects on an individual's psychosocial development and occurs at all levels of education (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Smith et al., 2008).

UNESCO policies emphasize that cyberbullying has become a serious problem, particularly among students, with the proliferation of digital technologies. This form of bullying has a profound psychological impact, as the pain can extend

beyond the safe home environment (UNESCO, 2017). The WHO Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) study shows that cyberbullying varies across countries, but overall, the prevalence of cyberbullying is rising while physical bullying is decreasing (Inchley et al., 2020). According to PISA 2018 data, approximately 23% of students in OECD countries reported experiencing some form of bullying at least a few times a month. While levels of bullying vary significantly across countries, the OECD has conclusively demonstrated that bullying significantly undermines both school belonging and academic performance (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2019). Studies conducted by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) in the United States have also reported that bullying continues to be a significant health threat among high school-aged youth (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2021).

Intergenerational differences play an important role in the development and change of social structures. In this sense, the concept of generation refers to the common behavioural patterns and value systems of individuals born within a specific time frame and raised in similar social, economic and cultural conditions (Mannheim, 1952). According to Mannheim, generations are communities that carry a social consciousness shaped by the historical events of their era. Therefore, each generation can be identified by cultural codes reflective of its time.

In the literature, generations are generally classified as follows:
• Silent Generation (1928-1945): Refers to those who were children during the Second World War.
• Baby Boomers (1946-1964): The generation characterised by the post-Second World War increase in birth rates.
• Generation X (1965-1980): The generation that grew up in the non-digital era and became familiar with technology later on.
• Generation Y (1981-1999): The first generation to grow up with the spread of the internet and mass media.
• Generation Z (2000–2020): The generation born into digital technologies, defined as 'digital natives' (McCrindle & Fell, 2020; Bayhan, 2020).

Generation Z was born and raised during a period of high digitalisation and technological advancement; they possess a profile characterised by the ability to access information quickly, communicate rapidly, and emphasise individuality (Twenge, 2017). While traditional bullying research focuses on face-to-face interactions, the distinctive lifestyle of Generation Z (Gen Z) necessitates a restructuring of the theoretical framework. This generation's birthright—their

digital nativeness (Prensky, 2001)—makes online environments not only a tool for bullying but also a constantly evolving social arena.

In this theoretical context, the act of bullying shifts from physical space to online identities as Generation Z manages critical adolescent needs such as reputation, social status, and peer approval largely through carefully constructed digital assets (online identities) (Pew Research Center, 2018). Therefore, cyberbullying (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019) targets not the individual himself/herself but his/her digital identity (shares, photos, number of followers) that represents his/her social capital, thus increasing the bully's aim from personal harm to the level of damaging social reputation.

Furthermore, Generation Z's tendency toward hyperconnectedness and technological dependence eliminates the spatial and temporal boundaries of bullying. Unlike traditional bullying, constant online presence does not allow victims to avoid these acts; as Kowalski and colleagues (2020) emphasize, this constant exposure forms the theoretical basis for the deepening of the psychological effects of bullying and the chronicization of problems such as anxiety and depression in victims.

During adolescence, social media pressures reinforce the motivations underlying bullying behaviors. The constant comparison culture and intense need for peer approval fostered by social media platforms transform bullying into a power struggle. As Viner and colleagues (2019) argue, bullying should be theorized as a strategy of social exclusion rather than a purely personal attack, functioning as a means of reestablishing power imbalances and ascending popularity hierarchies within the competitive digital landscape. This holistic approach more analytically explains the complex nature of bullying tendencies within the digital ecosystem of Generation Z. In addition, Generation Z carries the risk of experiencing difficulties in peer relationships in school environments due to factors such as the decline in face-to-face communication in social interactions and the presence of ambiguous and fake identities in virtual environments.

In this context, one of the significant problem areas in Generation Z's school life is peer bullying. Bullying is defined as the deliberate, persistent, and disproportionate use of power by one individual to inflict harmful behaviour upon another (Olweus, 1993). Peer bullying, on the other hand, occurs among students and involves one or more students repeatedly engaging in physical, verbal, or psychological violent behaviour towards other students (Kowalski & Limber, 2013).

The aim of this study is to systematically review published research on peer bullying among Generation Z from their school starting year to the present day, categorised by publication type, research method, educational level, sample size, and year of publication. In this study, peer bullying studies in the field literature were examined using the document analysis method, and the results of the examination were presented descriptively. The sub-objectives established in light of this general objective are as follows:

• How are the publication types of studies on peer bullying during Generation Z's school years distributed?

• How are the research methods of studies on peer bullying during Generation Z's school years distributed?

• How is the sample size of studies on peer bullying during Generation Z's school years distributed?

• How are the educational levels at which research on peer bullying among Generation Z during their school years is conducted distributed?

• How are the publication years of studies on peer bullying among Generation Z during their school years distributed?

METHOD

Research Model

This research was conducted using the document analysis method, one of the qualitative research designs. Document analysis refers to the collection of data through the systematic examination of pre-existing written, printed, or digital materials related to a specific topic. Assessing the authenticity and credibility of the documents is a crucial step in this method. (Bowen, 2009). It's stated that the study's extensive scope and use of periodic changes (the general trajectory of Generation Z) make document analysis the most appropriate method. Behavioral and technological changes in peer bullying (the transition from traditional to cyberbullying) need to be examined within a historical context. Document analysis enables this periodic analysis by providing the opportunity to compare and synthesize data from different time periods through retrospective data and theoretical articles. As in the qualitative synthesis tradition, this method is ideal for combining and reinterpreting findings from different sources (Noblit & Hare, 1988). As Merriam (2009) emphasizes, documents provide in-depth information about the context and historical process that the researcher cannot directly observe. This strengthens the analytical and theoretical linkage required by our research questions (Creswell, 2013). This method is widely used, particularly for obtaining information about past events and evaluating current policies, practices, or institutional structures. Researchers categorised the documents selected according to the purpose of the

study based on their content, analysed them through thematic coding, and aimed to reach meaningful conclusions from this data. Master's theses, doctoral theses, and academic articles on peer bullying were analysed. Within the scope of the research, studies on peer bullying were systematically reviewed, selected according to inclusion and exclusion criteria, and analysed.

Data Collection

The study covers master's theses and doctoral theses published between 2006 and 2024, as well as articles published in peer-reviewed journals. The data set of the study was determined in detail by academic studies on bullying in Türkiye. In this regard, YÖK National Thesis Center and ULAKBİM TR Index databases were used as the main data collection platforms. The reason for choosing these two national databases is the necessity to reflect both the periodic scope of the study (from the school starting year of Generation Z to the present) and the trends in practice in Turkey in the broadest possible way. YÖK National Thesis Center: It covers all scientific studies (Master's and Doctoral theses) produced at the postgraduate level in Turkey. ULAKBİM TR Index: Brings together a large number of refereed academic journals based in Türkiye, enabling us to follow current scientific publications and rapidly emerging findings in the field. The reason for excluding international databases such as Web of Science (WoS), ERIC, Scopus is that the study was mainly implemented with the aim of analyzing the education in Turkish literature and the basic bullying programs of national education individually. While international calendar reports (OECD, WHO, UNESCO) were used to establish the theoretical context and theoretical framework, the components for comprehensive analysis were limited to these two main databases representing the national context, namely abstract academic articles and theses. The search was conducted in the YÖK Thesis Centre and ULAKBİM TR Index databases using the keyword 'peer bullying'. When searching the ULAKBİM TR Index database, the search was filtered to include documents of the article type, open access format, Turkish language, and authors from Turkey.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria
• Studies published between 2006 and 2024 were included
• The educational level at which the research was conducted between 2006 and 2010 must be pre-school + primary school
• The educational level at which the research was conducted between 2011 and 2015 is pre-school + primary school + middle school
• The educational level at which the research was conducted between 2016 and 2020 is pre-school + primary school + middle school + high school

• The educational level covered by the studies conducted between 2021 and 2024 is pre-school + primary school + secondary school + high school + university

• The studies must have been conducted in Turkey

• The studies must cover pre-school, primary school, secondary school, high school and university students

• The sample size of the studies had to be clearly reported.

Data Analysis

Data analysis includes content analysis and descriptive statistics. Content analysis requires the data obtained to be organised and interpreted within specific concepts and headings. Researchers described and coded the data in the content analysis, taking into account the topics and headings.

Descriptive statistics were performed in terms of factors such as frequency and percentage, based on the inclusion criteria of the research and the identified studies, including article, master's theses, and doctoral theses publication types, research methods, educational level at which the studies were conducted, and the year of publication of the studies.

To review the studies identified, researchers developed a 'Study Classification Form' and coded articles and postgraduate theses according to the desired characteristics. The scope of the study classification form was created by reviewing the literature in the field (Göktaş et al., 2012; Sözbilir and Kutu, 2008; Seçer et al., 2014, Hebebci, Çelik and Şahin, 2016). The form's content consists of the year the studies were conducted, the title, author, method, sample size, and the level of education at which the studies were conducted. When analysing the data, the researchers analysed the data obtained independently of each other, and the final results were obtained by comparing the results. The Miles and Huberman (2015) formula was used to calculate inter-researcher reliability. The calculation revealed that the agreement between the researchers was 93%.

The data has been analysed under the following headings:

• Publication Type (Article, Master's Theses, Doctoral Theses)

• Method (Qualitative, Quantitative, Mixed)

• Sample Size

• Level of Education Studied (Pre-school, Primary School, Middle School, High School, University)

• Year of Publication (2006-2024)

FINDINGS

This section presents tables showing the publication type, method, sample size, educational levels and years in which the studies were conducted, along with the results, for studies that met the review criteria.

Table 1. Distribution of studies by publication type

Publication type	Total number of studies between 2006 and 2024	Number of studies included in the research
Articles	127	61
Master's theses	130	102
Doctoral theses	21	15
Total	**278**	**178**

According to the search results for the keyword 'peer bullying' in the YÖK Thesis Centre and ULAKBİM TR Index databases, a total of 278 studies on peer bullying were published between 2006 and 2024, while a total of 178 studies were evaluated within the inclusion and exclusion criteria determined by the researchers. Within the scope of the research, the publication type with the highest number of publications between 2006 and 2024 was master's theses, with 102 studies. The number of article studies published between 2006 and 2024 was 61, while the number of doctoral theses was determined to be 15. This distribution shows that the subject of peer bullying in Turkish literature is addressed predominantly at the graduate level, with descriptive and prevalence-oriented studies rather than comprehensive theoretical models and long-term intervention studies. The fact that article production (61 studies) is more than four times greater than doctoral dissertations (15 studies) is an important trend indicating an increasing effort to rapidly bring current findings into national and international scientific circulation.

Table 2. Distribution of studies according to research method

Method type	Articles	Master's theses	Doctoral theses	Total
Quantitative Research	54	99	13	**166**
Qualitative research	4	3	2	**9**
Mixed methods	3	0	0	**3**

When the studies included in the research are analysed according to their methodologies, it is observed that quantitative research methods were used in a high number of studies, totalling 166, and that the most common type of study using this high number was master's theses, with 99 studies. The number of articles using quantitative research methods was 54, while the number of doctoral theses was 13. It was determined that qualitative research methods were preferred in a total of 9 studies and mixed methods in 3 studies. The number of articles using qualitative research methods was determined to be 4, the number of master's theses was 3, and the number of doctoral theses was 2. Mixed research methods were found to be used in a total of 3 research articles. It was concluded that mixed research methods were not used in master's theses and doctoral theses.

From a methodological perspective, the marginal representation of qualitative (9 studies) and especially mixed methods (3 studies) in the literature points to a strong methodological gap. It is striking that mixed methods are not used even in high-level academic production, including doctoral theses (Quantitative: 13, Qualitative: 2, Mixed: 0). This situation shows that strong scientific syntheses that combine the generalizability power of quantitative data with the in-depth understanding power of qualitative data remain limited, and the approaches required for such a synthesis narrow the ground for application.

Table 3. Distribution of sample size in studies

Study types	0-200 Participants	201-500 Participants	501-999 Participants	1000 and Above participants
Articles	19	20	11	11
Master's theses	31	41	19	11
Doctoral theses	7	2	3	3
Total	**57**	**63**	**33**	**25**

When examining the analysis of the studies included in the research according to sample size, a total of 57 studies were conducted with 0-200 participants. Of these, 19 were articles, 31 were master's theses, and 7 were doctoral theses. It was found that master's studies constituted the highest number with 31. The number of studies with 201-500 participants was the highest, with a total of 63 studies. Of these, 41 were master's theses, 20 were articles, and 2 were doctoral theses. The number of studies with 501-999 participants was identified as 33. Of these studies, 19 were master's theses, 11 were articles, and 3 were doctoral

theses. The number of studies with 1,000 or more participants was 25, representing the lowest number of studies.

These studies consisted of 11 articles and master's theses, while 3 were doctoral theses. It is noteworthy that the highest number of study sections is clustered in the range of 201–500 (63 studies). This clustering is reinforced by the fact that master's theses (41 studies) constitute the largest number in this range. This suggests that most research in this area is limited to one or a few schools and focuses on conducting local assessments. Additionally, the large number of studies with 0-200 participants (57 studies) demonstrates the prevalence of restricted-access field research in the publication types of theses (31) and articles (19). These two groups constitute a large portion of the total literature, supporting the interpretation that research is driven by the ease of collecting quantitative data rather than by providing contextual depth. On the other hand, the fact that only 25 studies with 1,000 or more participants represent the smallest number reveals a significant methodological weakness in the literature. While large-sample studies are evenly distributed among articles (11) and master's theses (11), this low number demonstrates that peer bullying has not been thoroughly examined in the Turkish literature using large-scale, representative samples. This suggests that, despite the dominance of quantitative methods in previous findings, the vast majority of the data obtained lacks the generalizability to form the basis for national policies or comprehensive intervention programs.

Table 4. Distribution of participants by educational level

Field of study	Articles	Master's theses	Doctoral theses	Total
Pre-school	3	1	1	5
Primary school	6	19	1	26
Middle school	30	42	8	80
High school	19	40	4	63
University	3	0	1	4

When the studies included in the research are analysed according to educational level, it is seen that the educational level with the most research is secondary school, with 80 studies. Of the studies conducted at the secondary school level, 42 are master's theses, 30 are articles, and 8 are doctoral theses. The secondary school level is followed by the high school level with 63 studies. Of the studies conducted at the high school level, 40 were master's theses, 19 were articles, and 4 were doctoral theses. It was concluded that the educational levels

with the fewest studies were universities and pre-school education. It was found that university students were involved in a total of 4 studies, including 3 articles and 1 doctoral thesis, while pre-school students were involved in a total of 5 studies, including 3 articles and 1 master's thesis and doctoral thesis each.

An examination of the 178 publications included in the study by educational level reveals that the focus of peer bullying research in Turkey has clearly shifted to the early and middle stages of formal education. The middle school level boasts the highest number of studies with 80 (42 master's theses, 30 articles, and 8 doctoral theses), followed closely by the high school level (63 studies). The 143 studies focusing on these two levels clearly demonstrate that peer bullying is particularly focused on Generation Z, a period characterized by pre-adolescent and adolescent developmental crises, accelerated social identity formation, and the most intense use of hyperconnectedness and online identities. This concentration demonstrates a strong academic interest in the need for practical solutions during these periods, when bullying most critically impacts students' academic and social development.

Table 5. Distribution of studies by publication year

Publication period	Articles	Master's theses	Doctoral theses	Total
2006-2010	2	0	0	2
2011-2015	7	8	1	16
2016-2020	32	35	5	72
2021-2024	20	59	9	88
Total	61	102	15	178

When the studies included in the analysis are examined by publication year, the years with the highest number of master's theses and doctoral theses published are 2021-2024 with 88 studies, while the years with the highest number of articles published are 2016-2020 with 32 studies. Regarding peer bullying, the most published study type in the near future, between 2021 and 2024, was master's studies, with 59 studies. Again, when the table is examined, it is seen that between 2006 and 2015, only a small number of studies were conducted on peer bullying, with a total of 18 studies in the scope of articles, master's theses and doctoral theses.

The Turkish literature provides stark insights into the dynamics of periodic interest and academic production on the topic of peer bullying. The low volume of research, limited to just 18 studies between 2006 and 2015, suggests that academic interest in the topic during this period (the early years of Generation

Z's schooling) was quite limited, and bullying has not yet entered the mainstream literature as a research topic. In contrast, the period after 2016 marks a period of leapfrogging and restructuring in academic production. The period in which the highest number of master's and doctoral theses were published was between 2021 and 2024, with a total of 88 studies. This data demonstrates that academic interest in and pressure to produce work on bullying has increased rapidly recently. In particular, the predominance of theses, with 59 master's theses published between 2021 and 2024, the most recent period, confirms that the literature is still driven by introductory and descriptive field research (consistent with the dominance of quantitative methods and medium-sized samples identified in previous findings) rather than comprehensive theoretical models. The highest number of article publications was observed between 2016 and 2020, with 32 studies. This suggests that academic articles are responding more quickly to a rapidly changing social problem like bullying (especially the rise of cyberbullying) in the medium term, bringing their findings into scholarly circulation more quickly. However, this early peak in article production may also suggest that, despite the significant increase in theses and dissertations after 2021, the pace of article production has slowed relatively more than that of theses.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

When evaluating the results of the document analysis, the most frequently used research type in the studies included in the analysis is master's theses. Similarly, Korkmaz et al. (2021), in their study examining postgraduate theses related to peer bullying, state that the proportion of master's theses is 89%, while the number of doctoral theses is 11%. Very few studies were conducted at the doctoral thesis level. Albayrak (2012) explains this situation by stating that conducting research on sensitive topics such as bullying raises various obstacles in the process of obtaining approval from ethics committees and permission from school administrations, which also discourages researchers from the topic of peer bullying.

This study reveals that peer bullying research targeting Generation Z individuals is mostly conducted at the secondary school and high school levels. Korkmaz et al. (2021), in their study examining master's theses on the concept of peer bullying, concluded that 51% of the studies were conducted with a sample group from secondary schools. Kılınç's (2020) systematic review of studies on peer bullying in Turkey shows that the most commonly studied educational levels are secondary school and middle school. This can be attributed to the nature of adolescence, which increases conflicts in peer relationships (Rigby,

2017). Furthermore, quantitative methods are clearly predominant among the research methods used. Seven and Uçar Çabuk's (2023) analysis of studies on peer bullying in the pre-school period shows that the number of studies using quantitative methods is numerically higher than those using qualitative and mixed methods. Kılınç's (2020) systematic review of studies on peer bullying in Turkey also indicates that quantitative research methods are preferred over other research methods. Korkmaz et al. (2021), in their research findings examining master's theses on the concept of peer bullying, concluded that quantitative research methods were the most commonly used research method, with a rate of 46%. This also indicates that peer bullying is generally measured through scales and questionnaires.

This study found that the vast majority of research was conducted after 2015. Korkmaz et al. (2021), in their study examining master's theses on the concept of peer bullying, also concluded that the highest number of studies was reached in 2018. A similar study examining research on peer bullying also found that the numerical increase in peer bullying studies occurred in 2018 (Kılınç, 2020). This increase may be attributed to the growing prominence of bullying issues, facilitated by technological advances, developments in mass media, and the rise of social media.

Again, in this study, it was also found that the sample sizes in the studies examined were mostly concentrated in the range of 201–500. This can be explained by the predominant use of quantitative research methods. As a result, it can be interpreted that they mostly determined measurement tools as scales and questionnaires.

SUGGESTIONS

In line with the findings of the study, the following recommendations can be made:

• More parent-involved studies can be conducted at the pre-school level, which is the gateway for peers and the basis of peer bullying.

•Qualitative and mixed studies can be conducted to obtain more in-depth results on peer bullying.

• Studies that could serve as a guide for reducing peer bullying could be conducted.

• The number of doctoral thesis-level studies on peer bullying could be increased.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Giriş

Çocukluk çağı ve ergenlik döneminde bireylerin sosyal gelişimlerinde önemli bir role sahip olan okul ortamı, aynı zamanda birçok psikolojik ve sosyal problemlerin ağının da temelini atmıştır. Bu problemlerin başında ise akran zorbalığı yer almaktadır. Olumsuz, istenmeyen ve tekrarlayan davranış biçimleriyle tanımlanan akran zorbalığı, bireyler arasında görülen güç dengesizliğini esas alır ve genellikle sistematik bir şekilde uygulanan fiziksel, sözel ya da psikolojik saldırganlık şeklinde kendisini gösterir (Olweus, 1993). Özellikle ergenlik dönemindeki öğrencilerin sosyal çevrenin de etkisi ile ön plana çıkma isteği ergenlik dönemi öğrencileri arasında zorbalık davranışlarının sayısını ve yarattığı etkiyi artırabilmektedir.

Zorbalık davranışları farklı biçimlerde meydana gelebilmektedir. Alan yazında zorbalık türlerinin sınıflandırılması genel olarak; fiziksel, sözel, ilişkisel (dışlayıcı veya manipülatif) ve siber zorbalıktır (Beran & Li, 2007; Kowalski vd., 2014).

Z kuşağı, dijitalleşme ve teknolojik ilerlemenin yüksek olduğu bir dönemde doğmuş ve büyümüş; bilgiye hızlı bir şekilde ulaşabilen, hızlı iletişim kurabilen, bireyselliği öne çıkaran bir profile sahiptir (Twenge, 2017). Bunun yanında Z kuşağı, sosyal ilişkilerde yüz yüze iletişimin azalması, sanal ortamlarda belirsiz ve sahte kimlikler gibi sebeplerle okul ortamlarında akran ilişkilerinde sorun yaşama riski de taşımaktadır.

Bu bağlamda, Z kuşağının okul hayatındaki önemli sorun alanlarından biri de akran zorbalığıdır. Zorbalık, bir bireyin başka bir bireye bilinçli, devamlı ve dengesiz bir güç ile zarar verici davranışlarda bulunmasıdır (Olweus, 1993). Akran zorbalığı ise, öğrenciler arasında meydana gelen ve bir veya birkaç öğrencinin diğer öğrencilere yönelik tekrar eden biçimde fiziksel, sözel veya psikolojik şiddet davranışlarını içerir (Kowalski & Limber, 2013).

Bu çalışmanın amacı Z kuşağının okula başlama yılından günümüze değin akran zorbalığını konu edinen yayınlanmış araştırmaları; yayın türü, araştırma yöntemi, çalışma yapılan eğitim kademesi, örneklem büyüklüğü ve yayın yılına göre sistematik olarak incelemektir. Çalışmada alan yazında yer alan akran zorbalığı başlıklı çalışmalar doküman analizi yöntemi ile incelendikten sonra inceleme sonuçları betimsel olarak sunulmuştur. Bu genel amaç ışığında oluşturulan alt amaçlar şunlardır:

• Z kuşağının okul yıllarında akran zorbalığı hakkında yapılan çalışmaların yayın türleri nasıl dağılım göstermektedir?

• Z kuşağının okul yıllarında akran zorbalığı hakkında yapılan çalışmaların araştırma yöntemleri nasıl dağılım göstermektedir?

• Z kuşağının okul yıllarında akran zorbalığı hakkında yapılan çalışmaların örneklem büyüklüğü nasıl dağılım göstermektedir?

• Z kuşağının okul yıllarında akran zorbalığı hakkında yapılan çalışmaların araştırma yapılan eğitim kademesi nasıl dağılım göstermektedir?

• Z kuşağının okul yıllarında akran zorbalığı hakkında yapılan çalışmaların yayın yılları nasıl dağılım göstermektedir?

Yöntem

Bu araştırma, nitel araştırma desenlerinden biri olan doküman analizi yöntemiyle yürütülmüştür. Bu yöntem, özellikle geçmişe dönük olaylar hakkında bilgi edinme, mevcut politikaları, uygulamaları veya kurumsal yapıları değerlendirme amacıyla yaygın olarak kullanılmaktadır.

Çalışma, 2006–2024 yılları arasında yayımlanmış yüksek lisans ve doktora tezleri ile hakemli dergilerde yayımlanmış makaleleri kapsamaktadır. Tarama işlemi YÖK Tez Merkezi ve ULAKBİM TR Dizin veri tabanlarında "akran zorbalığı" anahtar kelimesi ile yapılmıştır. ULAKBİM TR Dizin veri tabanında arama yapılırken doküman tipi makale, erişim formatı açık, yayın dili Türkçe ve yazar ülkesi Türkiye olacak şekilde filtre uygulanarak arama yapılmıştır.

Veri analizinde içerik analizine ve betimsel istatistiklere yer verilmiştir. İçerik analizi, elde edilen verileri belirli kavram ve başlıklar dahilinde bir bütün oluşturmayı ve yorumlamayı gerektirir. Araştırmacılar verilerin içerik analizinde, konular ve başlıkları dikkate alarak betimleme ve kodlama yapmıştır. Betimsel istatistikler; araştırma dahil edilme ölçütler ile birlikte belirlenen çalışmalar olan makale, yüksek lisans tezi ve doktora tezi yayın türü, araştırma yöntemi, çalışma yapılan eğitim kademesi ve çalışmaların yayın yılına yönelik ortaya çıkan frekans ve yüzde gibi faktörler açısından yapılmıştır.

Ulaşılan çalışmaları incelemek için araştırmacılar tarafından "Çalışma Sınıflama Formu" geliştirilmiştir. Çalışmaların yapıldığı yıl, başlık, yazar, yöntem, örneklem sayısı ve çalışmaların yapıldığı eğitim kademesi boyutları formun içeriğini oluşturmaktadır. Veriler analiz edilirken araştırmacılar birbirinden bağımsız olarak elde edilen verileri analiz etmiş ve ortaya çıkan sonuçlar karşılaştırılarak nihai sonuçlar elde edilmiştir. Araştırmacılar arası güvenirlik

için Miles ve Huberman'ın (2015) formülü kullanılarak hesaplama yapılmıştır. Hesaplama sonucunda araştırmacılar arasındaki uyum % 93 olarak bulunmuştur.

Bulgular

Bu bölümde araştırma soruları ve inceleme ölçütlerine göre elde edilen veriler analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen verilerden Z kuşağının okul yıllarında akran zorbalığı hakkında yapılan çalışmaların yayın türleri, araştırma yöntemleri, örneklem büyüklüğü, araştırma yapılan eğitim kademesi ve çalışmaların yayın yıllarına göre nasıl dağılım gösterdiğine dönük analiz edilmiş ve her bir soru tablo olarak sunulmuştur. Yapılan analizler sonucunda çalışmada yer alan araştırma türleri arasında en çok başvurulan araştırma türünün yüksek lisans tez çalışması olduğu, Z kuşağı bireylerine yönelik akran zorbalığı araştırmalarının daha çok ortaokul ve lise kademelerinde yapıldığı, araştırmaların büyük çoğunluğunun 2015 sonrası yapıldığı ve örneklem büyüklüklerinin büyük kısmının 201–500 aralığında olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Sonuç ve Tartışma

Araştırma sonuçları değerlendirildiğinde çalışmada yer alan araştırma türleri arasında en çok başvurulan araştırma türü yüksek lisans tez çalışmalarıdır. Doktora tezi araştırma türünde çok az sayıda çalışma yapıldığı görülmektedir. Albayrak (2012), zorbalık gibi hassas konular üzerine çalışma yürütmenin, etik kurullardan onay almayı ve okul idarelerinden izin alma sürecinde çeşitli engeller ortaya çıkardığını, bunun da araştırmacıları akran zorbalığı konusundan uzaklaştırdığını ifade etmektedir.

Bu çalışma, Z kuşağı bireylerine yönelik akran zorbalığı araştırmalarının daha çok ortaokul ve lise kademelerinde yapıldığını ortaya koymaktadır. Bu durum, ergenlik döneminin akran ilişkilerindeki çatışmaları artıran yapısıyla ilişkilendirilebilir (Rigby, 2017). Ayrıca, araştırma yöntemleri arasında nicel yöntemlerin açık ara önde olduğu görülmektedir. Bu da akran zorbalığının genellikle ölçek ve anket yoluyla ölçüldüğünü göstermektedir.

Bu çalışmada araştırmaların büyük çoğunluğunun 2015 sonrası yapıldığı saptanmıştır. Bu artış, teknolojinin ve kitle iletişim araçlarının gelişmesi ve sosyal medya unsurunun ön plana çıkması ile birlikte zorbalık konusunun gündeme taşınmasının kolaylaşmasına paralel olarak değerlendirilebilir.
Yine bu çalışmada, incelenen araştırmalardaki örneklem büyüklüklerinin daha çok 201–500 aralığında yoğunluk gösterdiği saptanmıştır. Bu durumun araştırmacıların daha çok nicel araştırma yöntemi kullanmasından kaynaklı

olduğu söylenilebilir. Bunun sonucu olarak da ölçme araçlarını daha çok ölçek ve anket olarak belirlediği şeklinde yorumlanabilir.

Öneriler

Çalışma sonucunda ortaya çıkan bulgulara paralel olarak aşağıdaki önerilerde bulunulabilir:

• Akran zorbalığının temeli olan akranlar ile akranların aynı ortama giriş kapısı olan okul öncesi düzeyinde veli katılımlı daha fazla çalışma yapılabilir.

• Akran zorbalığı konusunda daha derinlemesine sonuçlar elde edilmesini sağlayacak nitel ve karma araştırmalar yapılabilir.

• Akran zorbalığının azaltılması için rehber olabilecek çalışmalar yapılabilir.

• Akran zorbalığı hakkında doktora tezi düzeyindeki çalışmaların sayısı arttırılabilir.