



## Peer Bullying Among Turkish Preschool Children: An Observational Study

Research Article

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### ABSTRACT

Although recent studies of peer bullying in preschool children in various countries have demonstrated the importance of studying bullying at these ages, studies have been limited in Turkey. The purpose of this investigation is to explore the nature of peer bullying among Turkish preschool children. Teachers of 121 children completed Preschool Social Behavior Scale-TF. Information about children's social behaviors in preschool was obtained through Storied Hypothetical Situations from children. According to analyses of these measures, 14 children were selected for observational assessments. Anecdotal records and event sampling were conducted in their leisure time and art activities. Time and scan sampling were conducted in their leisure time. Results indicated bullying occurred mostly in their leisure time and verbal bullying occurred more than other bullying types in each activity. Hitting, shouting and taunting were more observed behaviors. The discussion emphasizes the methodological need of peer bullying in preschool reflect individual differences.

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#### Keywords:

peer bullying, aggression, observation, preschool

### Introduction

Bullying has an influence over everyone regardless of age, gender and culture constraints, generally with the observed common adverse effects on the individual and group. Its remarkably increasing speed of social progress from past to present draws attention. Even preschool education institutions are faced with bullying incidents that make researchers working in this field begin to worry; hence, it emphasizes adults be more aware that they need to increase the amount of time spent with their children. According to Alsaker and Gutzwiller-Helfenfinger (2009) bullying is a part of the lives of preschool children. Children are engaged in

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bullying or other aggressive actions to get what they want by exerting force against each other or to take the situation under control (McGinnis & Goldstein, 2003). Children who do not have a better way to achieve their goals are likely to exhibit bullying behavior. Instead of developing positive ways to interact with others and to communicate their needs, such children learn to control others through intimidation and orientation (Swearer, Siebecker, Johnsen-Frerichs, & Wang, 2009).

Bullying is a type of aggression exerted by systematic abuse of power, by older, more physically powerful or more dominant one/group to the younger or powerless one/group in a purposeful and persistent manner resulting in scaring, alarming or disturbing which the victim is incapable of self-protection (Beane, 2005; Pişkin, 2006; Sharp & Smith, 2003; Smith, 1997; Smith & Sharp, 2003; Stephenson and Smith, 2002; Ural & Özteke, 2007). Sharp and Smith (2003) categorizes bullying as physical, verbal and relational among which physical and verbal bullying are the most easily recognized types. Conflicts occur directly in these types of bullying (Elliott, 2002a; Monks, 2000). Relational bullying is the indirect manipulation of social relations to exclude and harm individuals as particular victims (Lamb, Pepler & Craig, 2009). Giving harm to the victims through relational bullying cannot easily be observed, especially depending on the age and social environment (Adams, 2008; McGinnis & Goldstein, 2003). Researches show that the frequency of peer bullying is the identical for preschool and primary school children. The types of abuse may be similar, but the known characteristics are comparable (Saracho, 2017a). During 4-6 years more direct, less relational violence is used while verbal bullying is seen as the most common type of this period (McGinnis & Goldstein, 2003; Monks, 2000). For the last few years a new form of bullying has emerged, labeled cyberbullying, in which the aggression occurs through specifically mobile phones or the internet (Slonje & Smith, 2008).

Children are took part in bullying as a bully, bully-victim and victim (Pellegrini, 1998). Although bullies had a lot of friends, they are tended to make a group from other aggressive children (Craig & Pepler, 1995). It is difficult to predict that when bully-victims are bully or victim (Ayas, 2008). Bully-victims are lived negative sides both be a bully and a victim (Perren, 2000). It is easy to speculate that the hostility directed by those children towards their victim is fueled by their own experience of being victimized (Lee, 2004). Victims are usually weaker, fatter or thinner, shorter, or taller, and have learning difficulties, physical disabilities, special requirement, or chronic illness (Gökler, 2009; Stassen Berger, 2007). Different factors affect the increase or decrease in the frequency of bullying: the main determinants are gender and environment of the child.

*Gender:* Boys are the most common engaged in bullying and display more bullying behaviors. While verbal and physical bullying are more prevalent among boys, relational bullying is more common, especially among girls (Byrne, 1995; Smith & Ananiadou, 2003, Smith & Sharp, 2003).

*Environment:* Most of the bullying occurs during unstructured activities. Schools have places in and around the play area that are generally hidden from view and supervision enabling bullying behaviors. Furthermore, uncontrolled situations allow the developing cases of bullying (Beane, 2005; Boulton, 2003; Craig, Pepler & Atlas, 2000; Elliott, 2002b; Stephenson & Smith, 2002).

To investigate bullying among children, alternative and time-consuming methods, such as one-to-one meetings both with teachers and children and direct observational methods need to be practiced (Rigby, 2002). In the dining halls, hallways, school buses, in the play area and during breaks children can be observed while they are less supervised by adults (Pellegrini, 1998). Observation can help understand the mismatch between child behaviors and teacher reports (Craig & Pepler, 1997) and is an effective way to learn about the peer intervention frequency and nature of violence (Hawkins, Pepler & Craig, 2001). Developmental characteristics of children are taken into account in the studies made to reveal the peer bullying among children. Since preschoolers are not able to fill out the questionnaires or surveys due to their illiteracy, and also because of the short concentration span, interviews with children are not generally operational. Therefore, long-term

observation in their natural environment is considered as the most convenient method because it provides clear and rich information about the situation.

In Turkey preschool education is optional and includes the education of children in the 36-66 months of age group. Preschool education is given in kindergartens, preparatory classrooms, laboratory classrooms, day nurseries, nursery schools, day-care homes, and child care homes by various ministries and institutions, and by the Ministry of National Education most of all. The children can benefit from these institutions for a full day or a half day (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2006). Preschool teachers or kindergarten teachers are teachers working in schools before the start of elementary school, aimed at preparing children for entry to elementary school. 3-5 aged children are provided basic education in preschools which are funded by the Ministry of National Education in Turkey. As the standards for free-play and direct instruction (in art, for instance) can vary quite a bit internationally. Adults expect more sitting still and listening from the preschoolers, and would like to conduct structured activities within the context of the Turkish preschool (Gülşay Ogelman, Gündoğan, Sarıkaya & Önder, 2016). Aim of research was to determine whether peer bullying exists in preschool in Turkey. There are four research questions for each, were as follows:

- When is peer bullying observed in preschools and what type of activity is connected with this frequency?
- Which type of bullying behaviors do bullies and bully-victims display more frequently?
- Which type of bullying behaviors are bully-victims and victims of bullying exposed to more frequently?
- How often and how long do bullies and bully-victims display bullying behaviors?

### **Method**

This research is a case study. The case study is a qualitative approach in which the researcher explores in depth and detail one or more situations through a collection of data that includes observations, interviews, audiovisual materials and documents, and reports of case-based issues (Creswell, 2007).

#### ***Participants***

This study was conducted at two preschools which are funded by the Ministry of National Education in Ankara where is the capital city of Turkey. 3-6 ages children are provided basic education in preschools which are funded by the Ministry of National Education in Turkey. The study group consisted of 14 (10 male-4 female; Table 1) out of 121 Turkish children (56 male-65 female) who were 60-77 months old selected by applying Storied Hypothetical Situations Form (SHSF) which filled by children and the Preschool Social Behavior Scale-Teacher Form (PSBS-TF) which filled by teachers.

**Table 1.** Demographic Findings of Participants

Child	Month	Gender	Birth order	Number of siblings	Duration of preschool education (month/year)
K1	73	M	First	0	6 m-1y
K2	72	F	First	1	2-3 y
K3	76	M	First	0	6 m-1y
K4	68	M	First	0	1-2y
K5	77	F	First	0	2-3 y
K6	70	F	First	0	6 m-1y
K7	74	M	First	1	6 m-1y
K8	71	M	First	2	6 m-1y
K9	69	M	Last	1	1-2y
K10	73	M	First	1	2-3 y
K11	60	M	First	1	6 m-1y
K12	73	F	First	0	2-3 y
K13	65	M	First	0	2-3 y
K14	69	M	First	1	1-2y

These 14 children were given pseudonyms in this study like K1, K2 and K3. The study group was set by using the criterion sampling method, one of the purposive sampling methods. For the criterion sampling, sampling units meet specified criteria (objects, events, etc.) and are included in the sample (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2009).

## Materials and Data Analysis

### Preschool Social Behavior Scale-Teacher Form (PSBS-TF)

The original scale (PSBS-TF) was developed by Crick, Casas and Mosher in 1997 in USA to discover preschoolers' social behaviors through their teachers' evaluation (Şen, 2009). It consists of 25 items with six sub-scales: overt/physical aggression, relational aggression, prosocial behavior, depressed mood, same-sex peer acceptance and opposite-sex peer acceptance. The teacher determines whether the child displayed such behaviors by using a 5 point Likert-type scale (never to always) (Crick, Casas & Mosher, 1997). Exploratory factor analysis conducted by Şen (2009) to adopt the scale to Turkish language and culture, resulted in 24 items with four factors including overt/physical aggression, prosocial behavior, relational aggression and depressed mood. As for the reliability of the scale, according to the social behaviors data from 11 teachers and 228 children, Cronbach Alpha internal consistency for the overt/physical aggression was found as .95, for prosocial behavior .89, for relational aggression .90 and for depressed mood as .51 (Şen, 2009).

### Storied Hypothetical Situations Form (SHSF)

The original scale (SHSF) was developed by Uysal (2011) to identify the children who partake in peer-bullying. The scale has 18 items with seven sub-scales: physical bullying (4 items), relational bullying (3 items), verbal bullying (3 items), victim of bullying (2 items), prosocial behavior (2 items), peer acceptance (2 items) and peer rejection (2 items). The form was structured to be applied to children one-to-one in a distraction-free environment. A scenario related to the physical bullying could be: Suppose you have brought your favorite toy to the school. A friend of yours grabs and gets your toy forcefully. Which of your friends does this? Who generally display such behaviors? In this form applied to children individually, the frequency distributions of the responses given for each question were examined.

### Observation

Observation is used to obtain in depth information about the children. In this way, types of peer bullying (anecdotal record), frequency (scan sampling), and duration (time sampling) will be revealed and scores will be compared with each other (event sampling).

*Anecdotal Record.* Each child is observed for 30 minutes during leisure time activities and 15 minutes for structured activities. Observation on different days provides diverse information about the child's experiences. Therefore, it was specifically directed to not observe a child in the same day during both the

leisure time and structured activities. Keeping anecdotal records lasted four weeks - one week for each class. All other types of observation were recorded in the digital environment via Microsoft Office Word program. Afterwards, anecdotal records based on bullying behavior as specified were reviewed (Table 2; Field, 2007). Each line in the document was numbered and coded as necessary to figure out which sub-scale the bullying behaviors belong to and under which basic behavior groups they fit into.

**Table 2.** The Distribution for Type of Bullying Behavior (Field, 2007)

Physical bullying	Verbal bullying	Relational bullying
Pushing	Teasing	Intimating
Clinching	Shouting	Threatening
Hitting	Irritating	Sniggering
Shaking	Rebuking	Ignoring
Beating	Name calling	Staring
Extortion	Mocking	Refusing to sit next to
Kicking	Swearing	Spreading rumors
Fighting		Excluding from the group
Pinching		
Spitting		
Hair pulling		
Punching		
Throwing		
Locking in a room		
Harm belongings		
Pulling the chair from the bottom		

Later, frequency distributions (Table 3) regarding the implementation of these behaviors for each child and their frequency of exposure and were formed into an index table. As a result of the analysis, the groups into which the children were to be formed were agreed upon; this were mainly based on the roles of the children from their types of behaviors, as well as the duration of time sampling and scan sampling.

**Table 3.** Distribution of Observed Behaviors of Children

Physical bullying	Hitting	K1	K4	K7
	Extortion		K3	
	Harm belongings		K4	
Verbal bullying	Shouting	K1	K3	
	Rebuking			K5
	Teasing		K2	K10
Relational bullying	Mocking	K2		
	Excluding from the group			K6
	Threatening			K9
	Sniggering			K8

**Event Sampling.** At the end of the event sampling, the table with the dimensions of bullying and victimization was created to get more information about the type of bullying children apply more and was marked for all individual events in five different days. As a result of the analysis through which the children marked the most was determined considering the corresponding sub-dimension of bullying. Thus, cases of children applying and suffering from bullying behaviors could be compared and anecdotal records would help determine the roles of bully, bully-victim and victim.

**Time Sampling.** The researcher used time-recording to determine the time period of the observed behavior. Time for each child exhibiting bullying behaviors was identified based on the anecdotal records kept in three separate days during leisure time activities for 15-minute periods. Therefore, in three days, 45 minutes of each child’s behavior was observed and recorded. Thus, the validity of the frequency distributions obtained could be investigated as a result of anecdotal records. By identifying the duration for the behavior observed through time- recording in three days and how much time was allotted, the rate of the observed behavior was

obtained. Thirty percent and above was considered as the limit for children to be identified as frequent practitioners.

**Scan Sampling.** Children identified as bullies as a result of the anecdotal records were asked to keep 30 minute recordings during leisure time activities. A total of three scan samples were applied to each child for the observed behavior. The scan sample helped to determine each of the observed behavior frequency. Each child within three days was observed for each behavior during leisure time activities in 15 two minute intervals, totaling thirty minutes with a total of 2-minute 45 periods (90 minutes total). In three days, the frequency of observed behaviors displayed in 45 periods (total 90 minutes) was traced. Those who exhibited these behaviors in more than one-third of the 45 periods were recognized as frequent practitioners.

### **Procedure**

This study was conducted in two stages: In the first stage t-test and ANOVA were applied for the PSBS-TF analysis; frequency distributions were identified for SHSF analysis (Uysal, 2011). In the second stage, it was realized that children selected for observation were centered around a classroom in these schools. Administrators and teachers in the classrooms of these schools had been contacted and informed about the study, during which information about weekly activities and time allocated to leisure time activity was given. Afterwards, leisure time activities were decided to be observed while children move and act freely compared to the more structured regular daily activities.

Initially, 14 children selected after thorough analyses were observed using anecdotal observation. Then a table was created to decide which types of behaviors to observe in order to understand the frequency of such behaviors. Observations were conducted through event sample, time sample and scan sample. The observations lasted for seven weeks.

Low scores on the positive social behavior sub-scale of PSBS-TF, high scores on the physical and relational aggression sub-scales; additionally, high scores from SHSF physical, relational, verbal bullying of sub-dimensions were selected. Observations were used to identify whether these children were bullies or not. In addition, children with high scores of SHSF peer rejection and victimization sub-scales were selected to identify whether they are bully-victims. Children with low scores on the positive social behavior sub-scale of PSBS-TF, with high scores on the physical and relational aggression sub-scales, with additional high scores of SHSF physical, relational, verbal bullying of sub-dimensions were also selected. By means of observation their status of victims were decided. As a result, 14 children out of 121 (K4, K5, K10, K9, K14, K13, K12, K2, K6, K8, K11, K7, K1, and K3), were chosen to be monitored on their status as bullies, bully-victims and the victims.

Thirty percent of antisocial behavior of the children was set as the limit (Pepler, Craig & Roberts, 1998). When analyzing the observations in this study, a minimum of 30% of bullying behavior to take place was considered as the criteria.

### **Validity and reliability**

As for the observation practice, the researcher initially introduced herself before entering classes, positioned herself close to the children and observed where she could see the entire class without getting attention. Some children in the first week came up and asked "*What are you writing?*". The observer responded as, "*I wondered what you were playing and came to watch*".

**Inter-reliability between observers.** To overcome the disadvantage of observation, the observer variation helps reduce the bias that may arise from collecting all the data by a single person as well as evaluate the validity of data obtained directly (Patton, 2002). All the observations were performed by researchers in the study. In addition, an outside observer on the second day of each week of observation was included in the

study and this individual attended the classes with the researcher. Both observers enrolled in educational diagnosis and evaluation workshops before study.

Spearman Brown rho ( $r_s$ ) was used to examine the reliability between two observers in a normal distribution. Reliability between two observers marking the scan sample was .77 ( $p < .05$ ). Inter-observer reliability is expected to be at least .70 and in this study inter-observer reliability coefficients of .70 increased its reliability. In certain cases, researchers are required to assess the extent of association between two ordinally-scaled variables. In such cases, Spearman's R is calculated as the measure of association between the ranked variables. It is important to point out that it assumes that the variables under consideration were measured on at least an ordinal scale (Singh, 2007).

## Results

**1. Anecdotal records kept to determine whether bullying in schools occur more during art or leisure time activities.** The results of anecdotal record analysis revealed that bullying was observed more during leisure time activities (126) compared to art activities (63). In both types of activities verbal bullying was realized more (78) compared to other types of bullying (Table 4).

**Table 4.** The Distribution of Bullying Behavior for Type of Activities

Bullying	Leisure Time Activities	Art Activities	Total
Physical	44	17	61
Verbal	52	26	78
Relational	30	20	50
Total	126	63	189

**2. Anecdotal records to determine types of bullying bullies, bully-victims and victims of bullying frequently make.** The results are displayed in Table 5 showing that bullies, bully-victims and victims of bullying mostly exert hitting (17), extortion (9) and pushing (8). As physical bullying (35) the most common behavior was hitting (9). This behavior was followed by extortion (6), clinching (4) and pushing (4) respectively. Bully-victims displayed hitting as the most common type of physical bullying (8) followed by pushing (4) and throwing (4).

**Table 5.** Anecdotal Record- Frequencies of Performing Physical, Verbal and Relational Bullying Behaviors of Children

Bullying Behaviors	Bully					Total	Bully-victim					Total	Victim				Total	General			
	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5		K6	K7	K8	K9	K10		K11	K12	K13	K14					
Physical	Pushing	3		1		4		3		1		4									8
	Clinching	2		1		4		1				2									6
	Hitting	6	1		2	9	1	4	3			8									17
	Shaking		1			1						0									1
	Beating					0					1	1									1
	Spitting			3		3						0									3
	Extortion	1		4		6	1	1	1			3									9
	Kicking	1				1		1				1									2
	Fighting	1				1						0									1
	Pinching					0						0									0
	Hair pulling					0						0									0
	Punching					0			1			1									1
	Throwing	1	1	1		3		2	1		1	4									7
	Locking in a room					0						0									0
	Harm belongings	1			2	3			1			1									4
	Pulling the chair from the bottom					0			1			1									1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>61</b>	
Verbal	Teasing	1	2	2		5	2	1			3	6									11
	Shouting	11		4		17	2	1		1	4										21
	Irritating					0	2				2										2
	Rebuking	1	1		1	10			1	7	8										21
	Name calling	1				1					0										1
	Swearing	6	1			7					0										7
	Mocking	1	5	1	2	10	1				2			3						3	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>78</b>
Relational	Imitating					0			1		1	2									2
	Threatening	2				9				1	1										10
	Sniggering			1		1			4		4			2							7
	Ignoring	1				4				2	2										6
	Staring					0		1		1	2										2
	Excluding from the group				5	5	3			8	1	12									17
	Refusing to sit next to					0						0									0
	Spreading rumors	5		1		6						0									6
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>General</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>189</b>	

The most common verbal bullying behaviors experienced were shouting and rebuking (21), mocking (15) and teasing (11). Bullies have been identified to display shouting (17) the most often as a verbal bullying behavior followed by rebuking (13) and mocking (10). On the other hand, bully-victims most commonly rebuked (8) teased (6) and shouted (4). The victims were observed to tease (3) the most.

As for the relational bullying behaviors, the most common behaviors can be listed as excluding from the group (17), threatening (10) and sniggering (7). Bullies were found to threaten (9) followed by spreading rumors (6) and excluding from the group, game (5). Bully-victims most commonly excluded from the group, game (12) that was followed by sniggering (4). Some victims have also been observed to snigger (2).

**3. Anecdotal records to determine types of bullying bullies, bully-victims and victims of bullying are frequently exposed to.** According to the results on frequency distribution of physical bullying as shown in Table 6, the most common behaviors exposed were hitting (13), clinching (6) and pushing (5). Bullies suffered most from pushing (3) as a physical bullying behavior; while, most bully-victims were faced with hitting (10) that was followed by giving harm to belongings (3). On the other hand, victims suffered most from extortion (4), holding tightly (3) and hitting (2). In addition, bullies have suffered from physical bullying 5 times, bully-victims 22 times and victims 13 times. Based on this information, bully-victims were most commonly exposed to the physical bullying.

**Table 6.** Anecdotal Record- Frequencies of Suffering from Physical, Verbal and Relational Bullying Behaviors of Children



Bullying Behaviors	Bully					Bully-victim					Victim				Total	General			
	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	Total	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	Total	K11	K12			K13	K14	
Pushing	1	1	1			3			1			1	1				1	5	
Clinching			1			1		1	1			2	2	1				3	6
Hitting					1	1	1	3	6			10			2			2	13
Shaking						0						0						0	0
Beating						0						0			1			1	1
Spitting						0						0						0	0
Extortion						0						0	3		1			4	4
Kicking						0		1	1			2						0	2
Fighting						0						0	1					1	1
Pinching						0						0						0	0
Hair pulling						0						0						0	0
Punching						0	1					1						0	1
Throwing						0	1		1			2	1					1	3
Locking in a room						0						0						0	0
Harm belongings						0			1	2		3						0	3
Pulling the chair from the bottom						0			1			1						0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>40</b>	
Teasing						0	1	2				3	2		2			4	7
Shouting				1		1		1				1	3	1				4	6
Irritating						0			1			1						0	1
Rebuking				3		3	1				1	2		3	2			5	10
Name calling						0						0						0	0
Swearing						0	1		1			2						0	2
Mocking			2	2	2	6				1		1		1				1	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>34</b>	
Imitating		1			1	2						0						0	2
Threatening					1	1		1	1	1	3	6		1				1	8
Sniggering	4					4				1	1	1	1					1	6
Ignoring				1		1						0	2	1				3	4
Staring					1	1						0			1			1	2
Excluding from the group	1			4		5				2	2	2		1	4			5	12
Refusing to sit next to						0		1				1						0	1
Spreading rumors						0						0						0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>35</b>	
<b>General</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>109</b>	

The most frequently observed verbal bullying behaviors were rebuking (10), mocking (8) and teasing (7). Bullies were reported to suffer most from mocking (6) and rebuking (3); whereas, bully-victims from teasing (3). The most frequent verbal bullying behavior victims were exposed to be rebuking (5). This was followed by teasing (4) and shouting (4). In addition, the frequency of exposure for bullies was 10, bully-victims 10 and for the victims 14. Victims were suffered the most. However, the high rate of bullies suffering from bullying draws attention.

Relational bullying behaviors can be listed from the most to the least commonly occurring as: excluding from the game, group (12), threatening (8) and sniggering (6). Bullies were typically faced with the behavior of excluding from group (5) and sniggering (4) while bully-victims suffered most from threatening (6) and secondly from excluding from group (2). Victims were mostly exposed to excluding from game, group (5) and ignoring (3). Accordingly, the frequency of exclusion from bullies was 14, bully-victims 10 and victims 11. Nevertheless, the frequency of relational bullying exposure of bullies seemed to have created conflict with their roles.

According to the results of the anecdotal records analysis the children were grouped as bullies, bully-victims, and victims. Afterwards, time samples and scan samples were carried out to examine whether the condition of continuity had been met.

4. *Event sampling was conducted to see which types of bullying bullies, bully-victims and victims of bullying apply and suffer from.* The frequency distribution of the event sampling for a 5-day physical, verbal and relational bullying and victimization sub-dimensions signaling the frequency of peer bullying from bullies and bully-victims are illustrated in Table 7. Among children who bully, the frequency of physical, verbal and

relational bullying of K1, K2, K3, K4 and K5 during five days, respectively, are as follows K1 (5, 5, 2), K2 (5, 5, 5), K3 (3, 4, 0), K4 (5, 4, 1) and K5 (2, 3, 5). According to types of bullying, K1, K2, and K4 mostly applied physical bullying; K1 and K2 verbal and K2 and K5 relational. The frequency of victimization is listed as K1 (1, 0, 0), K2 (0, 0, 0), K3 (0, 1, 1), K4 (0, 0, 0), and K5 (1, 0, 0).

**Table 7.** Event Sampling- Frequencies of Performing and Suffering from Bullying of Children

		Bullying			T	Victimization			T
		Physical	Verbal	Relational		Physical	Verbal	Relational	
Bully	K1	5	5	2	12	1	0	0	1
	K2	5	5	5	15	0	0	0	0
	K3	3	4	0	7	0	1	1	2
	K4	5	4	1	10	0	0	0	0
	K5	2	3	5	10	1	0	0	0
Total		20	21	13	54	2	1	1	4
Bully-victim	K6	4	1	5	10	1	4	4	9
	K7	5	1	0	6	2	2	0	4
	K8	4	0	0	4	3	0	0	3
	K9	2	1	2	5	2	1	3	5
	K10	4	0	2	6	3	1	0	4
Total		19	3	9	31	11	8	7	26
Victim	K11	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4
	K12	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	1
	K13*	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	2
Total		1	2	0	3	6	0	1	7
General		40	26	22	88	19	9	9	37

\* Didn't come to school three observation days.

Bully-victims, K6, K7, K8, K9 and K10 exerted physical, verbal and relational bullying in five days, respectively in frequency as K6 (4, 1, 5), K7 (5, 1, 0), K8 (4, 0, 0), K9 (2, 1, 2) and K10 (4, 0, 2). Physical violence was of concern to K7, K6, K8 and K10, verbal bullying to K6, K7 and K9 while relational bullying to K6, K9 and K10. Similarly, the frequency of victimization for five days, respectively, is K6 (1, 4, 4), K7 (2, 2, 0), K8 (3, 0, 0), K9 (2, 1, 3) and K10 (3, 1, 0). K8 and K10 were found to suffer most from physical bullying, K6 and K7 from verbal bullying, K6 and K9 from relational bullying.

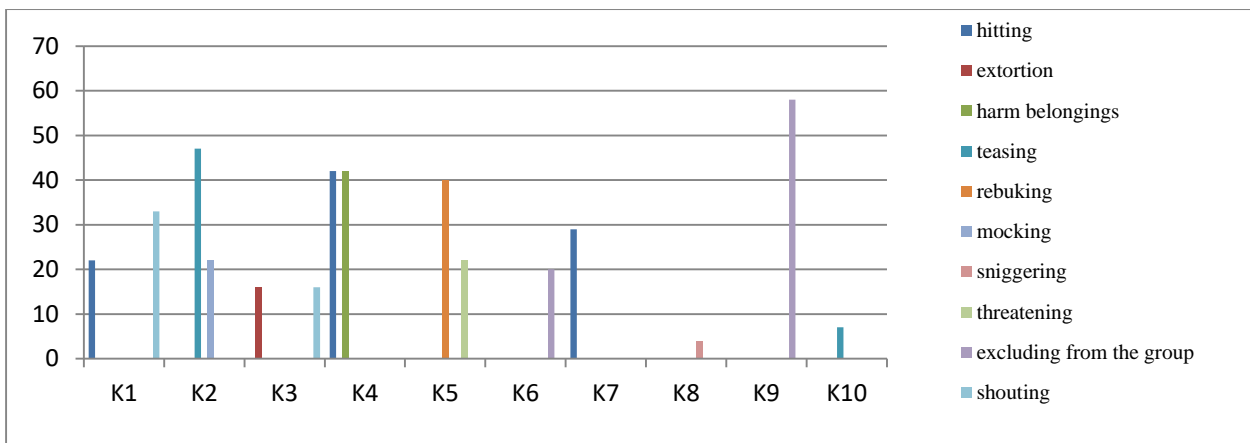
Among the victims, the rate of bullying is K11 (0, 0, 0), K12 (0, 2, 0) and K13 (1, 0, 0). The frequency of victimization to all types of bullying is as follows K11 (4, 0, 0), K12 (1, 0, 0) and K13 (1, 0, 1). K11 is identified as suffering most.

5. *Time samples were kept to determine the peer-bullying duration of bullies and bully-victims.* The frequency distribution of amount of time bullies and bully-victims exert bullying according to time records are given in Table 8a and Figure 1. The analysis revealed that within 45 minutes, K1 hit their peers for 10 minutes (22%) and shouted for 15 minutes (33%); K2 teased for 21 minutes (47%) and mocked their peers 10 minutes (22%); K3 extorted others' belongings for 7 minutes (16%) and shouted for 7 minutes (16%); K4 hit others for 19 minutes (42%) and harmed peers' belongings for 19 minutes (42%); finally, K5 rebuked peers for 18 minutes (40%) and threatened for 10 minutes (22%). On a similar basis, within 45 minutes, K6 excluded peers for 9 minutes (20%); K7 hit peers for 13 minutes (29%); K8 sniggered for 2 minutes (4%); K9 excluded peers for 26 minutes (58%) and K10 teased for 3 minutes (7%).

**Table 8a.** Time Sampling- Duration of Performing Selected Bullying Behaviors of Children

Child	Behavior	1st day	2nd day	3rd day	Total: 3 days (45 min)
K1	Hitting	5 min	5 min	0 min	10 min
	Shouting	5 min	4 min	6 min	15 min
K2	Teasing	3 min	8 min	10 min	21 min
	Mocking	3 min	5 min	2 min	10 min
K3	Extortion	1 min	2 min	4 min	7 min
	Shouting	4 min	1 min	2 min	7 min
K4	Hitting	6 min	8 min	5 min	19 min
	Harm belongings	6 min	10 min	3 min	19 min
K5	Rebuking	6 min	4 min	8 min	18 min
	Threatening	4 min	0 min	6 min	10 min
K6	Excluding from the group	2 min	2 min	5 min	9 min
K7	Hitting	2 min	2 min	9 min	13 min
K8	Sniggering	0 min	0 min	2 min	2 min
K9	Excluding from the group	6 min	10 min	10 min	26 min
K10	Teasing	0 min	2 min	1 min	3 min

Figure 1. Durations of Performing Bullying Behaviors from Bullies and Bully-victims (\*minutes)



6. Scan samples conducted to determine frequency of peer-bullying bullies and bully-victims apply. Table 8b and Figure 2 show that within 45 minutes, K1 hit peers for 14 and shouted for 18 minutes; K2 teased for 19 and mocked for 8 minutes; K3 extorted peer belongings for 8 minutes and shouted 11; K4 hit for 17, damaged peers' belongings for 15 minutes; K5 rebuked for 13 and threatened for 10 minutes. In addition, K6 excluded peers for 6 minutes; K7 hit for 8 minutes; K8 sniggered for 3 minutes; while K9 excluded peers for 19 minutes and K10 teased for 2 minutes.

Figure 2. Frequencies of Performing Bullying Behaviors from Bullies and Bully-victims

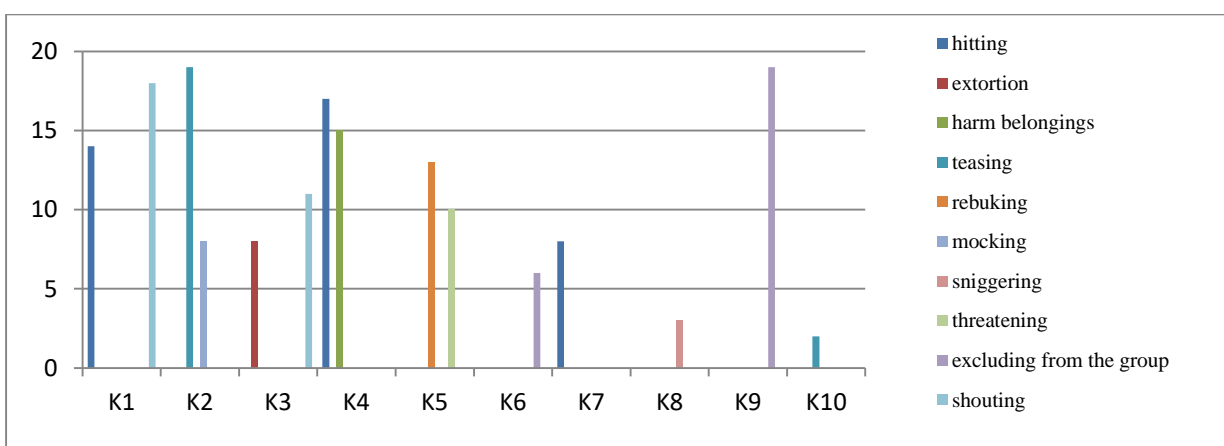


Table 8b. Scan Sampling- Frequencies of Performing Selected Bullying Behaviors of Children (\*absent in the class)

Child	Behavior	Day	Minute														
			2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30
K1	Hitting (14/45)	1st day	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		2nd day	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+
		3rd day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	+
K1	Shouting (18/45)	1st day	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-
		2nd day	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	+
		3rd day	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+
K2	Teasing (19/45)	1st day	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
		2nd day	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
		3rd day	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	+
K2	Mocking (8/45)	1st day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-
		2nd day	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
		3rd day	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
K3	Extortion (8/45)	1st day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		2nd day	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
		3rd day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
K3	Shouting (11/45)	1st day	+	-	+	+	-	*	*	*	*	-	-	-	+	-	-
		2nd day	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
		3rd day	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-
K4	Hitting (17/45)	1st day	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
		2nd day	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+
		3rd day	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+
K4	Ham Belongings (15/45)	1st day	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	+
		2nd day	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+
		3rd day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	+
K5	Rebuking (13/45)	1st day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
		2nd day	+	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
		3rd day	-	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
K5	Threatening (10/45)	1st day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
		2nd day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		3rd day	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-
K6	Excluding from the group (5/45)	1st day	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		2nd day	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		3rd day	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
K7	Hitting (8/45)	1st day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
		2nd day	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
		3rd day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+
K8	Sniggering (3/45)	1st day	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		2nd day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		3rd day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+
K9	Excluding from the group (19/45)	1st day	-	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	+
		2nd day	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
		3rd day	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
K10	Teasing (2/45)	1st day	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		2nd day	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		3rd day	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

As a result, observations during unstructured time slots revealed that K1 hit and shouted often, K2 teased a lot and mocked frequently, K3 sometimes extorted peers’ belongings and shouted often, K4 frequently hit and harmed peers’ belongings and K5 very frequently rebuked and often threatened. Moreover, K6 often excluded their peers, K7 frequently hit, K8 rarely sniggered to peers, and lastly, K9 seldom teased.

**Discussion**

Despite many years of existence, bullying has recently grabbed the attention of practitioners and researchers. Studies regarding bullying in primary and secondary education in Turkey are yet insufficient particularly in the preschool period. This paper focusing on preschool period is believed to contribute to the national, as well as international, literature.

Peer bullying in preschools is a serious and complex psychosocial phenomenon which has been addressed through various and usually conflicting approaches (Psalti, 2017). At some point, almost everybody has observed bullying, victims, bystanders, or perpetrators. Developmentally, peer bullying surfaces as early as preschool (Saracho, 2017b).

In this study, it has been seen that problems of bullying among peers was more frequent in leisure time rather than art activities. In other studies as well, bullying was usually observed where and when there is little or no adult supervision (Beane, 2005; McGinnis & Goldstein, 2003; Tanrikulu, 2018) and during unstructured activities (Beane, 2005; Boulton, 2003; Craig, Pepler & Atlas, 2000; Elliott, 2002b; Sharp & Smith, 2003, Stephenson & Smith, 2002). Children act more freely during adult supervision-free leisure time activities compared to art activities so that bullying behaviors can be encountered easily. Children who stay indoors to play games display less physical bullying behavior than verbal bully behaviors. In line with these findings, it could be inferred that adult supervision lessens cases of physical bullying while in direct proportion influencing verbal bullying rate. By the study of Tanrikulu (2018), in which he had intended to examine extend

the knowledge on preschool bullying by obtaining data from preschool teachers to evaluate early childhood bullying in their classrooms, it has been found that of the 254 participants, only one participant reported that no bullying happened in her/his classroom. Moreover, it has been determined that free play time inside and outside the classroom appeared to be the most risky times and places for bullying incidents. In this study, bullies have been identified as using verbal and physical bullying the most. Studies also resulted in bullies using physical and verbal bullying the most supporting the findings of this study while some research reported that children exert physical bullying the most (Gropper & Froschl, 2000; Marshall, 2007; Perren & Alsaker, 2006) that is also similar to the result of this research.

In general, the observed children applied hitting as physical bullying, shouting and rebuking as verbal, excluding from group as relational bullying type. Bullies and bully-victims hit, bullies shouted and bully-victims rebuked, and bullies threatened and bully-victims excluded from the group. Furthermore, children were observed to have suffered most from hitting as physical bullying, rebuking as verbal and excluding from game, group as relational bullying type. Bully-victims were faced with hitting as physical bullying, teasing as verbal and threatening as relational bullying behavior; while victims suffer from extortion as physical violence, teasing as verbal and excluding from group as relational bullying behavior. Similarly, the study of Tanrikulu (2018) has been determined that most frequent preschool bullying behaviors were rejecting a friend joining in a play, hitting, pinching, punching, slapping or kicking a friend, verbally threatening a friend/s and taking a friend's personal belongings away by force in that study. The finding that reports shouting and rebuking as the most common verbal bullying behaviors is not consistent with results of the study by McGinnis and Goldstein (2003).

The observations revealed that K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, K7 and K9 have been repeatedly showing some bullying behaviors repeatedly. The information obtained from the forms of personal information regarding the observed children conducting actions of bullying helped to uncover reasons for being a bully and/or victim, such as age, gender, birth order, siblings and duration of preschool education.

There are several limitations in this study. observations were limited to the time the researchers were in the class. The sample was not representative of the Turkish children population who are in preschool age, as it included only preschoolers from one large city in Turkey.

In this study, by examining in depth the status of peer bullying incidences among preschool children it can be concluded that verbal and physical bullying are the most common types of bullying and generally occur during leisure time activities. All members of society are responsible for resolving issues regarding peer bullying while teachers are key agents with whom children spend their whole day during preschool education. For this reason, teachers' awareness about bullying needs to be raised; furthermore, it is recommended to develop a guide and an early intervention program that shows how to appropriately solve such problems encountered with bullying. Also, efficacious social-emotional intervention programs which develop in other countries (e.g. Incredible Years, Second Step, Al's Pals) could be translate and adapt for Turkish culture and implement to Turkish preschool children.

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