

THE VULNERABILITIES AND RESILIENCE STRATEGIES OF GIFTED
STUDENTS IN THE FACE OF BULLYING

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

HALİL ASLAN

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES, GUIDANCE AND
PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING

MARCH 2023

Approval of the thesis:

**THE VULNERABILITIES AND RESILIENCE STRATEGIES OF GIFTED
STUDENTS IN THE FACE OF BULLYING**

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ABSTRACT

THE VULNERABILITIES AND RESILIENCE STRATEGIES OF THE GIFTED STUDENTS IN THE FACE OF BULLYING

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March 2023, 192 pages

The purpose of this study was to explore resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying. For this purpose, qualitative methodology was preferred. The data of the study were gathered via semi-structured interviews with 13 gifted students (10 females and 3 males). The gifted students were interviewed separately, and the transcribed data were analyzed by using thematic analysis method. The codes and themes that emerged from the data were shaped regarding the research questions and related literature. The results discovered from the data explained four main themes: bullying experience, support system, gifted identity, and coping strategies. The findings of the study revealed that gifted students were mainly victimized in the form of verbal bullying and exclusion. Bullying victimization has serious behavioral, emotional, and psychological consequences for gifted students. Moreover, jealousy, academic achievement, teachers' attitudes, and competitive environments are the main reasons gifted students were victimized. Victimization that gifted students experienced generally took place in heterogeneous classroom environments. Results indicated that peers, parents, and teachers of gifted students

were also important sources of resilience. The study underlined that there is limited knowledge and awareness regarding the problem of bullying among gifted students. The findings were discussed and interpreted in light of the data gathered and the related literature. Implications for further research and psychological counseling practices were discussed.

Keywords: Gifted Students, Resilience, Vulnerabilities, Bullying

ÖZ

ÖZEL YETENEKLİ ÖĞRENCİLERİN AKRAN ZORBALIĞI KARŞISINDA İNCİNEBİLİRLİKLERİ VE PSİKOLOJİK SAĞLAMLIK STRATEJİLERİ

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Mart 2023, 192 sayfa

Bu çalışmanın amacı özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığı durumundaki psikolojik sağlamlıklarını ve kırılganlıklarını anlamaktır. Bu amaçla nitel araştırma metodu seçilmiştir. Araştırmanın verileri, 13 özel yetenekli öğrenci (10 kız ve 3 erkek) ile yapılan yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Görüşmeler, özel yetenekli öğrencilerle ayrı/bireysel olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir ve deşifre edilen veriler içerik analiz yöntemi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Verilerden çıkan kodlar ve temalar, araştırma soruları ve ilgili literatürle şekillendirilmiştir. Verilerden elde edilen sonuçlar dört ana temayı açıklamıştır: Akran zorbalığı deneyimi, destek sistemi, özel yeteneklilik kimliği ve baş etme stratejileri. Araştırmanın bulguları, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin çoğunlukla sözel zorbalık ve dışlanma yoluyla akran zorbalığına uğradıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Akran zorbalığına maruz kalma özel yetenekli öğrencilerde ciddi davranışsal, duygusal ve psikolojik sonuçları vardır. Ayrıca, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığına maruz kalmasının başlıca nedenleri kıskançlık, akademik başarı, öğretmen tutumları ve rekabet ortamıdır. Sonuçlar ayrıca akranların, ebeveynlerin ve öğretmenlerin özel yetenekli öğrenciler için önemli psikolojik sağlamlık kaynağı olduklarını göstermiştir. Çalışma özel yetenekli

öğrencilerin akran zorbalığına uğramaları konusunda sınırlı bir bilgi ve farkındalık olduğunu vurgulamıştır. Bulgular, toplanan veriler ve ilgili literatür ışığında tartışılmış ve yorumlanmıştır. İleride yapılacak çalışmalar ve psikolojik danışmanlık uygulamaları için çıkarımlar tartışılmış.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Özel Yetenekli Öğrenci, Psikolojik Sağlık, İncinebilirlik, Akran Zorbalığı

to my loving family...

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

‘Never stop looking up’

I always dream of finishing this tough journey. In this process, we witnessed global pandemics, earthquakes and illness. At the end of this journey, I will start new chapter of my life. I made really many sacrificies to finish PhD process. I am grateful for all the insights that I have gained this process and I am grateful for the person that I have become.

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Özgür ERDUR BAKER. Her guidance, understanding, support, encouragement, and valuable contributions have always enlightened my way. Not only as an academician but also as a person, I have learnt a lot from her throughout this journey. It was honor for me to be her PhD student. I would never have found my way in this exciting new path without her valuable feedback. What I learnt from her as both researcher and person will enlighten my way.

I would like to present my deepest gratitude for the examining committee members of Prof. Dr. Cennet ENGİN, Prof. Dr. Çiler HATİPOĞLU, Assoc. Prof. Dr. İbrahim TANRIKULU and Assist. Prof. Dr. Fatma Zehra ÜNLÜ KAYNAKÇI for their insightful comments, constructive feedback, and valuable suggestions that created a great contribution for my thesis.

My deepest gratitude goes to my family who supported me in each and every stage of my PhD journey. I owe special thanks to my wife Gül who helped me whenever I needed. She was not only patient enough to endure all the stressful moments of this journey but also a loving mother to our daughters. I could never have managed to write this thesis if I had not felt her never-ending support and encouragement.

I am also thankful to gifted students who participated this study. I hope that they will find their own way in this world and fulfill their potentials.

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Mental health professionals have always held an interest in the healthy and successful development of all students. A Substantial number of studies have been carried out in order to uncover how students navigate healthy and successful development in adverse conditions (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Masten & Coatsworth, 1995; Rutter, 2012; Shinner & Masten, 2012). Yet, little scholarly time and energy has been devoted to one minority group: the gifted children (Peterson, 2009; Peterson & Watcher, 2010). For instance, American psychological Association has at least 54 divisions but none of them focuses on gifted students (Silverman, 2013). Scant research attention in the literature regarding gifted students results from a false belief that confident and motivated gifted students deal easily with developmental challenges (Connolly, 2018; Peterson et al., 2009). Moreover, a misperception indicating that gifted students have relatively good social and emotional adjustment and well-being (Bland et al., 1994; Pfeiffer & Stocking, 2000) lead researchers in the field of counseling and gifted education not to address difficulties that gifted students experience. However, gifted students encounter many continual challenges and risks such as severe family conflict, trauma, bullying, poverty (Mendaglio & Peterson, 2007; Peterson, 2002; Reis & McCoach, 2002) and giftedness impact their reactions (Yermish, 2010). Understanding and preventing risk factors that gifted students face is critical for both mental health of professionals and gifted educators to improve well-being of gifted students, prevention of psychological problems and support their healthy development.

Concept of giftedness is a contentious issue since giftedness and its related concepts such as human intelligence, talent, aptitude vary according to contexts and cultures

(Chen & Wong, 2013; Davis & Rim, 1998). For instance, the United States does not have national criteria to identify giftedness so that every state in the USA implements different practice to determine giftedness (Fisher & Kennedy, 2016). Historically, giftedness which was associated with the field of psychology and education was identified by high Intelligent Quotients (IQ) (Delisle, 1986; Foley-Nicpon & Assouline, 2015). Francis Galton was the first researcher to measure intelligence by testing psycho-physical abilities such as physical strength and motor coordination (Sternberg et al., 2011). Traditionally, students who take or exceed IQ cut off scores between the 90th and 98th percentiles are identified as *gifted* and enroll in gifted and talented education (GATE) programs (Worrell & Erwin, 2011). Cigman (2006) refers to the gifted students as the top 1% of students. However, as a result of dissatisfaction about rigidity of IQ-based definition of giftedness, more inclusive definitions of giftedness have emerged (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2005). Various studies highlighted that gifted students constitute approximately five to 20 percent of general student population, depending on criteria applied for identification (Gardner, 1993; Sternberg, 1985).

Despite the fluid and situational nature of the giftedness construct, researchers and scholars have come to some consensus on general and basic traits of giftedness. McClain and Pfeiffer (2012) described gifted students as “ones who exhibit outstanding intellectual ability, or promise, and are capable of outstanding performance and accomplishment” (p.59). Gifted children may demonstrate exceptional performance on tests and/or other measures of ability, compared to non-gifted students of the same age (Gross, 2004). Consequently, gifted students demonstrate exceptional performance in fields like academics, art, music, athletics, or leadership. However, despite the positive characteristics or profiles of gifted students demonstrate, it should be considered that gifted students do not always have good social and emotional adjustment, mental health, and psychological well-being. National Association for Gifted Students (2011) noted that various intrapersonal and interpersonal risk factors impede the development of gifted students. In this sense, bullying is one of the serious risk factor which negatively impacts social, emotional and psychological development of gifted students. Mental health professionals and

researchers have so far not paid significantly attention as to how and to what extent bullying influences well-being, adjustment and performance of gifted students.

In contrast to substantial number of literature about bullying among mainstream students, there is a huge gap in the literature unraveling bullying phenomenon among gifted students. Olweus (1993) stated that bullying is a subtype of aggression and its reasons would be different. In this sense, despite empirical validation does not exist regarding why gifted students become targets of bullying, limited research findings regarding bullying experience of gifted students have fallen into two contrasting views. First view posits that gifted students are victimized more frequently than their non-gifted peers (Richard et al., 2012; Thomson & Gunter, 2008; Wolke, 2004). According to this view, unique personal characteristics of gifted students such as hyper sensitivity and emotional intensity (Mendaglio & Peterson, 2007), introversion (Chan, 2007) and asynchronous development (Davis & Rimm, 1994) contribute to increase risk of being bullied. This view also assumes that since gifted students have introversion predisposition and engage in solitary activities in the school, they are targeted by bullies (Peterson & Ray, 2006b). For instance, Peterson and Ray's (2006b) study assessing bullying experience of 432 gifted students from 16 schools in U.S.A showed 67% of gifted students had experienced at least one form of bullying during their education lives.

Likewise, Whitney and colleagues (1994) reported that often just being different in a considerable way would be a risk factor for being a victim of bullying. Gifted students are perceived as different, which contribute to the being the target of bullying by students who are not identified as gifted (Gross, 2002; Peterson, 2009). For instance, gifted students are often teased by other students and are called names such as 'know-it-all', 'nerd' (Alvino, 1991). In a study conducted by Peterson and Bay (2006b) about bullying experience of gifted students, gifted students stated that giftedness itself results in bullying by others. Thus, careful attention must be devoted to the factors that exacerbate to this "difference" for gifted students. In addition, some gifted children may have poor social skills which consequently increase likelihood of being bullied by their peers (Peterson, 2009). Findings imply that bullying among gifted students is

an urgent research topic and further research is needed to understand bullying experience of gifted students comprehensively.

Concern about the low academic achievement gifted students may experience has been a predominant focus of much of the research that has been conducted regarding gifted students. Victimization of gifted students because of their high academic achievement has not come into prominence in the literature. However, recent research investigating effect of high academic achievement on bullying victimization in a sample 3928 high-achiever German students demonstrated that high achievement is a risk factor for especially high-achiever boys for being bullied (Bergold et al., 2020). Therefore, it is imperative to understand all reasons behind why gifted students are becoming target of bullying to provide support they need to cope with bullying effectively.

Second view regarding bullying among the gifted students argues that gifted students are victimized at similar occurrence rates of other student population (Mitchell, 2011; Peters & Bain, 2011). This view also argued that gifted students are better equipped for self-reflection and coping with stressful events like bullying, making them more resilient and adaptable than non-gifted students (Bland et al., 1994). Sameroff and Rosenblum (2006) stated that high cognitive functioning may facilitate to utilize adaptive strategies in response to stressful events like bullying. Additionally, studies investigating whether giftedness is a risk factor for gifted students or not indicated that giftedness is not a social risk, but it would be a social asset, placing gifted children at a social advantage compared to their non-gifted counterparts (Knepper et al., 1983; Lopez & Sotillo, 2009; Merrell & Gill, 1994; Richards et al., 2003). Different research findings about bullying among gifted students demonstrate the complexity of the problem. Furthermore, lack of an extensive model for explaining bullying among gifted students, the proper information for counselors and educators working with gifted students are urgently needed (Neihart et al., 2016). Due to two contrast views that elucidate bullying among gifted students, further research is warranted, especially studies that explore this complex phenomenon.

It is obvious that bullying victimization negatively impacts gifted students' emotional and cognitive functioning, development, and well-being. Research findings assessing bullying among mainstream students linked bullying with poor social adjustment, later

misconduct, and sickness (Gini & Pozzoli, 2009; Nansel et al., 2001). Furthermore, several psychological problems have been found to be associated with bullying, such as externalizing problems (Solberg & Olweus, 2003), internalizing problems, including higher level of anxiety (Bernstein & Watson, 1997), depression (Olweus, 1993), lower level of self-esteem (Beaty & Alexeyev, 2008). Recent systematic reviews indicated that outcomes of bullying endure during adulthood (Ttofi, 2011; Zych et al., 2015). Moreover, there are several studies indicating that bullying victimization results in poor academic achievement (Nishina, 2005; Schwartz, 2006). However, so far the role of academic achievement for bullying victimization has been ignored (Bergold et al., 2020). In short, in spite of extensive research studies undertaken about nature and impacts of bullying on mainstream students, little is known about bullying among gifted students.

In spite of less agreement about definition of giftedness, there is a growing consensus on definition for peer bullying. Bullying is generally defined as a form of aggression (e.g., direct, indirect) that include physical, verbal, relational negative actions causing significant distress and performed by more powerful individual(s) to a lower powerful one over time (Olweus, 1993). Craig and Pepler (2007) also expanded definition of bullying and highlighted relational aspect of bullying by describing bullying as a destructive relationship problem and it occurs between individual and his or her context. Bullying is recognized as a significant public problem across the world (Bauman et al., 2013). First systematic research initiated in 1970s by Olweus after the suicides of three students as a result of bullying victimization. Since then, a great deal of efforts was exerted to understand and address nature of bullying and factors contributing to it around the world. (Craig & Harel, 2004; Espelage et al., 2000; Popp & Peguero, 2012; Roland, 2011; Solberg & Olweus, 2003).

Bullying is a prevalent problem in all countries around the world (Gaffney et al., 2019; Hymel & Swearer, 2015; Olweus, 1994; Spriggs et al., 2007; Walters, 2021). For instance, result of a meta-analysis investigating prevalence of bullying was reported as 34.5% across 80 countries (Modecki et al., 2014). Similarly, an international survey conducted to determine the prevalence of bullying among adolescence within 43 countries reported that 32% of adolescents reported being bullied and 36 % of

adolescents reported bullying others (Currie et al., 2012). Based on these research findings, it can be concluded that bullying is a significant research topic and it is needed to develop prevention and intervention programs to reduce bullying occurring among the students.

Bullying is classified into modes; directly and indirectly, and three types generally; physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, pushing), verbal (e.g. name calling, threats), and relational (e.g. social exclusion, saying mean things) (Bauman & Del Rio, 2005; Olweus, 1993; Prinstein & Cillessen, 2003; Smith, 2014). Bullying research has revealed that verbal and relational forms of bullying happen most frequently (Espelage & Swearer, 2004). Wang et al., (2009) conducted a study with 7128 U.S students in order to examine types of bullying among U.S. students. The results showed that prevalence rates of bullies or victims at least once in the last two months were 20.8% for physical bullying, 53.6% for verbal bullying and 51.4 for relational bullying. Besides, many studies have pointed out that bullying behavior such as name calling and social exclusion are most prevalent in the school contexts (Cullerton-Sen & Crick, 2005; Hicks et al., 2018; Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017).

With the advancement of technology, computers, laptops, smart phone has become an ordinary part of students' lives and the increased usage of such technology has changed the way students bully each other. As a result; a new form of bullying, called cyber bullying emerged. There are various definitions of cyber bullying in the literature. *Cyber bullying* can be defined as a willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009). Cyber bullying contains aggressive text messages, degrading postings on social networking sites, threatening emails, or even websites established specifically to target a person (Connolly, 2018).

Cyber bullying has quickly become a pervasive problem due to its negative psychological impacts and increased prevalence rate (Low & Espelage, 2013; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2007). Previous findings indicated that victims of cyber bullying reported feelings of frustration, anger, sadness, anxiety and fear after being exposed to cyber bullying (Beran & Li, 2005; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008). Additionally, cyber bullying is associated with low self-esteem, poor school attendance, low academic

performance, depression, suicidal ideation. (Gámez-Guadix et al., 2014; Kowalski & Limber, 2013). So far, concerning research findings have noted that cyber bullying is evident in all countries regardless the cultural, political and religious backgrounds (Li, 2007; Perren et al., 2010) Research on cyber bullying generally emphasized on its definition and prevalence (Mason, 2008), its relation to traditional bullying (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004), psychological consequences (Ortega et al., 2012) and gender (Keith & Martin, 2005). In contrast to the large body of literature cumulated on cyber bullying among mainstream students, a few studies examined cyber bullying and its correlates among gifted students. In review of the literature, two studies examined solely cyber bullying experience of gifted students. A recent study conducted by Gonzalez-Cabrera (2019) sought to explore prevalence of cyber bullying with 259 Spanish gifted students (155 boys, 104 girls). It was found that 25.1% of Spanish gifted students were pure-cyber victims, 3.9% pure-cyber bullies, and 6.6% cyber bully-victims. In similar vein, Mitchell (2012) pointed out that 5% of her gifted student sample was cyber victims, 4% of them were cyber bullies. Taken together, cyber bullying is a serious problem for gifted students and more detailed examination on cyber bullying experience and its impacts is an urgent research topic for educators, counselors and psychologists.

Given increased information and research on the short and long-term consequences of bullying for students who involved in bullying incidents (McDougall & Vaillancourt, 2015; Rodkin et al., 2015), considerable emphasis has been devoted to elucidate the most effective ways to address bullying, clinically and educationally. In this sense, bullying is a relational problem in its nature and it occurs complex interaction between the individual and his/her social environment (Craig et al., 2000; Hanish & Guerra, 2000; Lee, 2011). Moreover, students can engage in different roles at different times in bullying dynamics (Rose & Espelage, 2012) Therefore, bullying involves complex and dynamic relationship between bullies and victims. Thus, bullying is started to be described through considering individual and his/her social environment. But, it has not been any study exploring holistically resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying.

Bullying is thought as a phenomenon affected by multiple factors, including individual characteristics, interactions with others (peers, families, teachers), and interaction with

environmental context or system (Espelage, 2014; Hymel & Swearer, 2015). Thus, bullying is shaped by the factors linked not only to individual but also school, familial, neighborhood or broader social contexts (Swearer et al., 2010). In this context, purpose of the present study is to explore the individual, parent, peer and school factors that impact bullying experience of gifted students. In addition, it is to find out vulnerabilities and resilient strategies that gifted students employed.

Moreover, various studies indicated individual factors that were continually found to be significant on bullying behavior (Hong & Espelega, 2012; Lee, 2010). Studies focus on age, gender, intelligence, dominance, impulsivity and attitudes toward aggression as individual factors (Espelage et al., 2000; Espelage & Horne, 2008; Nansel et al., 2001; Pellegrini & Long, 2002). For instance, intelligence has been found to be linked to bullying behavior, as demonstrated by a limited number of research findings (Peterson & Ray, 2006; Woods & Wolke, 2004). Woods and Wolke (2004) investigated bullying experience of students in UK with the sample of 1016 school children. Results showed that high achieving students are at risk of being relational bullying (e.g., social exclusion) from their peers.

Parents, peers, teachers and experiences within school are influential factors regarding understanding bullying. Family is generally considered one of the essential factor on children's and adolescent's development such as physical, cognitive, psychological, social, and emotional development (Bornstein, 2013; Rowe, 2002). In this regard, family plays an important role for students facing difficulties. Regarding bullying research, extensive body of research revealed that lack of parental support, parental engagement, negative parental interaction, authoritarian parenting and parental maltreatment has been found to be factors impacting bullying behavior (Christie-Mizell, 2003; Espelage et al., 2001; Flouri & Buchanan, 2003). For instance, Lereya et al., (2013) carried out meta-analysis to examine parenting behaviors and risk of becoming a victim and bully/victim. In term of parenting behaviors, high parental engagement and affectionate relationships were found protective factors against bullying victimization. It is important to unveil the perspectives of parents in relation to bullying since how parents address the bullying situation may reduce probability of their children's exposure to more bullying (Sawyer et al., 2011).

The other important factor is certainly peer relationship. Research has consistently shown that peer relations impacts development (Bukowski & Adams, 2005) and positive psychological adjustment (Criss et al., 2002; Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000). Peers are paramount during adolescence because they become a significant source of both emotional and social support influencing positive psychological adjustment (Steinberg et al., 2011). Review of literature regarding bullying and peer relations has highlighted four peer relations factors, namely power dynamic, the level of difference acceptance, coercion of public self, and pseudo friendship network (Lee, 2010). Social support has also been important factor helping students cope with bullying behaviors. Demeray and Malecki (2003) investigated role of social support as a buffering effect against bullying. The results showed that victim of bullying reported lower level of total social support than comparison group. Furthermore, researchers have also begun to find out the role of social support in mitigating detrimental consequences of bullying (Rigby, 2000; Rigby & Slee, 1999). Regarding gifted students, there is no research on effect of social support toward bullying among gifted students.

Considering that students spend great deal of their time in the school, characteristics of the school environment can have high influence on bullying. School factors such as norms, values, rules and structure of school, teachers' communication style and support provided to the students play a role on students' development (Brewster & Bowen, 2004; Cohen et al., 2009; Griffith, 1999). Previous study findings showed that perceived teacher support and active monitoring reduced occurrence of bullying within school (Astor & Benbenishty, 2007; Nansel, 2001). Moreover, positive school climate acts as a buffering factor and thereby decrease bullying and victimization in school (Gage et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2013). Many studies demonstrated that factors related to school climate such as safety (Gregory et al., 2010), social relationships (Chen et al., 2020), school connectedness (Hong & Espelage, 2012) has been directly or indirectly associated with bullying. According to socio-ecological theory, children who engaged in bullying in the school encounter with problems in multiple areas, including the family, peer group, school, and neighborhood/community (Espelage & Swearer, 2004). Both the personal and environmental factors along with unique characteristics of gifted students may have influence on how gifted students overcome bullying victimization.

A few research investigated bullying which enable to illuminate reciprocal interaction between individual and his/her environment. For instance, Lee (2007) investigated bullying behavior among the middle school students employing ecological model. Result indicated that individual traits, family interaction, school climate, parent-peer communication are significant predictors of bullying behavior. Moreover, the ecological model allows researchers to integrate different approaches into it to create more comprehensive understanding of any given phenomena. For example, currently, ecological approaches integrated with risk and resilience frameworks to construct a model explaining adaptation process of immigrant-origin of children and youth (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018). Similar integration model seems to be helpful to construct a model for gifted students with bullying experiences.

1.1.1. Resilience and Bullying

One of the most important research questions in the field of bullying is how to reduce bullying victimization in the both physical and virtual (cyber) environment. *Resilience* can be used to explain bullying and to create prevention and intervention program toward bullying. Although there is no universally accepted definition of resilience, resilience is most often considered as an indicator of good adjustment despite adversities such as poverty, terminal illness or traumatic events (Coleman & Hagell, 2007; Prince-Embury & Saklofske, 2014). Construct of resilience has been studied extensively by psychologists since 1970's in the context of poverty, family psychopathology and trauma to increase individuals' coping abilities within adverse circumstances. First wave of research on resilience were to build global theories to uncover personal qualities and factors enabling positive adaptation of individuals who live in adverse circumstances (Masten, 2014). In these initial phases of resilience research, the term was defined as a personality trait and a resilient outcome was characterized as the absence of psychopathology.

Over the time, resilience research progressed through different theoretical perspectives and lens over characterizing and defining resilience. The upcoming various researchers defined resilience as a dynamic process rather than a trait, determining protective factors or mechanisms in resilient outcomes and explaining the interaction of risks and protective factors in disadvantaged contexts (Graber et al., 2015; Masten, 2014). Basic

features of resilience are (a) exposure to risk or adversary, (b) achievement of positive adaptation (Christiansen & Evans, 2005; Masten et al., 1990). Without being of risk or adversity, positive adaptation is considered a competence of individuals, rather than expression of resilience.

Resilience is cultivated as a result of the complex interactions of *risk and protective factors and processes* (Luthar & Zelazo, 2003; Tugade, 2011). In short, risk factors include the elements that lead an individual towards poor outcome, while protective factors drive the individual toward adaptive outcomes (Masten, 2002). In general, risk factors focused on resilience studies are adverse past experiences, biological defects, traumas in community level, low socio-economic status, complications in birth, and family factors like divorce. Protective factors include personal qualities and environmental factors (Prince-Embury, 2007). Literature is replete with studies examining protective factors in relation to students from mainstream schools. For instance, personal qualities containing self-esteem, optimism, self-efficacy and internal locus of control (Buckner et al., 2003; Sapouna & Wolke, 2013; Moore & Woodcock, 2017) were extensively researched. Each factor can affect individual, but it is a combination of both internal and external factors and processes that interact to build resilience.

Current research paradigm on reducing bullying and victimization relies on identifying risk factors and minimizing the deficiencies in the lives of students (Garbarino, 2001). The paradigm shift from deficiencies to personal strengths and assets would expand our knowledge in addressing bullying (Christiansen & Evans, 2005) and buffer students from negative consequences of victimization experience (Bowes et al., 2010; Narayanan & Betts, 2014). It should be emphasized that basic premise under studying resilience is to provide clues for helping students or adolescents who live under adverse circumstances (Masten & Reed, 2002). In this direction, fostering resilience will be one of the most effective approach to decrease bullying and victimization in school. Professionals working with gifted students including school counselors, psychologist, teachers of gifted students, researchers benefit from knowing what makes gifted students resilient despite bullying victimization. (buffer against detrimental or negative consequences of bullying).

A few studies directly examined the relationship between bullying and resilience. Research findings on relationship between bullying and resilience suggested that students with high level of resilience were less likely to take part in bullying behavior or be bullied than those who have low level resilience (Donnon, 2010) and resilience to bullying is enhanced if the students have social support to disclose (River & Cowie, 2006). Similarly, resilience is thought to have a mediating role in the relationship between bullying and self-efficacy (Narayanan & Betts, 2014) and self-esteem (Overbeek et al., 2010), which are two important internal factors that directly impact students' health, functioning and adaptation. Bowes et al., (2010) stressed that identifying protective factors that promote resilience to bullying victimization could lead to improve intervention strategies. Basic notion on bullying research in relation to resilience is to explore reason(s) why some students are resilient despite their victimization experience. The results of above mentioned study indicated that resilience was an important protective factor against bullying victimization. However, existent findings were based on research examining relationship between bullying and resilience among students from mainstream schools.

Kumpfer (1999) underscored that identification and improvement of resilient attributes and characteristics are highly important for interventions with at-risk students. Whereas the assertion that gifted students may be at risk for bullying victimization, to date, no research has explored their resilience in relation to bullying victimization. A group of studies investigating characteristics of resilient students assumed that some characteristics of resilient children, such as curiosity (Anthony & Cohler, 1987), self-efficacy (McMillan & Reed, 1994), high moral standards (Coles, 1986), a sense of humor and problem-solving skills (Masten et al., 1990) can be similar to the characteristics of gifted students.

Moreover, Kitano and Lewis (2005) stated that high level of intelligence may contribute to resilience of gifted students by supporting positive coping strategies in the face of difficult situations. For instance, Ballam (2013) investigated effects of resilience on gifted students from low socio-economic background with qualitative research methodology. The results showed that five key themes, namely: identity, personality, environment, relationships across contexts; and opportunities are

important factors effecting gifted students' resilience. Similarly, identifying effect of giftedness factor which influences resilience of gifted students may provide comprehensive understanding for researchers and practitioners.

1.1.2. Gifted Students in the Context of Turkey

Gifted students have been recognized and taught in Turkey after establishment of republic of Turkish. Different education model and programs have been implemented to meet educational and psychological needs of gifted students in Turkey (Sak et al., 2015). Ministry of National Education, division of special education and guidance was responsible for identification and education of Turkish gifted students in Turkey. For Turkey context, what constitute giftedness and how to teach them has been one of the important research topics in the Turkish literature (Gokdere et al., 2004; Tortop, 2013). In this sense, problems and difficulties faced by gifted students such as bullying among gifted students was ignored by Turkish researchers. One study conducted by Aslan (2016) as part of the Master thesis found that bullying experience impacted psycho-social adjustment of Turkish gifted students and gifted students involve in bullying either bully or victim. Research findings regarding bullying in Turkey are generally based on bullying among students from mainstream schools. Many researchers investigated bullying and its correlates such as occurrence rates of bullying and victimization (Dölek, 1998; Karaman-Kepenekçi & Çınkır, 2001, 2003; Pişkin, 2003), self-esteem (Pişkin & Ayas, 2005) perceived social support (Yiğit et al., 2018), empathy (Çiftçi, 2010). In Turkey, the first published study examining cyber bullying among Turkish adolescents was carried out by Erdur-Baker and Kavşut (2007). However, cyber bullying among gifted students was not addressed by Turkish researchers. Relationship between resilience and bullying experience has not yet received the attention it deserves. It may be that Turkish researchers became too occupied in addressing nature and severity of bullying and overlooked role of resilience in addressing bullying victimization.

Taken together, students who engage in bullying or bullied by others may suffer from psychological, physical, social and emotional problems to some extent. Unfortunately, great deal of study on bullying investigated bullying among mainstream students and individual risk factors. Researchers also overlooked bullying among gifted students

who may be at risk for either bullying or victims. However, some students demonstrate more effective coping and better adjustment to the bullying victimization (Donnon & Hammond, 2007; Hinduja & Patchin, 2017; Montero-Carretero et al., 2020; Narayanan & Betts, 2014). Resilience may help students overcome negative effects of bullying more efficiently. There might be some external factors and internal protective factors affecting those students' adaptation. It can be inferred that resilience in the face of bullying might be a significant buffering mechanism that mitigates impacts of psychological problems and can be used to develop efficient bullying prevention and intervention toward bullying. In this direction, examination of the interaction among personal, parental, environmental protective factors and vulnerabilities through developing a model of resilience for gifted student in the face of bullying will be the focus of the current study. Thus, research producing in-depth knowledge between bullying and resilience of gifted students by taking into account of individual and environmental factors would contribute to theory and practice in the both of counseling and gifted education fields. Turkish studies examining the resilience among the gifted students in the face of bullying from the perspective of gifted students remained unanswered. The present study is designed to fill this gap in the literature. Thus, the purpose of this study is to shed into light vulnerability and resilience strategies of gifted students in the face of bullying by employing phenomenological research.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to explore experience of gifted students in the face of bullying and to obtain how personal characteristics and environmental features impact them to cope with and strategies that they utilize to increase their resilience.

Specifically, the current study will address following research questions:

- How did gifted students experience bullying?
- How did the personal and environmental factors in the lives of the gifted students that help them to cope with bullying?
- How did the personal and environmental factors in the lives of the gifted students that restrict them to overcome bullying?

- How did giftedness operate as a protective factor, contribute to resilience, and result in vulnerability for gifted students?

1.3. Significance of the Study

This phenomenological research was a pioneer study for bullying and resilience literature by employing a qualitative design with gifted students, thus giving the voice of the gifted students for bullying. Main significance of this study is the theoretical contribution, which may especially be useful for mental health practitioners, gifted educators, and researchers. Despite substantial number of existing prevention and intervention strategies were developed to address bullying among mainstream students (Bauer et al., 2007; Kärnä et al., 2013; Limber & Olweus, 2010; Rigby, 2002), it is necessary to develop intervention program tailored to the needs specific to gifted students. Developing intervention program for gifted students is ideally yielded by consulting gifted students, their parents and teachers. Therefore, findings of this study would provide valuable information for designing prevention and intervention programs that promote resilience of gifted students in the face of bullying.

Additionally, unlike previous studies, this study aims to understand the vulnerabilities and resilience strategies used by gifted students in the face of bullying. The significance of the study also relies on providing deeper understanding of information about the role of resilience in addressing bullying among gifted students. Accordingly, understanding the individual and environmental (etc. parent, school and peer) factors and their association with bullying involvement can serve as the foundation for reducing bullying among gifted students. The findings obtained from this study will also contribute to develop bullying prevention and intervention in the long-term.

Despite the fact that bullying victimization and its detrimental consequences is common problem for students all over the world (Gaffney et al., 2019; Walters, 2021), psycho-social support of victimized students have been neglected, meaning that gifted students who went through victimization could not have the sufficient social and psychological support from mental health professionals. For the gifted students who experienced bullying victimization, the implication derived from this study would provide information about the valuable data concerning the literature and the practices

of counseling, gifted education. For instance, how gifted students could be supported by their parents, peers; or what kind of psychological services would be given for the gifted students by teachers and school counselors was discussed. For policy makers, designing prevention for gifted students were discussed. The significance of the study concerning the applicability of the findings in different contexts stem from an urgent need in the literature.

Gifted students face with the changes and challenges unique to them, which result in various problems during their development period (Baily, 2007; Cross & Frazier, 2010; Peterson, 2009). Some gifted students who experienced bullying may need additional buffering factors in order to be protected from detrimental consequences of bullying victimization. The resilience framework, which is the key element of this study, enable exploring the ways through which gifted educators and mental health professionals may contribute healthy development of gifted students in the face of bullying. Furthermore, exploring factors facilitating successful adaptation despite bullying victimization will serve as protective agent for gifted students facing bullying.

In recent years, researchers in the field of resilience have focused on examining protective processes/mechanisms and understanding *how* individual, family, environmental factors contribute to resilience or positive outcomes (Luthar et al., 2000). It has been argued that understanding resilience from such a perspective is crucial for developing appropriate prevention and intervention programs (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Luthar et al., 2015; Masten, 2014). But, shedding into lights role of giftedness as either protective or risk factor enhance our knowledge about role of giftedness linked to the bullying. Therefore, the current study will fill the gap in the literature in terms of understanding the role of resilience and giftedness in addressing bullying experience of gifted students. Moreover, in Turkey, resilience studies have largely examined resilience in relation to individual risk and protective factors among students from mainstream schools (Esen-Aktay, 2010; Onat, 2010; Özden & Atasoy, 2020; Turgut, 2015; Türk-Kurtça & Kocatürk, 2020; Yakıcı & Traş, 2018; Yılmaz & Sipahioğlu, 2012). In place of identifying resilience as a risk or protective factor, this study attempts to understand how gifted students maintain or improve their resilience and well-beings in the condition of bullying by exploring the interrelatedness of

environmental and personal factors. Findings of the present study will contribute to the resilience and counseling literature.

Additionally, studies regarding resilience generally centered on adaptability of students in the face of adversities such as poverty, handling with loss and grief, post traumatic stress disorders, childhood abuse and chronic illnesses (Gizir, 2004; Grotberg, 2001; Masten, 2014; Murrel et al., 2018; Newcomb et al., 2018; Sanjeevi et al., 2018; Sattler & Gershoff, 2019; Walsch, 2020). Specifically, the present study attempts to explain the factors that contribute to the resilience of Turkish gifted students in the face of bullying, a population for whom research on bullying and resilience has been underrepresented. In this respect, it was thought that understanding ecological factors (e.g., schools, teachers, peers), along with personal factors, would provide mental professionals with sufficient knowledge to help gifted students in the face of bullying. It is also believed that findings of this study will produce novel information regarding how gifted students adopt despite bullying experience. Therefore, mental health professionals and school counselors would benefit from data obtained from this study by increasing their knowledge about factors contributing to the resilience of gifted students and offering unique strategies fit to needs of the gifted students.

This study is an attempt to go beyond the well-founded association between bullying victimization and factors effecting bullying victimization. Once resilient strategies and vulnerabilities of gifted students related to bullying are explored, new counseling strategies specific to gifted students can be developed, rather than performing strategies developed for mainstream students. In other words, this study served as an input for both counseling and gifted education fields by exploring interaction of social context including the peer group, the classroom, the school and the family with regard to bullying victimization of gifted students. The precious data explaining resilience strategies and vulnerabilities set basis for additional research for gifted students and mainstream students as well. The findings may provide some clues for the future bullying and resilience studies. Findings drawn from this study would assist educators and researchers in the establishment of intervention programs tailored to the needs of gifted students.

Parents have a key role in their children's schooling experience and psycho-social developments (Pinquart & Ebeling, 2020). Stockdale et al., (2002) also stated that parents and teachers need to pay closer attention to bullying and improve their knowledge regarding bullying in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. However, research findings show that mostly parents and teachers are not aware of seriousness of bullying (Demaray et al., 2013; Wachs et al., 2019). Therefore, with this study, parents and teachers would increase their awareness about magnitude of bullying and its detrimental consequences for the victimized gifted students.

Lastly, limited numbers of bullying research regarding gifted students in the literature has been studied in Western countries, mainly USA and Australia. Hence, findings mostly reflect the perspectives of Western people. The significance of the present study resides in explaining resilience of the Turkish gifted students in the face bullying. This study might be used as a database for conducting further cross-cultural studies on bullying among gifted students.

1.4. Definition of Terms

Bullying: A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more fellow students (Olweus, 1993).

Cyber Bullying: it is defined as a willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009).

Gifted students: gifted students are those who show outstanding level of aptitude in one or more areas such as arts, sports, leadership capacity or special academic areas (NAGC, 2014).

Resilience: It was defined as the ability to thrive, mature and increase competence in the face of adverse circumstances (Gordon, 1995).

CHAPTER 2

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This present study aimed to explore role of vulnerabilities and resilience strategies of gifted students in the face of bullying. Given that many factors can be related to bullying behavior, personal, parental or school factors and complex interplay among them were included in this study. The relationships among parental, school and personal factors were examined separately in the previous bullying research; however, understanding interaction with parents, school and personal factors have not been explored yet, in qualitative research.

The literature review chapter of this study was mainly established on existent research related to bullying, resilience and gifted students. Under this chapter of the study, the review of the literature was separated into three main sections. In the first section, bullying and variable related bullying and research reporting bullying among gifted students were presented. In the second section, definition of resilience, research about resilience and bullying were introduced.

2.1. Definition of Bullying

Even though bullying among students is not a new phenomenon, scientific studies on bullying have been increasing in psychology and counseling literature since the 1980s. The first systematic research on bullying had begun in Norway, owing to the suicide of three students being bullied by fellow students. This incident resulted in a national intervention campaign against bullying in Norway (Olweus, 1993). Subsequently, Olweus researched the issue of bullying in the school-age children, considered the first scientific study (Olweus, 1993). Olweus's seminal study produced valuable knowledge regarding the prevalence and form of bullying, behavioral characteristics of those involved. After that time, a number of international researches on bullying has

grown considerably. The impetus for an interest in bullying research is derived from the increased research funding opportunities, media attention, the awareness among teachers, parents, and students (Smith, 2016). Today, researchers have widely recognized that bullying impacts not only the ones who are bullied but also students who bully others and bystanders (Blake et al., 2016; Gonzalez-Cabrera et al., 2020; Hymel & Swearer, 2015). Therefore, bullying is regarded as a public health threat that affects students mentally and physically and is considered a pervasive problem in many countries (Pitsia & Mazzone, 2021). To understand how to tackle bullying, it is necessary to understand what constitutes bullying.

Since bullying is a complex phenomenon (Ostrov et al., 2013), various definitions of bullying have emerged in the literature. Although some definitions include similar aspects, some are dissimilar in their essential criteria. Still, there is a consensus among the researchers that bullying is a global sub type of aggressive behavior (Peets et al., 2011; Griffin & Gross, 2004). Olweus (1993), who created the most commonly cited definition of bullying in the literature, defined bullying as “aggressive, intentional acts carried out by a group or an individual repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself” (p. 197). Many researchers have utilized this definition to examine the bullying phenomenon in the school setting. Olweus (1994) also stated that *repetition*, *intention to hurt*, and *power imbalance* as criteria for an action to be considered bullying behavior. In recent years, the focus of bullying research has tended to consider the social context in which bullying occurs rather than the dyadic interaction between bully and victim (Maunder & Crafter, 2018; Swearer & Espelage, 2004). Since bullying rarely occurs between two persons in isolation, individuals, families, peer groups, schools, communities, and cultural factors are considered to contribute to its onset and continuation (Rigby, 2020; Smith, 2004).

On the other hand, Olweus’ description of bullying constructed the platform from which new definitions of bullying could emerge. Thus, researchers seek to generate more specific definitions to yield a stable assessment of bullying. It can be argued that a universal definition is vital so that the measures and assessment of given elements are congruent across inquiries (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006). Bauman and Del Rio (2006), for instance, have defined bullying as “[a] subset of more general aggression,

distinguished by an intent to harm, the repetitive nature of the acts, and the power imbalance between bully and target” (p. 219). Cheng et al., (2011) have described bullying as “malicious behavior that results in harm to the body, mind, property, or rights under the circumstance of power imbalance” (p. 237), while Rigby (2002) put forward a more comprehensive description of bullying as the “systematic abuse of power”. Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt and Hymel (2010) have asserted that a lack of a universal definition induces problems in terms of interventions and measuring bullying within studies. Despite the emergence of new definitions regarding bullying and the lack of a universally admitted conceptualization, Olweus’ (1993) definition of bullying, as is the most quoted by researchers, was used to investigate bullying in the current study.

Bullying is classified into two forms; direct and indirect, as well as in three distinct types generally; physical (e.g. hitting, tripping), verbal (e.g. name calling, teasing), and relational (e.g. exclusion, spreading rumors) ((Bauman & Del Rio, 2005; Olweus, 1993; Prinstein & Cillessen, 2003; Smith, 2014). While physical and verbal bullying have been investigated since the 80s, relational and indirect forms of bullying gained research attention during the 90s (Slonje & Smith, 2008). The general tendency in the studies (Björkqvist, 2001; Monks et al., 2005) showed that direct type of bullying (physical) decreases with age, but the percentage of indirect bullying increases. For instance, a study of 7530 participants from seven cities in China yielded that prevalence of bullying among elementary school students is dramatically higher than the prevalence rate among high school students (Ba, et al., 2019).

2.1.1. Prevalence of Bullying

Given that bullying is a serious societal health problem that has important implications for students involving bullying incidents, scholars pay special attention to how prevalent bullying is. Before going into the details of research findings related to the prevalence rate of bullying, some cautions should be informed for readers. Firstly, variations in the measurement of bullying contribute to how to analyze and report results. Employing different time frame (e.g. in the past week, in this school year), and different types of strategies (e.g. presenting bullying definition) has resulted in drastically different prevalence rates. For instance, when definition is given, bullying

prevalence reported lower level of bullying than a study that did not provide a definition of bullying (Jackson, 2017; Yun & Kim, 2016). Secondly, despite the long history of bullying research, majority of the conducted studies on bullying prevalence rate are relied on non-random and non-representative sample. Furthermore, gender and age are widespread factors that are included in the prevalence study of bullying. Research findings show mix results on bullying prevalence rate of gender (Smith, 2019). Similarly, depending on the age of students, prevalence and forms of bullying may differentiate. All taken together, readers should keep in mind that reported prevalence rates of bullying aims at providing some knowledge about the seriousness of bullying.

The report of World Health Organization (2019) indicated that almost one in three (32%) children globally has been bullied and this rate shows that bullying is a universal concern. Studies from US with the prevalence rate of 37% bullying experience among 463 middle school students (Hicks, et al., 2018), from England 27% of being bullied among 298.080 students (Przybylski & Bowers, 2017), from Australia 13.3 % of bullying experience among adolescent ages between 11-17 years (Thomas, et al., 2017), from China 40.5 % of being bullied either traditional or cyber bullying among 3775 middle school students (Li et al., 2020), have displayed that bullying is major public problem that jeopardizes well-beings of students. Besides, a meta-analysis which reviewed 80 studies indicated that mean prevalence of bullying rate was found as a 37% (Demeracay, 2014)

Bullying has also become important research topic in Turkey. Despite different measurement techniques employed by Turkish researchers, high level of bullying occurrence was reported. The first published study examining traditional bullying among Turkish students was carried out by Dölek (1998). After that time, development of scientific studies on bullying in Turkey followed the same path like international bullying literature. Researchers are interested in bullying and its relations to gender (Bayraktar, 2009), school type (Pelendecioğlu, 2011), Pişkin (2010) investigated bullying prevalence and types of bullying from 4th and 8th grade students with sample of 1154 participants. The result showed that occurrence rate of bullying was 35.1%. In same vein, the prevalence rate for bullying as 4.6%, for victimization as 21.3%, and

for bullying/victimization as 6.5% in the research findings by Atik and Yerin-Güneri (2013). More recently, Gökkaya and Sütçü (2020) studied with 1740 middle school students and investigated bullying prevalence rate. Of the participants, 34.9% was victim, 2.8% was bullies and 27% was bully-victims of bullying.

Scope of bullying research has expanded within the last three decades to contain new types. The rapid surge in using laptops, smart phone and the internet has enabled to emerge cyber bullying. Cyber bullying received great deal of attention from researchers, policy makers and media, due to its negative impact on well-being and development of children. One of the most popular definitions of cyber bullying belongs to Hinduja and Patchin (2009) “willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices.”. Although this definition carries similarities regarding basic characteristics of traditional bullying (repetition and intention to hurt), several researchers have expressed serious doubts about the application of these criteria to the cyber bullying (Menesini et al., 2012; Smith, 2013). Moreover, there is still debate in the literature about cyber bullying is a phenomenon different from traditional bullying. Some theoretical framework describes cyber bullying as a separate phenomenon with its own characteristics (Zych et al., 2015). Four main differences distinguish cyber bullying from traditional bullying were (1) Bullying act does not stop once the victim leaves the school (keep receiving embarrassing photos or messages) (Langos, 2012) (2) the nature of social media and technologies enable to reach wider and anonymous audiences (Kowalski et al., 2014) (3) anonymous nature of cyber bullying (Sampasa-Kanyinga et al., 2014) (4) the lack of in-person contact decreases the possibility of empathy from the bully or bullies (Zych et al., 2019).

Furthermore, cyber bullying can happen without time and space restrictions. Cyber bullying might include direct forms of aggressive behavior, such as verbal (sending threatening messages) and photo harassment (posting harmful images) in social networks like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, and indirect forms of aggressive behavior, such as stalking or trolling (Uusitalo- Malmivaara & Lehto, 2016). The United Nations Children’s Fund (2019) explained that 33% of school-aged children from 30 countries have been victims of cyber bullying. Brochado and her colleague

(2017) carried out systematic review of 159 empirical studies to examine cyber bullying prevalence among adolescent. Results indicated that in the last year, the rate of cyber bullying victimization were between 1.0 and 61.1%. In the same period, the proportion of cyber bullying perpetration was between 3.0% and 39.0%. Similarly, Kowalski et al., (2019) studied a systematic review concentrated on developmental change in cyber bullying. Results indicated that cyber bullying is existent throughout the school years, from elementary school to college.

In similar vein, cyber bullying research has been growing research topic in Turkey. In Turkey, the first seminal study to examine cyber bullying among Turkish adolescents was conducted by Erdur-Baker and Kavşut (2007). After that time numerous researchers studied prevalence rate of cyber bullying (Yılmaz, 2011), its correlates (Akbiyık & Kestel, 2016; Peker & Ekinci, 2016) and effects of cyber bullying on its victims (Özer, 2016). For instance, Öztürk et al., (2019) measured cyber bullying occurrence among 240 middle school students. Of the participants, 13.8% were victims, 10.8% were cyber bullies and 4.6% were bully/victims of cyber bullying. Also, Peker (2015) calculated cyber bullying and victimization rates among 400 students. Findings of the study revealed that 17 % of students were victims of cyber bullying, 10.5% of the students were cyber bullies and 35.2 % of them were bully/victim of cyber bullying.

Additionally, previous studies have established that there is considerable overlap between traditional and cyber bullying. For instance, Wang et al., (2019) studied to demonstrate overlap between traditional and cyber bullying. Recruiting 2111 high school students (51.4% female and 48.3% male) with ages between 14-20, they found that 48.7% of students involved in cyber bullying also experienced traditional bullying, and similarly 41.5% of those engaged in traditional bullying also experienced cyberbullying. Also, Estevez et al., (2020) conducted systematic review to shed into light overlap between two types of bullying. The authors identified 1838 studies that were published in the last 20 years. In order to ensure which studies they would add in their review, they arrange certain inclusion/exclusion criteria (e.g., language, adolescent and type of article) and ended up with 19 studies. The findings of the study demonstrated that there is a consistent and valid link between both forms of bullying.

Furthermore, a study comprised of nationally representative sample of 73704 US adolescent between 2011 and 2019 showed that being bullied in the cyber environment positively links to the victims of the traditional bullying (Kreski et al., 2022). The findings of reported previous research presented association between traditional and cyber victimization. Bullying including cyber one is a serious concern that has detrimental impacts on well-being of children and adolescents for more than five decades.

2.1.2. Consequences of Bullying

As stated above, prior studies from various countries demonstrated that significant number of students engaged in bullying behavior either as bully or victim. No doubt that an agreement has been existed on detrimental consequences of bullying on physical, social, psychological, emotional development of children and adolescent (Moore et al., 2017). These consequences range from minor annoyance to suicide. For instance, experiencing bullying is positively related to psycho-somatic symptoms such as headache, sleeping disorder, back pain (Lee & Vaillancourt, 2018), depressive symptoms (Krygsman & Vaillancourt, 2017). A meta-analysis examining association between internalizing symptom and bullying in the school aged population demonstrated that peer victimization significantly predicted changes in internalizing symptoms (Christina et al., 2021).

Further, bullying experience has been identified as one of the significant risk factors for maladjustment of bullies (Lin et al., 2019) and also was found to be precipitating factor for suicide ideation including action form (Arango et al., 2016; Baiden, & Tadeo, 2020; Chen & Elklit, 2018; Gunn & Goldstein, 2017). Holt et al., (2015) conducted a meta-analysis with 47 studies to investigate effect of bullying participants as bully, victim and bully/victim on suicidal ideation and behavior. Results found a significant link between that each of the predictors (bully, victim and bully-victim) and suicidal ideation. Additionally,

Given the adverse impacts of bullying involvement on student's development, researchers also attempt to unravel its influences on students' academic progress (Fan & Dempsey, 2017; van der Werf, 2014). Students who are victims of bullying incline

to have risks of school absenteeism, classroom misconduct, poor academic commitment, motivation and interest in schoolwork, school dropouts (Bergold et al., 2019; Ladd et al., 2017; Wright & Wachs, 2021). Furthermore, Nakamoto and Schwartz (2010) conducted a meta-analysis of 33 studies representing studies implemented in North America (US and Canada), Europe (Greece, UK, Netherlands, Norway), and Asia (China, South Korea). Based on the effect size calculation by Nakamoto and Schwartz (2010), significant negative correlation was determined between peer victimization and academic achievement.

2.1.3. Gender and Bullying

A gender difference is a significant factor that is frequently investigated in bullying research. For instance, a study conducted by Salmivalli and Nieminen (2002) found that boys were more likely to be victimized than girls. A meta-analysis concluded that boys were more likely than girls to be victim of bullying (Casper & Card, 2017). Besides, some studies did not find any gender differences (Boxer & Tisak, 2005; Perren et al., 2010). On the other hand, some studies reported that girls were more likely to engage in verbal bullying than boys (Crick et al., 2001; Wang et al., 2009). Nevertheless, research finding with regard to girls and verbal bullying are inconsistent. Galen and Underwood (1997) who investigated social aggression among four, seven, and ten grade students found that girls during elementary and middle school years were not more socially aggressive. It was only the ten grade girls who stated significant, higher levels of social aggression than boys. Salmivalli and Kaukainen (2004) utilized a similar method and revealed that girls were both directly and indirectly less aggressive than boys, but that there was a group of highly aggressive girls who frequently employed indirect aggression. More studies are needed to obtain a better understanding of the gender and bullying and to establish intervention programs based on the peculiarities of gender.

2.1.4. Bullying and Parents

Parents for gifted students have been one of the most important elements to actualize their talents and potential. Some studies found that gifted students tend to be children of intact families and educated parents (Gross, 2004). It demonstrated that healthy

family relations and parent-child interaction has remarkable influence on the development of gifted children (Fornia & Frame, 2001). Previous research indicated that happiness and well-being of the gifted students has been influenced by factors within family. It was also revealed that gifted students' life satisfaction related to their perception of parents as warm, responsive emotionally supportive and encouraging (Suldo et al., 2018). Gute et al., (2008) examined the influence of family on gifted students by employing qualitative research method. They found that parent support such as encouraging children's aptitude and interest, and spending time with gifted students have been remarkable in the healthy development of gifted students. Some studies assessing parent role on gifted students' adaptation reported that there is low level of conflicts among family members and effective communication among family member (Buescher, 1986; Cornell, 1984).

Parents also play an important role on bullying dynamic and effectiveness of prevention programs as well. Evidence indicated that traditional and cyber bullying are associated with parent characteristics (parenting style, insufficient parental emotional support, lack of parental monitoring) (Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Nocentini et al., 2019). Furthermore, it was found that parental support has been protective factor regarding bullying victimization (Cassidy et. al., 2009; Herraiz & Gutierrez, 2016). For instance, a study from China revealed that parent-child relationship which was characterized by love and support was negatively correlated with bullying victimization (Hu & Li, 2019). Similarly, in a study conducted by Boniel-Nissim and Sasson (2018) with 1000 adolescent aged 11-17 years found that positive mother-child and positive father-child communication were negatively correlated with bullying victimization. Herraiz and Gutierrez (2016) investigated the association between parent support and being a victim of bullying among 769 high school adolescents. Results showed that insufficient parent support correlated with higher risk of being bullied. Overall, there is a huge gap in bullying literature in terms of understanding how the parents of gifted students support their children in the face of bullying. Importantly, how parents of the gifted students understand and conceptualize bullying impact the way they respond to such incidents. Therefore, a qualitative design is needed to provide opportunity for the voices of gifted students to be heard about their parents' support.

Many students who involved in bullying incidence do not confide in their experience with adults surrounding them (Blomquist et al., 2020) since they worry about parents' overreaction and choose to manage the issue on their own (Mishna & Alaggia, 2005). Parents' understanding as to bullying is a factor that can impact whether students feel comfortable in sharing their victimization (Mishna & Alaggia, 2005). Moreover, Mishna et al., (2006) pointed out that parents may deal with several difficulties when reacting to bullying, especially if they do not know how to intervene. In this sense, best of our knowledge, there is no study assessing how parents of gifted student support their children when they experience bullying.

It is evident that parents' role in intervening and preventing bullying victimization is important. Previous studies showed students' response to the bullying was closely related with parent's responsiveness to their children's bullying experience (Lester et al., 2017). However, parents' respond to bullying was attributed to how they define and characterize bullying (Sawyer et al., 2011). Campbell et al., (2019) conducted a study to examine parents' ability to identify tradition and cyber bullying using the scenarios. Results indicated that most of parents were not accurate in defining traditional and cyber bullying. Finally, in order to establish successful bullying prevention program in school it is crucial that parents should be cognizant and knowledgeable about bullying victimization.

2.1.5. Bullying and Teachers

Teachers are the key person to intervene bullying victimization in schools since they would be first responders when bullying happen (Yoon & Bauman, 2014). Although teachers are responsible to create safe and supportive environment, some research findings showed that teachers have underestimated bullying prevalence within school (Ronning et al., 2009), and that they are lack of knowledge to respond it (Mishna et al., 2006). For instance, Bradshaw et al., (2007) conducted a study with 15,000 elementary, middle and high school students and 1500 school staff about bullying prevalence. They found that majority of the staff stated bullying occurrence less than 10 percent while the students reported the bullying occurrence between 20 and 30 percent.

Research suggests that teachers' efficacy is important in relation to reducing bullying (Craig et al., 2000). However, inconsistent findings have been cumulated on literature. For instance, In Bradshaw et al., (2007) study with 15000 students and 1500 school staff, it was revealed that 61.5 % of the middle school students and 57 % of the high school students disclosed that teachers made bullying circumstances worse after their intervention, while 51.7 percent of students at both levels stated that they had witnessed school staff at school overlooking a bullying behavior. Similarly, Rigby and Bagshaw (2003) who assessed teachers' response when they deal with bullying indicated 40 % of students stated that teachers were not helpful in tackling bullying, 20 % disclosed that teachers did not care about them and 20 % of students believed that teachers exacerbated bullying situations. Conversely, some studies demonstrated that teachers' interventions were helpful in bullying situation (Bentley & Li, 1996; Smith & Shu, 2000).

Teachers' beliefs about bullying have been paid attention in literature. Teachers were more likely to intervene bullying incidents if they think that incidence is serious such as when physical bullying took place (VanZoeren & Weisz, 2018). Boulton (1997) found that 25 percent of teachers did not consider that name-calling or social exclusion was a type of bullying. Other research has demonstrated that teachers consider relational bullying (e.g., excluding student from the peer group) as less serious than bullying that contains physical and verbal perpetration (Blain-Arcaro et al., 2012). It was easier to detect physical and verbal bullying than relational ones.

The role of teachers in reducing bullying is undeniable and they should involve in bullying intervention (Kallestad & Olweus, 2003). Thus, an ascertaining their belief and definition of bullying is important since these may impact whether they react effectively and properly to the bullying victimization of gifted students within school. It is also crucial to study perception of gifted students with regards to their teachers' support. This study contributed to the fields of bullying and resilience research by understanding how gifted students perceive and understand teachers' support in the face of bullying. Through phenomenological approach, perspectives of gifted students how their teachers supported them, and the effective reactions of teachers when supporting gifted students were uncovered.

2.1.6. Bullying and Peers

Literature indicates two contrasting views about victims and their peers. While some studies report that students who are the victims of bullying are submissive and passive (Craig et al., 2000), several studies indicate that victimized students are proactive and perpetrators (Alvarez, & Szücs, 2022; Quillet-Morin et al., 2013). These inconsistent findings stem from utilized methods. In other words, while research based on the report of peers and teachers found that victims are frequently proactive, but studies based on the report of children and peers underlined that they are inclined to show submissive behaviors (Storch & Ledley, 2016). As a result, it was considered that victimized students do not have problem-solving abilities.

Studies investigating effects of peers on bullying involvement of students revealed the importance of peer acceptance and peer status. Previous studies demonstrated that students who are not accepted by peers have become victims of the bullying (Olweus, 2001; Sheppard et al., 2019). Peer status includes popularity and social preference. Popularity indicates the extent a student has dominance and power in the group (LaFontana & Cillessen, 1998). Traditionally, it was seen that popular students bullied other students to maintain their power and dominance in the group (Caravita et al., 2012; Duffy et al., 2017). However, this view of having high peer status in relation to bullying has not been validated by recent studies. For instance, Andrews et al., (2016) investigated victims' social prestige with 952 middle school students. They found that adolescents who have high peer status were more likely to be victimized than students who have average peer status. Thus, future studies are needed to conduct the effect of peer status of gifted students on their victimization.

2.2. Giftedness and Bullying

Bullying among gifted students is a new research area compared to the bullying among mainstream students. Before detailing bullying among gifted students, it is important for readers to explain what constitutes giftedness. There has been an ongoing debate on the definition and characteristics of the giftedness in both research and practice. Despite more than one hundred years of research on giftedness, researchers and practitioners have not a universally accepted definition of giftedness and their

definitions vary based on the what intelligence is (VanTassel-Baska, 2005). Hereby, the construct of giftedness has been defined in multiple ways (Sternberg & Davidson, 2005). However, the definition of giftedness is crucial since how it define impacts guidelines and official policies which determine gifted education service (Renzulli, 1986). In the first definition of giftedness, Sir Francis Galton attempted to produce a comprehensive description of giftedness and to yield the knowledge about genetic etiology of giftedness (Owen Lo et al., 2019). He described that giftedness is inherited and it varies greatly among human beings (Silverman & Miller, 2009). Lewis Terman has conducted a first longitudinal study with 684 gifted individuals, which was described in his book *Genetic Studies of Genius* (1925). Lewis Terman defined giftedness is as having high intellectual abilities. This definition implies that ability is characterized as general intelligence, or *g*. After that time, general intelligence is a commonly utilized metric for selecting gifted students since the validity of the construct of IQ has been underpinned by research (Smedsrud, 2020; Warne, 2016).

Since the beginning of the 20th century, identification of giftedness has been exclusively based on result of IQ tests or other cognitive measures. For instance, a student is diagnosed as a gifted after taking a certain cut-off point or 130 points on any standardized IQ test (Borland, 2009; Ford, 2010). Similarly, Renzulli (2011) described giftedness as individuals with significantly higher intelligence quotients than their counterparts. According to Marland report (1972), comprehensive study on giftedness, nearly 3% to 5% of school-age population can meet the giftedness criteria including outstanding abilities, performance and achievement in specific academic domains, creativity and leadership ability. Such practices help to elucidate why giftedness is often associated with a high IQ.

Subotnik et al., (2011) defined giftedness as the manifestation of performance or production that is clearly at the top of the bell curve. It was underlined that gifted students may demonstrate high achievement or performance in fields like academics, art, music, athletics, or leadership. Moreover, Delisle (1986) described giftedness as the intelligence quotients (IQ) of above 140. Cigman (2006) characterized giftedness as the top 1% of students. Furthermore, he additionally describes six specific features correlated with giftedness: intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, creative or

productive thinking, leadership ability, visual or performing arts, and psychomotor ability.

At the end of the 20th century, paradigm shift which includes a more comprehensive approach resting on multi-criteria and domain-specific abilities (Subotnik et al., 2011; VanTassel-Baska et al., 2007; Ziegler et al., 2012) has been taking place in the identification of giftedness. Along with general intelligence, recent conception of giftedness has implicated additional factors, such as personality characteristics and environmental influences. This paradigm shift influences how to provide best practices for gifted students. Today, few people hold the view that general intelligence is most important part of giftedness or it is solely the product of our genetic endowment. Otherwise, it has been linked to role of external factors and ascertaining talent development process.

Gifted students who composed small percent of the society generally demonstrate extraordinary achievement, high personal standards and the perfectionist personality. Most of the time, they show hypersensitive, anxiety and empathy which ended up with moral sensitivity and honesty (Gardynik & McDonald, 2005). Studies indicated that significant cognitive development characteristics of gifted students include eager to learn new knowledge, ability to produce novel idea, early language development (Dağlıoğlu, 2004), independent thinking, high level of motivation, emotional sensitivity (Fraiser & Passow, 1994), high moral thinking, analytic thinking, curiosity (Silverman, 1993). Gifted students have independent thinking and ability generate original ideas with the aid of creativity which is the indispensable part of the giftedness (Betts, 1986). Gifted students are able to think and feel through universal terms, and they tend to see whole rather than parts, which help them to conceptualize in more complex categories (Roeper, 1982). Gifted students in the field of fine arts and sports show their competence in the early years of their life (Ataman, 1982).

Gifted students are not only different in terms of cognitive development, but also social and emotional development of them have become different from non-gifted students (Gross, 2006). Emotional sensitivity and responsiveness are considered important emotional development characteristic of gifted students (Cross, 2004). Emotional development of gifted students includes being an emphatic, aware of their thoughts

and feelings, self-criticism, investigator and questioning (Akarsu, 2001). However, Silverman (1993) pointed out despite gifted students are superior in several areas than non-gifted counterparts, they show similar developments in social relations fine motor abilities with their non-gifted peers. Furthermore, they experience all anxiety and fears that all children face and these disturbing psychological problems would be as challenging as non-gifted peers experienced (Preiffer & Stoking, 2000).

In similar vein, there have been increasing effort to improve gifted education in Turkey. To better understand what giftedness means in Turkey, historical perspective should be taken into account. Since many well-educated Turkish people died in the independence war, young Turkish republic struggled to make educational reforms to increase literacy rate, cultivate national identity and spirit, which was important to build a modern state during the first half of the 20th century. First effort about gifted education conducted in 1929 was law (1416) related to sending high able student to the foreign countries. With this law, young Turkish republic compensated its needed human resources and many high able students found opportunity to study abroad as scholars (Kulaç & Çalhan, 2013; Levent, 2011). Likewise, İdilBiret-SunaKan law was enacted in 1948. The artists who utilized from the law of “Talented Kids” were sent to abroad to get a further education compatible with their artistic talents (Kulaksızoglu, 2007; Tuncdemir, 2004). Since global competitions on gifted education among countries have escalated in 1960’s, Turkey had made several efforts to develop gifted education. Enç (1979) summarized legislation efforts carried out during 1960’s as:

- The project of Ankara Science High School to serve high-ability students.
- The foundation of *Rehberlik ve Arastırma Merkezleri* (RAMs; Guidance and Research Centers) for the identification and diagnosis of children with special education needs.
- Free/public boarding school exams
- The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) scholarships (Enç, 1979).

Establishing science high schools can be considered one of the most important paces toward education of the gifted students (Sak et al., 2015).The basic goal of science

high schools is to educate high able students in science and math areas (Şahin, 2015). New government perceived human resources was one of the most valuable assets of the Turkish Republic so that numbers of the science high schools have increased in a short time after the 1980's (Sak et al., 2015b). Moreover, Science and Art centers were established to meet academic demands of the gifted students in the 1994. The main purpose of science and art center is to develop talents and skills of gifted students attending to the primary, secondary and high schools. A brief history of definition of giftedness in Turkey has revealed that many attempts have been done to define giftedness.

2.2.1. Bullying among Gifted Students

While the large body of literature accumulated on bullying among the mainstream students, bullying among gifted students has been neglected research topic in the literature. For instance, Espelage and King (2018) determined that there were 20 English published research studies in total investigating bullying among gifted students. It can be concluded that there is a scarcity in researchers' interest in bullying experience of gifted students. For example, Petersen and Ray (2006a) highlighted that they did not find out a research examining the impacts of bullying on gifted students. Limited research evidence as to bullying among gifted students have been evolving in two contrasting views. It is not uncommon to see these differences because there are different factors that might impact the findings, including the questionnaires utilized in examining bullying, the school environment, the participants' characteristics (e.g., willingness to disclose) and even definition of giftedness (e.g., achievement level of the entire school). First view held that gifted students are victimized more frequently than their non-gifted counterparts (Richard et al., 2012; Thomson & Gunter, 2008; Wolke, 2004). According to this view, unique personal characteristics of gifted students such as hyper-sensitivity and emotional intensity (Mendaglio & Peterson, 2007), introversion (Chan, 2007) and asynchronous development (Davis & Rimm, 1994) contribute to increase risk of being bullied. This view also assumes that since gifted students have introversion predisposition and engage in solitary activities in the school, they are targeted by bullies (Peterson & Ray, 2006b). For instance, Peterson and Ray's (2006b) study assessing bullying experience of 432 gifted students from 16

schools in U.S.A showed 67% of gifted students had experienced at least one form of bullying during their education lives. In similar vein, Ogurlu (2015) assessed the social ostracism among 94 middle school gifted students. Results indicated that the more intelligence gifted students have, the more they experienced social ostracism.

Similarly, Whitney and colleagues (1994) pointed out that behaving different would be a risk factor for being a victim of bullying. For instance, gifted students are often verbally bullied by other students and are called names such as ‘know-it-all’, ‘nerd’ (Alvino, 1991). In a study conducted by Peterson and Bay (2006b) about bullying experience of 57 gifted students by using qualitative research methodology. Findings of the study indicated that giftedness was perceived as a risk factor for gifted students. Participants disclosed that teachers like the gifted students and they are more permissive gifted students than non-gifted students, which cause jealousy among peers and lead to victimization of gifted students in the class. A cross-sectional study with a sample of 449 gifted students and 950 non-gifted students indicated that the prevalence of victimization was significantly greater extent in gifted students than non-gifted counterparts (Gonzalez-Cabrera, 2022). Thus, careful attention must be given to the factors that exacerbate to this “difference” for gifted students. In addition, some gifted children may have poor social skills which consequently increase likelihood of being bullied by their peers (Peterson, 2009). Findings imply that there is an urgent need to further investigate the bullying experience of gifted students.

The second view posits that gifted students experience victimization in a similar rates with other student population (Peters & Bain, 2011; Mitchell, 2011). This view also assumes that gifted students are better equipped for coping with bullying, making them more resilient than non-gifted students (Bland et al., 1994). Sameroff and Rosenblum (2006) pointed out that high cognitive functioning may facilitate the use of adaptive strategies in response to stressful events like bullying. Additionally, studies investigating whether giftedness is risk factor for gifted students or not demonstrated that giftedness is not a risk factor, but it would be a social asset, placing gifted children at a social advantage compared to non-gifted students (Lopez & Sotillo, 2009; Richards et al., 2003). Furthermore, a study recruiting 90 gifted and high-achieving high school students (Peters and Bain, 2011) did not find statistically significant

differences between gifted students and high achieving students in terms of victimization scores. There are also studies reporting substantial differences in reports of bullying according to the status of giftedness. A contradictory findings as to bullying among gifted students showed the complexity of the problem. Furthermore, lack of a comprehensive model for elucidating bullying among gifted students, the proper information for counselors and educators working with gifted students are urgently needed (Neihart et al., 2016). Due to two contrast views that explain bullying among gifted students, further research is warranted, especially studies that explore this complex phenomenon.

There is, however, a need to distinguish a gifted child's different skill sets. They might have high intellectual performance, yet their psychosocial and physical set of skills can be at the age appropriate developmental level. Even though the definition of giftedness, due to their intellectual abilities, places them at a seemingly advantaged position, this intellectual ability is less likely to discourage bullies and cyberbullies from perpetrating harm on them. Perpetration of bullying might be less about a child's characteristics, but more about the characteristics of a child's educational-social environment. For example, most of the gifted students attend regular schools and bullying at the school environment is likely to influence gifted students. Peterson and Ray (2006b) interviewed 57 gifted students in 8th grade to evaluate personal meaning of victimization. They claimed that external factors caused the bullying although they felt responsible for resolving the bullying. This finding shows that gifted students not only endure bullying, but also feel alone in solving the problem.

Victimization of gifted students due to their high academic achievement has not received adequate attention. Recent research investigating the effect of high academic achievement on bullying victimization in a sample of 3928 high-achiever German students demonstrated that high achievement is a risk factor in being the victim, particularly for males (Bergold et al., 2020). Intellectual and psychosocial characteristics of gifted students may thus place them on the spot. A qualitative study aiming at investigating bullying experiences of eight gifted students revealed that their memories related to being a victim of bullying dominated their school experience

(Sayman, 2011). They still feared and felt intimidated by the bullies (Sayman, 2011). The victims felt miserable due to the exposure to bullying (Peterson & Ray, 2006b).

Gifted students further report that giftedness itself may cause a predisposition to being the victim (Peterson & Ray, 2006b), showing that just being different would be a risk factor for being a victim of bullying. Non-gifted students may target gifted students just because they perceive them as different (Gross, 2002; Peterson, 2009). For instance, non-gifted students may often tease gifted students and exercise name-calling on them like 'know-it-all' or 'nerd' (Alvino, 1991). Their unique characteristics like over-excitability (Ackerman, 2009; Bailey, 2007), emotional sensitivity (Rinn & Reynolds, 2012), perfectionism (Chan, 2007) and asynchronous development (Silverman, 1997) may make them even more vulnerable to bullying. Gifted students more than non-gifted peers may be more vulnerable to victimization (Peterson, 2009). Consequently, gifted students may hide their talent for fear of rejection or ridicule, thus denying themselves opportunities for success in school and into adulthood (Sayman, 2011).

Gifted students may not share their bullying experience for various reasons. Connolly (2018) conducted three focus groups, including 59 gifted students, their age ranging from 13 to 17 years. These interviews indicated that gifted students did not choose to disclose adults, worrying about their overreaction, and choose to control the issue on their own. The students viewed reporting cyberbullying to adults, particularly parents and teachers, as an expensive course of actions, noting that they would look for alternative ways, in order to avoid social ostracism, looking weak, and being labeled as "snitch." Particularly, male gifted students were much concerned about looking strong, thereby disguising their experience with cyberbullying. Female students were more likely to share their exposure to rbullying with a peer. Laffan and colleagues (2022) compared the results of 195 gifted Irish students. They revealed that tendency to disclose bullying to an adult (e.g., parent, teachers, and counselor) was higher. A great deal number of students, due to both bullying, tried to better blend in the community to tackle the peer bullying. The most of gifted students tried to hide their giftedness (11%) to avoid bullying or even did not notice they were being bullied (17%) until much later. These dynamics in bullying are likely to make gifted and

talented students vulnerable to bullying. This vulnerability of gifted students to bullying and cyberbullying in extreme cases might be even life threatening. Giftedness for some students may intensify their sense of isolation and loneliness, and may place them at risk for self-harm. Hyatt (2010) examined the suicide case of Amber (pseudonym), who killed herself at the age of 18. Amber scored in the 99th percentile in the math and language tests. Hyatt's interviews with Amber's teachers, friends and family members as well as examining the records point out that Amber felt misunderstood by peers, teachers and adults. Even though Amber endured troubles of bullying, her attempts to reach out to other people often failed in addressing her concerns. Amber contemplated about suicide for seven years, endured bullying since kindergarten, felt profoundly isolated and lonely, and eventually killed herself with a firearm. Amber's suicide is not an isolated event. Screening a random sample of 1,963 middle school students showed that victims of cyberbullying tended to have significantly higher suicidal thoughts and attempts (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Litwiller and Brausch (2013) tested the relationship of cyberbullying with self-harm behaviors through a sample of 4693 students. They found that cyberbullying was associated with an increase in substance use, violent behaviors, unsafe sexual behaviors, and suicidality.

The limited research of cyberbullying in gifted students provides remarkable insights into the issue and points to the detrimental influence of cyberbullying on gifted and talented students' psychological functioning and overall well-being. A cross-sectional study including 163 compulsory secondary education Spanish gifted students looked at the internet use, victimization and various areas of mental health problems (Garcia et al., 2020). With the increases in internet use, they noted that the problems in interpersonal relationships were associated with cyberbullying victimization in gifted students, but not in non-gifted students. According to the results of another cross-sectional study with 255 Spanish gifted students pure-cyber victims and cyberbully-victims suffered the worst health related quality of life outcomes, depression and stress as well as worst decrease in life satisfaction (Gonzalez-Cabrera et al., 2019). Gifted students who are uninvolved in cyberbullying consistently reported higher scores of wellbeing and lower psychological functioning like higher depression, anxiety and stress scores (Gonzalez-Cabrera et al., 2019). A qualitative study also showed that

gifted students reported enduring the severe and long-lasting negative consequences of cyberbullying (Connolly, 2018). Gonzalez-Cabrera and colleagues (2019) conducted a cross-sectional study, looking at the influence of being a victim of cyberbullying on psychological functioning. Gifted students not only suffered from significantly higher incidents of cyberbullying but also the pure-victim gifted students reported significantly higher scores of distress than pure-victim non-gifted students. The stress level of gifted and non-gifted students both reported higher levels of psychological distress and lower level of quality of life in the status of pure-victim and than other profiles (Gonzalez-Cabrera et al., 2019). Laffan and colleagues (2022) introduce an even less studied concern in gifted students' mental health by rising concerns about twice-exceptional students through intersecting identities of giftedness and another disadvantaged or marginalized identity status. In this sample of 195 gifted and talented students, 19% of them reported having at least one other formal diagnoses (mental illness, autism spectrum disorders, dyspraxia, physical disability, specific learning disability, and sensory impairment. These females, LGBTI + and twice-exceptional gifted and talented students tended to suffer more from the negative outcomes of cyberbullying and report lower levels of satisfaction with life. This rich study collection offers important evidence that exposure to bullying deteriorates gifted students' overall functioning.

In sum, bullying has quickly become a pervasive problem due to its negative psychological impacts and increased prevalence rate (Low & Espelage, 2013; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2007). Taken together, bullying is a significant problem for gifted students and more detailed examinations on both traditional and cyber bullying experience and its impacts is an urgent research topic for educators, counselors and psychologists. At least three conclusions can be drawn from two qualitative studies. The first two alarming results come from Peterson and Ray's (2006b) survey (N:432) and interview (N:57) examining personal meaning of victimization among the gifted students in 8 grade. The participating gifted students in this study reported that a) external factors caused the bullying, although they felt responsible for resolving the bullying and victims felt miserable from bullying, b) giftedness itself is a predisposition to being bullied by others. The third alarming result come from Sayman's (2011) qualitative

study which reported that c) memories of bullying dominated gifted students' school experience and they still feel fear and intimidation from those who victimized them.

2.3 Resilience

The constructs of risk and resilience have been one of the important research topic in psychology and counseling literature. Research findings related to the resilience are used to create prevention and intervention programs for students who live in adverse conditions. It is crucial to understand how students who live in adverse conditions such as poverty, child abuse overcome these difficulties (Greene, 2002). Besides, development of resilience and psychological well-being of students have been the focus of the studies (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). Notably, understanding of how students overcome risk and adversity can help researchers to develop appropriate programs for the other students who live in same adverse conditions (Masten & Reed, 2002). Knowledge derived from studies was utilized to establish effective programs for mental health practice (Greene & Conrad, 2002).

Although there has been no agreement about definition of resilience, it can be conceptualized as manifesting good adjustment in the face adversities (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). However, researchers agreed on two characteristics of the resilience: (a) exposure to the significant risk factor and (b) achieving positive adaptation (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000). While risk factors were extensively studied in the context of economic hardships, child abuse and social and emotional deprivations, but, protective factors which were studied include supportive teachers and parent, a positive school atmosphere, academic success and self-efficacy (Coleman & Hagell, 2007; Prince-Embury & Saklofske, 2014). For instance, Howard and Johnson (2000) divided characteristics of resilient children and adolescent into four groups: individual characteristics, parent characteristics, features of school and features of society

Luthar et al., (2000)'s study evaluated either resilience is a personality characteristic or it is a dynamic process. Researchers have accepted that these two views are valid. In other words, they pointed out resilience was depended on some personal characteristics and interactions of personal characteristics and environment. Despite definition of resilient individual implies certain characteristics, both theoretical and

correlational studies indicated individual who adapted positively in adverse circumstances. This conceptualization highlighted dynamic nature of resilience. Resilience is considered as an indicator of good adjustment despite negative life experience.

Another point that is discussed is that is it general characteristic or exceptionality. Masten (2001) expressed that resilience is an ordinary magic in life rather than being an extraordinary skill. In another word, it is not necessary that child should not live in adverse circumstance to demonstrate it. Overcoming daily difficulties or problems individuals face would be indicator of resilience. A great deal of study in the literature assessed the protective factors with regard to mainstream students in poverty (Ungar & Teram, 2000). For instance, while personal characteristics containing self-esteem, optimism, self-efficacy and internal loci of control were revealed as important resilience variables (Buckner et al., 2003; Moore & Woodcook, 2017; Sapouna & Wolke, 2013).

However, studies investigating psychological well-being process for gifted students have been studied by researchers to enhance their adaptation and achievement. Awareness about the social and emotional difficulties gifted students experienced has increased since 1980's (Neither & Yeo, 2018). From 1930 to today, many researchers have been debating whether being a gifted is a beneficial or not for their adaptation (Lopez & Sotilla, 2009). There has been two contradictory views emerged about psychological well-being of gifted students. Although First view posits that giftedness enhanced resilience of gifted students, other view supports that giftedness increases vulnerabilities of gifted students (Neihart, 1999; Neihart & Yeo, 2018). There have been many theoretical and quantitative studies which support these two views in the literature. First view argued that gifted students can understand themselves and others because of their high intellectual capacity (Bland, 2010). Therefore, gifted students can easily cope with stress and conflicts. Additionally, high cognitive functioning is considered as protective factor and it includes distinguished characteristics which enhances flexibility. Second view asserts that gifted students are under great risks because of emotional and social problems they face (Peterson, 2009). It implies that giftedness would be a risk factor for adaptation. Gifted students were more likely to

experience alienation and stress than non-gifted students as a result of their sensitivity to the interpersonal relationships conflicts and their high cognitive capacities (Lopez & Sotilla, 2009). It was also reported that well-being of gifted students linked to personal characteristics such as the type of their abilities, their perceived self-concept, their temperament (Neihart, 1999).

A meta-analysis conducted by Keiley (2002) pointed out gifted students characterized as having high-motivation, socially matured, open to new experience, independent, having high tolerance to the uncertainty. However, some studies do not validate these findings. For instance, a study by Ballam (2013) studied resilience of gifted students who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds on New Zealand context by using qualitative research method. Research findings demonstrated that giftedness itself was perceived as a risk factor because high expectation oppressed by their teachers and parents. Further researches were warranted to understand how giftedness operates either as protective factor or risk factor in the lives of gifted students.

2.3.1 Resilience and Bullying

Despite resilience was extensively studied in the context of poverty, trauma to help individuals to actively cope with adverse circumstances or conditions. However little is known about relationship between resilience and bullying. One of the crucial research topic in bullying literature is how to tackle bullying problem. One of the pioneer study to assess relationship between resilience and bullying conducted by Donnon (2010). He found that adolescent students who have a high level of resilience were less likely to engage in bullying involvement (both bully and victim). Similarly, Lisboa and Killer (2008) pointed out that bullying experience can be reduced, if the emotional regulations are taught to the victims. Furthermore, in a study conducted with 190 victimized adolescents demonstrated that victimized students may better cope with bullying if they have significant person such as parents or peers to disclose their experience (River & Cowie, 2006). Bowes and his colleagues (2010) carried out a study to investigate parent factor that promotes resilience and decreases bullying with 1116 twins. Results showed that maternal warmth, sibling warmth and a positive atmosphere at home would increase resilience to victimization for participants. Therefore, increasing gifted students' resilience may help them overcome detrimental impacts of

bullying efficiently. Identifying some external and internal protective factors can affect gifted students' adaptation following victimization experience. It can be inferred that resilience in the face of bullying might be a significant buffering mechanism that mitigates impacts of psychological problems and can be used to develop efficient bullying prevention and intervention toward bullying.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review

In this part of the dissertation, definition of bullying and resilience were presented. It was found that many factors including parent, peer and school factors that affect the resilience of gifted students in the face of bullying. Results of the studies indicated that a great deal of numbers of students engage in bullying involvement. A great deal of number of studies reported that bullying has a negative and harmful impact on the development of students. Limited existent studies specifically investigating bullying among gifted students found out that gifted students took part in bullying incidents. The relationship between bullying and resilience has indicated that resilience would be a possible protective factor against harmful consequences of bullying. Consequently, understating resilience strategies of gifted students in the face of bullying may be helpful in designing bullying prevention programs specifically targeting gifted students. What the giftedness means and characteristics of gifted students were explained based on the literature. Similarly, some studies demonstrated that many initiatives were made to improve education of gifted students in Turkey.

CHAPTER 3

3. METHOD

In this chapter, the study's methodology was presented. The chapter starts with the overall design of the study. Then, descriptions of the participants, context, and role of the researcher were presented. Next, the data collection procedure and data analysis were explained. Then, validity and reliability issues were explained in relation to the qualitative nature of the study. Finally, the chapter ended with an explication of the study's limitations.

3.1. Overall Design of the Study

The goal of the study was to explore gifted students' vulnerabilities and resilience strategies in the face of bullying. Importantly, this study has an important objective of disclosing the perspective of gifted students regarding resilient strategies that aim at reducing bullying they experienced within the school setting. In order to reach this goal, qualitative methodology was adapted due to the fact that qualitative research emphasizes on the individuals and their life-worlds. Thus, with the usage of qualitative study, life-worlds of participants such as their emotions, motivations, and meanings they attached to events, natural lives of individuals and groups in their usual settings have been taken into consideration (Lune & Berg, 2017; Patton, 2015) with the premise that knowledge is created by people (Stake, 2010).

3.2. Design of the Study

The phenomenological study aims to reveal the meaning of events, experiences, interactions, situations of ordinary people (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; van Manen, 1990). It focuses on the phenomenon of which detailed understanding is sought (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Instead of reaching a theory, insights about everyday experiences of

the participants' everyday (van Manen, 1990) by utilizing the question of "What is this kind or that kind of experience like" (van Manen, 1990, p. 9). As a kind of qualitative study, phenomenological studies might not give cause-effect relations or certain results. However, it enables the researcher and the readers make sense of the phenomenon better by its giving examples, explanations or experiences that could make significant contributions to both literature and practices (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Another significant feature of these studies was being reflective rather than introspective. Experienced phenomenon is always re-collective, people in these studies talked about what was lived, already passed (van Manen, 1990). Accordingly, this study aims to yield better understanding of the bullying experiences of gifted students from their own perspectives to see whether their giftedness has indeed put them under greater risk and/or helped them to develop better resilience strategies to shield them against bullying.

Bullying involves a complex and dynamic relationship between bullies and victims. That is why, with this study it was aimed to understand the overall resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students and to examine peer, parent and school factor that influences their victimization experience. This information was best obtained from the participants' own words, by their reports of their own experiences (Glaser & Strauss, 2006). Secondly, bullying is a crucial public health problem around the world. While studies have examined this issue using quantitative research methodology, there has been a need for qualitative research, precisely phenomenological study approach to uncover the resilience of gifted students in the face of bullying. Vulnerabilities and resilient strategies of gifted students in the face of bullying may provide in-depth information on the process of developing appropriate intervention and prevention programs toward bullying and help to enhance the resilience of the gifted students who took part in the bullying, either a bully or a victim.

Succinctly, the current qualitative study aimed to demonstrate the form of bullying and the impact of bullying gifted students experience based on the gifted students own perceptions in school settings. Further, the resilient approach is also utilized since the researcher aimed at explaining how these personal, parent, peer, and school factors serve either the resilience or the vulnerability for gifted students. Gifted students who

experienced victimization constituted the participants of the present study. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with the gifted students.

3.3. Research Contexts and Researcher's reflexivity

This study was conducted with gifted students enrolling in science and art centers in Elazığ. Science and Art centers are education centers formed to address the academic needs of gifted students in Turkey. Elazığ science and Art Center, one of Turkey's oldest science and art schools, started teaching in 2007. Elazığ is a small city located in the eastern part of Turkey. Two things should be mentioned about science and art centers. First of all, all students who attend to the science and art centers are gifted students identified by the Ministry of National Education. Secondly, gifted students keep going to two schools in their educational lives simultaneously: Mainstream schools and science and art centers that serves as an after-school program.

Why other research topic did not take the attention of him, but this topic did? Personally, he was the school counselor who worked with gifted students. While the researcher has worked as a school counselor in the science and art center, some gifted students consulted the counseling service because of being bullied. Researcher witnessed that gifted students with victimization history developed some mental health issues. Almost all students who experienced victimization showed sadness, confusion, and anger. He personally witnessed that some gifted students consciously changed their behaviors to fit in the peer groups. Shocking experience for him was that one of his students visited his office and she said that I do not have any friend anymore. Her close friend told her that she would not have been her friend anymore because she is too smart to be a friend of her. Then her grades dropped sharply. Her parents did not know the main reason for her underachievement. They visited counseling service many times to raise their awareness how to address this issue. Bullying concerning gifted students took the attraction of the researcher. Then, the researcher decided to examine the prevalence and effect of bullying that gifted students experienced as a part of his Master thesis in 2016. For the researcher, exploring gifted students' vulnerabilities and resilient strategies in the face of bullying would be a starting point to raise awareness of gifted students' parents and teachers about what gifted students experience within

themselves and for other people who do not realize impacts of bullying for the gifted students.

The researcher of this dissertation has been working as a psychological counselor since 2005. He has worked with students with special needs, their families, and teachers. He has worked with gifted students, their parents, and teachers in the science and art center. As a counselor, he had training in parent education of gifted students and the psychological needs of gifted students. Also, for the last two years, he has been a member of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, which advocates for the gifted students worldwide. Therefore, from a professional point of view, he was able to carry out such research. The attitude of a researcher may impact the nature of the researcher-participant bond which affects the information that two sides are willing to disclose (Berger, 2015). Being a school counselor who works with gifted students has helped me recruit participants for this study. The participants who were recruited to this study were receptive and cooperative during data collection process since they expressed that they trusted him (researcher) because he is insider and work with them. They described me as a one who is able to understand their experience and difficulties related to bullying.

3.3.1. Data Sources

Qualitative research intends to gain rich information from specific cases with a detailed examination. It refers to determining cases for a qualitative study that has the potential to provide rich and detailed information about the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2002). This process is described as ‘sampling’. As Patton (2002) describes, different from probability sampling or convenient sampling, qualitative researchers utilize purposeful sampling. This type of sampling encompasses a deliberate selection of participants, settings, or events. The present study's main aim is to obtain a rich and deep understanding of gifted students' resilience strategies and vulnerabilities in the face of bullying. Therefore, the study participants were selected via the purposive sampling method.

There are different sorts of purposive sampling methods. In the present study, typical sampling method was employed. Accordingly, participants possess typical

characteristics of phenomenon that research address (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, researchers who reflect typical characteristics regarding research aims selected as participants. Participants of the present study were selected from gifted students who enrolled to the Elaziğ Science and Art center. Considering aim of the study, thirteen gifted students were recruited in the current research.

The inclusion criteria were prepared to reach participants who had rich information regarding the research questions, the main aims and the purposes of the study. The inclusion criteria were determined to ensure that the key points of the research topic were captured. Previous studies have indicated that there is an increase in bullying among gifted students during middle school years, and form of bullying has changed throughout the high school (Peterson & Ray, 2006b). To fully inquire this research topic, the aim was to participate gifted students who were in middle and high school, and aged between 11 and 17 years for the sample. Additionally, gifted students who were able to bring consent forms (individual and parental) were recruited in the research. Gifted students under the age of 11 were not recruited.

This study based on interviewing of participants to understand perspectives and opinions. Current study selected participants whose ages were between 11 to 17 years, and ranged from grade 5 to 12. For this phenomenological study, 13 gifted students were recruited and interviewed until data saturation are reached. As Creswell (2012) recommended that it is important to get depth information about research problem from the participants. In this regard, this sample size was both sufficient and enough to provide depth information about resilience strategies and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying. Age mean of the participants were found as 13. More than half of the participants' parents (n=7) were graduates of the university. Data saturation were achieved when no new data, concepts and perceptions were generated from the participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In a qualitative research study, rather than the quantity, but the quality of the data yielded and profoundness concerning the information were provided more importance, what was important in this study was to obtain deeper understanding of resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying. After identifying volunteer participants, each participant was asked a suitable date, and time for the interview. Before starting each interview, the researcher

sought personal and parental contests. Each interview was recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. Interview is carried out by the researcher and lasts between 35 and 68 minutes.

3.3.2. Participants

Before beginning to the interview questions, demographic questions were asked to participants. Below, gifted students' demographic data was given.

Table 3.1 *Informants for Semi-Structured Interviews*

No	Category	Gender	Age	Grade	Bullying Involvement
1	Student	M	16	10	Victim/ Exclusion
2	Student	F	17	11	Victim/ Exclusion-Verbal Bullying
3	Student	F	11	6	Victim/ Verbal Bullying
4	Student	F	11	6	Victim/ Verbal Bullying
5	Student	M	17	11	Victim/ Verbal Bullying
6	Student	F	11	6	Victim/ Verbal Bullying
7	Student	F	12	7	Victim/ Verbal Bullying
8	Student	F	16	11	Victim/Exclusion Verbal Bullying
9	Student	F	11	6	Victim/Cyber bullying
10	Student	F	14	9	Victim/ Verbal Bullying
11	Student	F	14	9	Victim/ Verbal Bullying
12	Student	M	17	12	Victim/ Verbal Bullying
13	Student	F	12	7	Victim/ Verbal Bullying

3.3.2.1. S1

S1 is 16 years old, male science high school student. He was the eldest of three children. Two of his parents were graduate of university. His mother works as nurse like his father in the same hospital. He has a shared room with his brother. He was the victim of exclusion several times in his middle and high school he was enrolled. He has introverted personality and it is difficult for him to share his feelings and thoughts with others. Relationship with his parents is good. Her family wants him to be successful student in his school. His family encourages him to take part several research projects about technology and science fields. His relationship with his teachers is good because he is eager to participate research projects. He was excluded by group of his peers which maintained one education year.

3.3.2.2. S2

S2 is 17 years old, female private science high school student. She was older of two children. Her parent graduated from the high school. Her father works as a police officer and her mother is a housewife. She has a private room in her house. She is talkative and it is easy to start conversation with other students for her. She has a good relationship with her parents. She was victimized during her high school years by the group of her classmate. She was the victim of exclusion and verbal bullying many times in her high school where she was enrolled. She was bullied because she is talkative and wants to be popular student in her class.

3.3.2.3. S3

S3 is 11 years old, female middle school student. She was the eldest of two children. Her parents were university graduates. Both of her parents work as teachers. She describes herself as a considerate person. She has a good relationship with her parents. She does not have strong relationship with her friends. However, she has some expectations about her future academic achievement. She has a private room in her house. She was the victim of verbal bullying many times in her middle school where she was enrolled.

3.3.2.4. S4

S4 is 11 years old, female middle school student. She was the elder of two children. Her parents were graduated from the university. Her father worked as a security officer and her mother worked as a judge. She has a private room in her house. She has extraverted personality. She is not popular students but, she likes talking with other students. Her relationship with her parents is good. Her family believes that she can solve her problem by herself because she has the capacity to cope with her problems. She was the victim of verbal bullying many times in her elementary and middle school where she was enrolled.

3.3.2.5. S5

S5 is 17 years old, male Anatolian high school student. He was the middle child of three children. His parents were graduate of the elementary school. Her father worked as an insurance broker and her mother was a housewife. He had a private room in his house. He has introverted personality. He has high standarts to start a relationship with a new friend. He has difficulties to start a new friendship because of his high standarts and shyness. When he has some problems in his life, he tries to solve them by himself. His family does not support him properly because his family does not have enough knowledge about giftedness. He was the victim of verbal bullying several times in his high school where he was enrolled.

3.3.2.6. S6

S6 is 11 years old, female middle school student. She was the elder of two children. Her mother was the graduates of elementary school and her father was the graduate of university. Her father worked in a call center and her mother was a housewife. She had a shared room with her brother. Her family has close relationship with her. She is not talkative. It is difficult for her to meet with a new friend and express her feelings. She was the victim of exclusion several times in his middle school she enrolled. She was victimized by one girl because of her academic accomplishment and teachers' attention toward her.

3.3.2.7. S7

S7 is 12 years old, female middle school student. She was the eldest of three children. Her mother was the graduate of the middle school and her father was the graduate of the high school. Her father worked as a repairman and her mother was a housewife. Her relationship with her parents is good. She does not have problem with her parents. She was not talkative but she listens her teachers carefully and her teachers like her. She had a shared room with her brother. She was the victim of verbal bullying several times in her middle school where she was enrolled.

3.3.2.8. S8

S8 is 16 years old, female science high school student. She was younger of three children. Her mother was the graduates of the high school and her father was the graduate of the university. Her father worked as a veterinary and her mother was a housewife. She had a shared room with her brother. She was the victim of verbal bullying several times in his science high school where she was enrolled. She was bullied due to her academic achievement. She was not talkative but she id hardworking students. She has a good relationship with her parents. She shared everything she experienced with her parents. She felt closer to her father than her mother.

3.3.2.9. S9

S9 is 11 years old, female middle school student. She was older of two children. Her mother was the graduates of the high school and her father was the graduate of the high school as well. Her father ran a small business and her mother was a housewife. She had a shared room with her brother. She was the victim of cyber bullying. Some of her classmate wrote derogatory comments about her upon several times. She likes her friend and gets well along with them, but she does not know why they behave like that. She is motivated students and wants to be successful student.

3.3.2.10. S10

S10 is 14 years old, female science high school student. She is younger of two children. Her mother and father were the graduates of university. Her father and mother worked in a state department as a civil servant. She has a private room in her home. She was the victim of verbal bullying several times in her middle, and science high school where she enrolled. She was successful student. She enrolled to science high school in a first rank. Her parent is interested in her academic achievement. However, she is not popular student because she has an introverted personality.

3.3.2.11. S11

S11 is 14 years old, female science high school student. She had four siblings. Her mother was the graduate of high school and father was the graduate of the middle

school. Her father and mother worked in a local newspaper as journalists. She had a private room in her home. She was the victim of verbal bullying several times in the elementary, middle, and science high school where she was enrolled. Her relationship with her parents is good. Her parents are attentive when she experienced problem in the school. She was not popular student and tries to hide her giftedness in her mainstream school.

3.3.2.12. S12

S12 is 17 years old, female science high school student. He was younger of three children. His father and mother were the graduates of doctorate level. His father and mother work as academician. He has a private room in his house. He was the victim of verbal bullying several times in the science high school where he was enrolled. He is the popular and hardworking student in his school. He has also strong relationship with his friends. His family has high expectations about his academic achievement.

3.3.2.13. S13

S13 is 12 years old, female middle school student. She was the only child in her family. Her mother and father were the graduates of a university. Her mother worked at a state school as a teacher and her father worked in a medicine company as a senior administrator. She had a private room in her home. She was the victim of verbal bullying several times in the elementary and middle school where she was enrolled. She has a good relationship with her mother because her father was not home most of the time because of his job requirement. She wants to be popular student in her class so that she has experience difficulties in her school. She has an extraverted personality so that she is energetic and outgoing.

3.4. Data Collection

Data is what is obtained through systematic examination of the world and yields evidence to the ground ideas in the form of diaries, photographs, interview transcripts, field notes, official documents (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). In this kind of studies, researcher attempt to understand the nature of meaning of everyday experiences by

asking the question of "What is this sort or that sort of experience like?" (van Manen, 1990, p. 9). By performing a phenomenology, it is not strived for constructing a theory by that we could elucidate the world, but rather with the aid of phenomenology we could yield insights about experiences that make the more direct contact with the world possible (van Manen, 1990). In this study, data were obtained from semi-structured interviews with gifted students, and memo-writing.

3.4.1. Semi-Structured Interview

Interview has a central role in the data collection process of the qualitative research studies (Cresswell, 2007). There are various types of interviews such as structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Semi-structured interview is frequently used data collection method for the qualitative research (O'Reilly & Dogra, 2016). In this study, main tool was the semi-structure interview with the gifted students. Interviews' aim was to make readers grasp the issue of resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of the bullying while also allowing researchers to elucidate the participants' expressions of their lived experiences (Patton et al., 2015). Semi-structured interview is greatly recommended for novice researcher compared to the structured interview, because a semi-structured interview may facilitate managing the emergent issues during the research process. Semi-structured interviews are particularly important for this study as this mode of data collection allow researchers to uncover, directly from the participants, the meanings they attribute to their experiences of bullying (Patton et al., 2015). The utilization of the semi-structured interviews could facilitate the process of obtaining views and perceptions regarding sensitive subject areas, particularly in relation to gifted students. Moreover, it is asserted that to get valuable perspectives regarding a research subject for which researchers have a limited knowledge, it is essential to first conduct an exploratory approach.

The design of the semi-structured interview protocol started in the light of the literature review. Since the limited number of previous studies conducted on this topic, this process has become challenging. Since the researcher carried out some research about bullying among gifted students, the researcher managed to form a question pool from the literature related to bullying and resilience. Open-ended questions were the notable in facilitating participants towards expressing their perspectives. As the participants

had limited knowledge about descriptions of the bullying and resilience, definition of bullying and resilience were given during the interview. A pilot study was undertaken to evaluate the interview questions with two gifted students who had parental consent. After the interview questions were finished, gifted students' view as to the quality and structure of questions were asked for. Following the revision of the interview questions based on the feedback of the gifted students, a professor in the field of qualitative research and two researchers experienced in qualitative research were consulted for their feedback on the content and validity of the interview protocol. After their feedbacks as to the interview questions were obtained, final revision of the interview questions was determined. The interview protocol utilized could be seen in Appendix.

The interview protocol was prepared for gifted students. Interview schedule comprised of three parts respectively:

- demographic information (age, gender, their parents' educational background)
- bullying experience of gifted students (reasons, consequences, form of bullying they experience, how they feel and think following the bullying, personal characteristics that make them target of bullying)
- how vulnerabilities and resilience impact gifted students following bullying victimization (personal, parent, school, and peer factors which are either source of resilience or vulnerability for gifted students based on gifted students' perceptions) following victimization

3.5. Data Collection Procedures

Initial data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with gifted students. In qualitative studies, whatever sampling strategy is utilized, the main aim is to select information-rich respondents to obtain a detailed picture of the phenomenon under scrutiny. *Purposive sampling was utilized in the present study.* The reason behind the use of the purposive sampling method in this study is to reach potential participants who are information-rich regarding the phenomenon being studied by the researchers (Creswell, 2012). In this study, it was crucial to recruit gifted students who experienced bullying victimization. That is why purposive sampling was used in this study.

3.5.1. Recruitment of Participants

A gatekeeper approach was used to recruit participants. In this sense, gatekeeper is a person who has knowledge regarding the feature of the community members and who is influential to participate the community in a research (Hennink et al., 2011). Besides, some researchers underlined that usage of the gatekeeper approach is beneficial when studying young participants (Wiles et al., 2005).

The process of selecting participants for the current study started by contacting the school counselor (gatekeeper) chosen for the study. During this process, the researcher explained the purpose and significance of the study to the school counselor. The school counselor announced the study's purpose and importance to parents and student groups via e-mail or Whatsapp application. The school counselor reached participants who want to participate in this study. After the gatekeeper identified potential participants, the contact information was obtained from her and contacted by e-mail or mobile phone. The researcher informed prospective participants about the details of the study. For example, they notified about who would conduct the study, the purpose of the study, the purpose of interview, what kind of questions would be asked to respondents, and how confidentiality was assured. Volunteers who brought signed personal and parent informed consent were recruited to the present study.

Participants who voluntarily took part participated in the present study. The participants were asked for a location and time for their interview, ensuring that they might feel comfortable. All the participants selected to be interviewed in the virtual environment on the day arranged with the participants. Before undertaking interview with participants, researcher asked parents for providing a private space and wanted them not to disturb the researcher and child during the interview. The researcher assured that the participant wants to keep going and told them that they can terminate at any time during interviews. After interviews, researcher asked the participants, if they had any additional questions related to the study. All participants were also stated that summary of the research findings will be shared with them, following the study is finished and that the researcher could discuss findings in greater detail if they want. After each semi-structured interview, the researcher prepared a memo. Interviews were conducted from February 2021- November 2021.

Table 3.2 *Information Regarding How Research Questions Were Handled in the Interview Protocol*

Research Questions	Interview Questions to Handle with the Research Question
How did gifted students experience bullying?	<p>Sometimes kids pick on each other. Have you ever been picked on, teased, harassed, hit, or made to fall down by someone who intended to hurt, threaten, or frighten you or make you uncomfortable?</p> <p>1. Students may use various ways to bully other students, such as hitting, teasing or excluding them from their peer group. Or sometimes, they use internet or smart phone to hurt, threaten, frighten, or make them uncomfortable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you observed such behavior in your school? (If yes) Tell me what happened. • Has it happened to you? (If yes) Tell me what happened. • How did you feel? • How did you react? • What did you think? • Have you done such things to other kids? If yes, tell me what it happened. <p>2. Now, think about your own experiences;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Do you think gifted and talented students are targeted more or less than other students are targeted? Why? b. Do you think that giftedness makes students vulnerable to bullying? How? c. Do you think other victimized students feel/think/ behave in ways similar to how you felt/thought/behaved when or after you were bullied? <p>3. Based on your experience, what were the reasons that gifted students were bullied?</p>
How did giftedness operate as protective factors, contribute to resilience, or result in vulnerability for gifted students?	
How did the personal and environmental factors in the lives of the gifted students that help them to cope with bullying?	<p>Describe how your personal characteristics (sensitivity Can you describe have your personal characteristics (sensevity etc).as a gifted student helped you to overcome bullying you experienced?</p> <p>b) Can you describe how your parents helped you to overcome bullying you experienced?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What ways are helpful? • What ways are not helpful? Why <p>c) Can you describe how your friends and peers support you to overcome bullying you experienced?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What ways are helpful? • What ways are not helpful? Why
	<p>d) When you consider your school environment (Teachers, counselors etc.),what do you think about how your school supports you to overcome bullying you experienced?</p> <p>e) What do you think about what the school needs to do when bullying is occurred?</p> <p>9) Do you involve in any extra-curricular activities? If yes, how these activities helped you to overcome bullying you experience</p>

3.6. Data Analysis

Due to various forms utilized in different disciplines, a shared definition of qualitative data were not emerged among scholars. "The term data was considered a rough materials researchers collect from the world they are investigating" (Bogdan, & Biklen, 2007, p. 117). They ensure evidence and clues (Bogdan, & Biklen, 2007). Field notes, transcripts of audio records, documents, official documents, and photographs are frequently used data in qualitative research. Raw data do not reflect meaning; it is the interpretation that the researcher makes the data evident (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Data analysis is the systematic investigation and interpretation of qualitative data. This study was exploratory in nature due to the limited empirical studies on resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying in both international and Turkish context.

Interview transcribes were analyzed by utilizing thematic analysis technique which helped researcher to create new themes and sub-themes from the data. A theme was referred as "A theme seize something significant about the data in terms of the research objective and indicates some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set." (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). Thematic analysis may be described as an independent qualitative analysis that composes a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Thus, individual narrative as to their resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying (N=13) were analyzed by thematic analysis (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). Themes can be produced both inductively (what the data reveals) or deductively (based on the literature and previous studies before the study) (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). In this study, themes were generated inductively, meaning that there were codes that were created from the participants' narratives.

After completing data collection, all of the transcribed interviews were put into qualitative data analysis program MAXQDA 2022. Use of computers in qualitative data analysis has become prevalent since the 2000s. Miles and Huberman (1994) asserted that computer programs aid qualitative researchers while analyzing data. First, it is effective to save time and energy. Researchers have pages of data after recording transcribes, organizing and scrutinizing them requires great deal of time and energy.

In this context, computer programs help researchers to get easy access to their data and to put them in order. As another advantage, computer programs allow researchers to construct a more systematic data storage setting. Furthermore, since iterative nature of data analysis process in qualitative research, the researchers are in need of going back and forward during the analysis. Computer programs, in this respect, help researchers to change codes and themes, to edit them, to add or remove a code under a theme. In addition to those advantages listed above, Weltzman and Miles (1995) emphasized that computer programs allow visual depiction of findings which assist both the researcher and the researcher comprehend the relationship among themes and codes. In the current study, analysis of data by traditional methods would be time-consuming and complex. Considering the advantages of utilizing software in qualitative analysis, the researcher employed MAXQDA 2022 to analyze the data. While doing coding, researcher employed coding for the participants. The researcher put “S” to demonstrate that it was related to students. Researcher opened a project file and put relevant data into file. Next, each transcribed data was coded separately for analysis in accordance with the aim of the study. After the analysis of whole data, three counselors in the field of counseling who has conducted qualitative research was consulted their feedbacks. The revision was made to eliminate redundancy for sub-theme of type of bullying. Teasing and verbal bullying were merged under the sub-theme of ‘verbal bullying’. Furthermore, sub-theme of intervention under the theme of reaction in the case of bullying victimization was integrated to ‘teacher support’ sub-theme.

3.7. Trustworthiness of the Data

The concepts of validity and reliability used to assess quantitative research are not ensured in the same manner in qualitative research. Trustworthiness is the concept utilized to assess the quality of qualitative research, and it is determined by four criteria: dependability, credibility, transferability, and conformability.

Construct “dependability” is used to examine the process and product of the research to increase consistency (Hoepfl, 1997). It is related to how the interpretation of data should be consistent over time. To enhance dependability, the entire research step was explained.

To increase credibility for the data adequacy, gifted students willing to participate in the study were involved (Morrow, 2005). Collecting data just from participants who wanted to take part voluntarily was a way to provide that those participants were sincere with their information disclosed to the researcher (Shenton, 2004). At the beginning of the interview, an informed consent form was handed to participants and the researcher both verbally and with a written form highlighting participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time for any reason. The researcher also elucidated the confidentiality and assured the guarantee to participants that the information would be shared anonymously throughout the research.

Transferability refers to the explanatory power of the research. It is related to replicating the findings in other settings (Guba, 1981). For the transferability of present study, thick descriptions of all phases of the study were presented. Other researchers could replicate the findings of this study in other settings. Also, there were many participants' testimonies utilized in the findings' sections of the study. Thus, for the reader, it would be possible to anticipate the context from where the data was gathered (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Also, semi-structured interview questions were indicated at the end of the paper. To ensure the validity of themes and codes of the study, peer and expert reviews were taken.

Conformability refers to the evaluation of the research results, whether they are generated adequately through scientific inquiry or not. One of the techniques to provide conformability is the audit trial. To ensure the audit trial, data was checked by the supervisor of the study and dissertation committee.

In present study, the following techniques were employed to promote the trustworthiness of the study:

1. Member checks were used for interviews,
2. The researcher kept a reflexive diary,
3. The research process was explicated in detail.

3.8. Ethical Procedure

Special care was given to ethical principles in the current study. Ethical approval for the current study was obtained by human subject ethics committee of Middle East Technical University. Informed consent was taken from the parents, teachers and gifted children. The pseudonym was given to keep confidentiality of participants. To protect participants from any distress stemming from the content of the interview, it was stated that participants feel the free to stop the study at any time and conceal any information that they are uncomfortable sharing to the researcher.

3.9. Limitations of the Study

Although the participants provided valuable information about vulnerabilities and resilient strategies concerning their bullying experience, this study has some limitations. First of all, although participants were the representative of gifted student population, there was a gender disparity in the present study. This disparity could be handled by further research to uncover if there are variabilities in the perception of male and female gifted students. Bullying reaches its peak during adolescent's years (Peterson & Ray, 2006a). This is the main justification for recruiting adolescent gifted students for the current study. Nevertheless, by obtaining data from adolescent gifted students, gifted students who are in elementary schools were eliminated, and further studies might focus on the vulnerabilities and resilient strategies of gifted students who in elementary schools. Thus, the findings of the presents study are related to gifted adolscents students and their perspectives.

Contrary to standardized measurement tools like scales or tests, interviews were criticized in terms of the conduction of the study and its results. To minimize the data collector bias, semi-structured interviews were selected. Also, by taking the expert opinions in the field, such as from psychological counselors and academicians about how to reach the sample, format of questions, number of questions, this data collector bias was attempted to be minimized. Themes and codes created in the interviews' transcripts were discussed with those professionals.

CHAPTER 4

4. RESULTS

This study aimed to comprehend resilient strategies and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying and to understand the effects of school, parent, and peer factors on their bullying experiences. The originality of this study comes from the fact that resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying has been overlooked in the national and international literature. Bullying research conducted in Turkey has mainly investigated bullying experience of the mainstream students, while bullying experience of gifted students were neglected. In this way, gifted students were able to reveal how resilient strategies and vulnerabilities influenced bullying they experienced. As previously indicated within the literature review, there is a scarcity in the literature about the bullying experience of gifted student and how they cope with its detrimental consequences. Previous research on bullying among gifted students tend to focus on the prevalence of bullying with small samples (Erwin, 2015; Peters & Bain, 2011), but, harmful effects of bullying on gifted students well-being remained unanswered (Groman, 2019; MacFarlane & Mina, 2018). Research questions of the study:

- How did gifted students experience bullying?
- How did the personal and environmental factors in the lives of the gifted students that help them to cope with bullying?
- How did the personal and environmental factors in the lives of the gifted students that restrict them to overcome bullying?
- How did giftedness operate as protective factors, contribute to resilience, or result in vulnerability for gifted students?

In this chapter, results of the qualitative analysis based on data were indicated. Audio-taped interviews were transcribed, and the data were analyzed by using MAXQDA 2022. 13 participants' data were analyzed individually by using content analysis, so

codes and themes were produced from all the participants in order to uncover gifted students' resilience and vulnerabilities in the face of the bullying. How gifted students experienced the bullying victimization was addressed in the "bullying experience" theme specifically, but the gifted students' resilience and vulnerabilities was also handled throughout all themes.

For analyses of data, all participants' data (N=13) were analyzed jointly. By performing this analysis, the unique experiences of gifted students after bullying victimization were investigated. Participants' statements were reported as evidence throughout all themes and sub-categories to provide the credibility and trustworthiness of the data. There were four themes obtained from the data. Themes and sub-categories derived from the data are presented in Table 3.

Table 4.1 *Conceptual Model of Gifted students' vulnerabilities and resilience strategies in the face of bullying*

4.1. Theme: Bullying Experience

- 4.1.1. Type of Bullying
 - 4.1.1.1. Verbal Bullying
 - 4.1.1.2. Exclusion
- 4.1.2. Feelings in the case of bullying
 - 4.1.2.1. Unfairness
 - 4.1.2.2. Sadness
 - 4.1.2.3. Anger
 - 4.1.2.4. Fear/anxiety
- 4.1.3. Reasons for bullying victimization
 - 4.1.3.1. Jealousy
 - 4.1.3.2. Being a gifted student
 - 4.1.3.3. Teachers' Attitudes
 - 4.1.3.4. Competitive Environment
- 4.1.4. Reactions in case of bullying victimization
 - 4.1.4.1 Unresponsiveness
 - 4.1.4.2 Sharing (Parent, school)
 - 4.1.4.3 Distancing
- 4.1.5. Impacts of bullying
 - 4.1.5.1 Withdrawal
 - 4.1.5.2 Drop on academic achievement
 - 4.1.5.3 Changes on eating habits

4.2. Theme: Support System

- 4.2.1. Peer Support
 - 4.2.1.1. Accompanying
 - 4.2.1.2. Lack of Communication
 - 4.2.1.3. Competitive Environment
 - 4.2.1.4. Side with bullies
 - 4.2.2. Parent Support
 - 4.2.2.1. Being a thoughtful
-

Table 3 (continued)

- 4.2.2.2. Parent pressure
 - 4.2.2.3. Intolerance
 - 4.2.2.4. Communication style
 - 4.2.2.5. Lack of knowledge
 - 4.2.3. School Support
 - 4.2.3.1. Attitudes of school administrators
 - 4.2.3.2. Taking a more active stance
 - 4.2.3.3. Providing support and attention
 - 4.2.3.4. Preparing bullying prevention plan
 - 4.2.4. Teacher support
 - 4.2.4.1. Teachers' intervention
 - 4.2.4.2. Lack of knowledge regarding bullying
 - 4.2.4.3. Being a more attentive and supportive
 - 4.2.5. Counseling service
 - 4.2.5.1. Providing better support for the victims
 - 4.2.5.2. Interviewing with bullies and victims
 - 4.3.Theme: Gifted Identity**
 - 4.3.1. Thinking pattern
 - 4.3.2. Problem solving abilities
 - 4.3.3. A high level of self-esteem
 - 4.3.4. Self-regulation
 - 4.3.5. Academic accomplishment
 - 4.4.Theme: Coping strategies**
 - 4.4.1. Focusing on themselves and classes
 - 4.4.2. Developing social abilities
 - 4.4.3. Increasing knowledge toward bullying victimization
 - 4.4.4. Joining extracurricular activities
 - 4.4.4.1 Avoiding stress
 - 4.4.4.2 Forming a relationship with new people
-

4.1. Theme 1: Bullying

This theme gave information about context of the bullying among gifted students in term of what the gifted student have attributed the bullying experience. As the perspectives of gifted students have not generally been studied in the literature, this aspect was valuable to understand the bullying they experinced. In addition, this core theme captures how gifted students employ resilience strategies. Even though bullying is prevalent problem among students, bullying experience of gifted students has its own context. Most of the gifted students who participated in this study were bullied when they were in the presence of their friends since bullies intended to deteriorate gifted students' position at the school and they were perceived differently by their peers. What gifted students attributed to victimization were explained in five sub-

categories: types of bullying, feelings in the case of bullying, reasons for bullying, reactions in the case bullying, impacts of bullying.

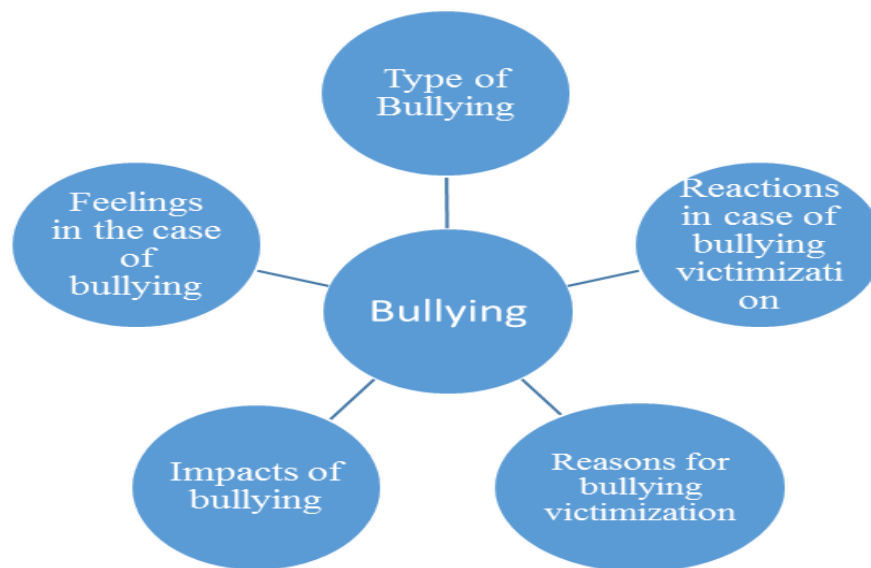


Figure 1 Core Category: *Bullying*

4.1.1 Type of Bullying

Gifted students were asked to share their bullying experiences. Notably, in terms of form of bullying that they went through, participants specifically mentioned the types of bullying they experienced. In this sub-category, types of the bullying gifted students experienced were presented. Bullying victimization that participants experienced were accumulated into two forms: verbal bullying and exclusion from groups. Most of the participants in the current study exclaimed that they were victimized in the form of verbal bullying.

4.1.1.1 Teasing and verbal bullying

Verbal bullying was reported to be the most common way of victimization by participants. Many of gifted students reported verbal bullying as being common in their schools. Verbal bullying gifted students experienced included teasing, name calling, and public humiliation. Reasons for verbal bullying of gifted students were related to their physical appearance, their abilities, jokes and gossiping aimed at humiliating gifted students. Teasing is the most common type of verbal bullying mentioned. Some of the participants were negatively labeled as different or deviant in

comparison with the non-gifted peers. Issue of verbal bullying were apparent in the narratives of participants, with some participants disclosing the actual word ‘teasing’ in a various form. For example, below are two different statements which participants expressed related to teasing experience.

Since I was not talkative at school I usually do not interact with students so much. When students asked me questions, I could respond clearly and some students were not pleased with it. Therefore, they started making fun of me S10

Okulda ben konuşkan olmadığım için genelde insanlarla pek iletişime geçmiyordum. İnsanlar bana soru sorduğunda gayet açık bir şekilde cevap verebiliyordum ve bu da bazı insanların hoşuna gitmiyordu. S10

Teasing is the most common thing that happens at school. Something has taken place at school. They blamed me for it. They started insulting me and oppressed me. They keep insulting me so much.S5

Okulda olan en çok alay. Mesela okulda bir olay olmuştu. Benim üstüme attılar. Bana bir sürü hakaretler etmeye başladılar ve sıkıştırdılar. Bir sürü hakaretler ettiler S5.

As A S5 pointed out, gifted students were verbally bullied because gifted students were perceived differently by their peers' eyes in terms of her abilities, her relationship with teachers. Likewise, another participant (S2) reported that when she was telling her opinion about any topic, her friends started teasing about her ideas. Indeed, these participants highlighted that how differences, such as being an introvert or a smart are identified by non-gifted counterparts used it in ways that bully them. The participants disclosed that the existence of verbal bullying in the school is the prevalent and frequently occurring.

4.1.1.2. Exclusion

It was particularly important that participants emphasized the importance of differences in term of socially exclusion. These differences related to their abilities, academic success, and leadership characteristics. These mentioned differences between gifted students and non-gifted counterparts was considered as a prominent foregrounding of bullying behaviour. Many participants reported that they have been involuntarily isolated or excluded from the social life in the classroom in the mainstream schools. Nevertheless, some participants emphasized that exclusion is the one of the biggest problem they encountered in the school. For instance:

I have been excluded several times. I was excluded because I was not like them. They perceive scientific studies or projects as unnecessary work. They thought that hobbies like painting or writing poetry are unnecessary, only roaming and having fun is good. That's why I had clashed with them (S6)

Dışlanmışım. Onlar gibi olmadığım için dışlanmışım. Bilimsel çalışmaları, projeleri boş işler olarak görüyorlardı. Resim yapmak, şiir yapmak gibi hobilerin gereksiz olduğunu, sadece gezmek ve eğlenmenin iyi olduğunu düşünüyorlardı. Bu yüzden anlaşmazlık yaşamıştım (S6)

This type of behavior is too much towards me in school. I am always excluded because of my short height, curly hair and dark skin (S8).

Okulda bu çok fazla olan bir davranış bana karşı kısa boyum şey kıvrıkcık saçlarım koyu tenim yüzümden yani fiziksel görüntüm yüzünden sürekli olarak dışlanıyorum (S8)

My friend told me not to talk nonsense. I really felt sad for what he told me (S7)

Arkadaşım boş boş konuşma gibi şeyler söylemişti. Ben de ona gerçekten çok üzüldüm (S7)

My friend next to me insulted me (S4)

'Yanımdaki arkadaşım bana hakaret etti.' (S4)

A remarkable concern from participants was that they considered exclusion as the biggest problem, which demonstrate that such relational bullying is needed to address immediately. Despite such behaviours could not be overlook by the teachers and school principals, it was not easy to detect this form of bullying incidence within the school setting. The participants agreed regarding the existence of bullying victimization in the form of verbal bullying and socially exclusion in the school. It is evident from these statements that bullies utilize different types of bullying to bully gifted students within the school environment.

One of the salient findings of the study is that despite all participants explicitly stated type of victimization they experienced, none of them reported they bullied to other students as a reaction to their victimization.

4.1.2. Feelings in the Case Of Bullying

In this sub-category, how participants felt after they were victimized were presented. As Carlisle and Rofes (2007) pointed out that the victimized students could have felt shame, anxiety, and anger after victimization. Firstly, their first emotions following the bullying victimization was unfairness. They thought they did not deserve to being bullied. Secondly, they felt sadness because of the bullying incidents they faced. Thirdly, they felt anger toward themselves and other students who bullied them. Lastly, they felt fear/anxiety for the ongoing future bullying.

4.1.2.1 Unfairness

Participants who experienced bullying stated that they did not deserve to be victimized. They developed a sense of unfairness. This sub-category is appropriate with characteristics of gifted students. Gifted students show a preoccupation with fairness and sensitivity to the rights of others. Bullying experience may shake their worldview and belief toward themselves and their environment surrounding them. Some of the extracts below were taken by participants

I think that I do not deserved this victimization “Bunları hak etmediğimi düşündüm.” (S4)
(S4)

At first, I thought that I offended her without realizing it. Then, considering what he has done, I don't think that I offended her (S5) “Acaba onları bilmeden kırdım mı diye düşündüm ilk başta. Ondan sonra yaptıklarını göz önünde bulundurunca kırdığımı düşünmüyorum.” (S5)

It make me feel that I was treated unfairly (S7) Haksızlığa uğruyor muşum gibi hissettiriyor.”(S7)

I thought I didn't deserve this. After all, I did anything wrong. I didn't tell anything unfavorable to them. Therefore,I was so upset why they behaved like this (S10) Bunları hak etmediğimi düşünüyorum Sonuçta ben onlara yanlış hiçbir şey yapmadım. Onlara negatif bir şey söylemedim. Bu yüzden çok üzülüyordum neden böyle davranıyorlar diye.” (S10)

4.1.2.2 Sadness

Another point to uncover in the finding is that gifted students who experienced bullying tended to have increased feelings of sadness. While most of the participants disclosed their sadness with words during the interview when sharing their bullying experience. For some participants, their sense sadness remains for weeks and even months. This finding demonstrated that victimization is an important mental health issue for gifted students.

I threw the phone out of my hand and closed myself in the room because it made me hurt to experience the same events again. I withdrew and I felt sad. (S2)” “Telefonu elimden attım ve kendimi odaya kapattım çünkü aynı olayları tekrar yaşamak insanı üzüyor. Ve direkmen içime kapanıp üzüldüm.” (S2)

The reason is being excluded, when a person is excluded, it hurts more. Then I try to console myself. I say that you are more successful than them somehow. I console you that you enroll in better schools than them. But I still feel sad. (S9).

“Sebebi dışlanmak öğretmenim insan dışlanınca daha çok kırılıyor öğretmenim. Sonra kendimi teselli etmeye çalışıyorum sen nasılsa onlardan daha başarılısın diyorum sen daha iyi okullar kazanırken onlar kazanmayacak diye teselli ediyorum ama üzgün oluyorum yine de.” (S9)

I often feel very upset. I feel sad (S6)

“Genel olarak kendimi çok kötü hissediyorum. Üzüliyorum.” (S6)

4.1.2.3 Anger

In this sub-category, participants (n=4) expressed feelings of anger towards oneself, others, and environment surrounding them. Notably, a few participants disclosed that they were unable to manage their feeling of anger following the victimization experience. This anger also includes participants’ accusation toward students who bullied them.

I felt a lot of anger, but I didn't disclose to anyone (S11)

“Çok yüksek öfke hissettim ama kimseye de açmadım.” (S11)

I felt upset because there was an unfairness happening. He was lying to me and calling me a thief. This was disturbing. Anger and sadness were my overwhelming emotions. (S12).

“Kendimi kötü hissettim çünkü ortada bir haksızlık vardı. Bana hırsız deyip yalan söylüyordu. Bu rahatsız ediciydi. Öfke ve üzümlük çok baskın duygularımdı.” (S12)

4.1.2.4 Fear/Anxiety

Most of the participants expressed their fear and anxiety after the bullying experience. Participants emphasized that bullying exacerbates feelings of fear and anxiety they feel. Some participants who went through bullying incidents disclosed that long term consequences of bullying made them afraid. Additionally, they were concerned with the repeated bullying victimization in the future. S8 stated that I am scared that this incident (bullying) may take place again. This participant’ comment also indicates how gifted students experience fear of future bullying that they may face.

You feel alone.

Yalnız hissedersin

Sometimes I felt desperate. I do not know what I can do (S4).

Zaman zaman çaresiz hissettim kendimi...Ne yapacağımı bilemedim.” (S4)

I feel sad because I'll be excluded again, or I'm scared that everyone does not like dışlanıcam diye üzülüyorum veya herkesbeni sevmeyecek diye korkuya kapılıyorum

4.1.3. Reasons For Bullying Victimization

Although bullying among mainstream students has a long history of research, an attempt to understand reasons for bullying behavior among gifted students has received little attention. For this study, it was aimed at providing an explanation that takes into consideration complex interaction between gifted students and their surrounding environment. This sub-theme demonstrated participants' view as to why they were bullied. Participants attributed their victimization to their giftedness, social and environmental conditions, and personal experience. Most of the participants mentioned their personal experience such as sense of jealousy, social environments of gifted students, and academic competitions stemming from education system for their bullying victimization. Four sub-themes emerged regarding why gifted students were victimized.

4.1.3.1. Jealousy

For the majority of participants (n=11), sense of jealousy toward gifted students is the main reason for the occurrence of victimization. Jealousy may motivate bullies since bullies receive either direct or indirect messages from the significant others surrounding them, which may trigger bullying against gifted students. Participants emphasized that gifted students who have high academic achievement, good relationships with teachers caused sense of jealousy toward gifted students for the bullies. S4 reported that I am the best students in the English class so that they envied my success. That's why I am bullied continuously in the school. Importantly, participant disclosed that victimization becomes a habit toward the gifted students. This participant undelined important point- that is bullies behavior is repetitive. Data revealed that jealousy has had indispensable effects on bullying involvement of gifted students. Intellectual abilities, academic achievements of gifted students and their good relationship with teachers were determined main issues for triggering jealousy.

People envy gifted students. Why is he gifted but I am not? They want us to be intimidated İnsanların onları kıskanması. Neden o özel yetenekli ama ben değilim. Ve herkesin

*in front of everyone. That's why they bully us
.S5*

*önünde küçük düşmenizi istiyorlar. O yüzden
zorbalık oluyor bana. S5*

*Gifted students are excluded as if they
are not human beings. Everyone does
not do this kind of behavior. They may be
jealous because of different teacher
behavior. In other words, they are
jealous of gifted students because they
are not as successful as gifted students.
S6*

*genelde özel yetenekli öğrencileri
diğerleri insan değilmiş gibi dışlıyorlar
öğretmenim. zaten herkes yapmıyor
bunu. Daha farklı hoca davranışlarına
göre kıskanıyor olabilirler öğretmenim.
Yani özel yetenekli öğrenciler daha
başarılı biz değiliz gibi sorunlarda
kıskanıyor olabilirler. S6*

The above quotations indicated that other students bullied gifted students because they want to show them in different ways. Since bullies were less likely to be successful than gifted students in their courses, they preferred to bully gifted students to prove their existence through bullying.

4.1.3.2. Being a Gifted Students

Impacts of being a gifted student on their involvement in bullying were stated by gifted students. Gifted students are aware of their differences from non-gifted counterparts' in terms of their physical appearance, interests, and high abilities. Gifted students also emphasized that they absorb topics faster, comprehend more deeply than their non-gifted peers. The faster they exceed their peers, the more visible they become. Notably, other students seek to conceal their weaknesses -such as lack of academic success- by bullying gifted students to gain attention and to make them visible in the classroom. Thus, gifted students have become targets of bullying.

*We do not think simply, how else can we find
a second or third solution from a subject.
They can find many different resolutions.
More creative. They may evaluate different
ideas. While normal people focus on a single
idea, we try to work on multiple ideas
altogether. This is a characteristic of our
special talent. That's why I think the joke is
getting too much against us. We can try to
solve a problem ourselves without any help.
We're trying to stand on our own feet about
a project or about a topic. We try to do it
without having any help (S13)*

*basit düşünmüyoruz, başka nasıl olabilir mesela
bir konudan ikinci üçüncü çözümü bulabiliriz.
Çok farklı çözüm yolu bulabilirler. Daha çok
yaratıcı. Farklı fikirler üzerine
değerlendirmeler yapabilirler. Normal insanlar
tek bir fikre odaklanırken biz birden çok fikri bir
arada götürmeye çalışıyoruz. Bu bizim özel
yetenekli olmamızın bir özelliği. Bu yüzden alay
konusunun fazlalaştığını düşünüyorum. Bir
sorunu kendimiz yardım almadan çözmeye
çalışabiliyoruz. Kendi ayaklarımız üzerinde
durmaya daha çok çalışıyoruz bir konu
hakkında bir proje hakkında. Yardım almadan
yapmaya çalışıyoruz.” (S13)*

Being different from others, being more successful than others, having different worldview more than others, having different education other than and they are conscious about it. (S8)

...diğerlerinden farklı olmak, daha başarılı olmak, farklı hobilere sahip olmak, hayata bakış açılarının daha farklı olması, daha farklı eğitim görmüş olmaları, bunun bilincinde olmaları. (S8)

4.1.3.3. Teachers' Attitudes

Although it was expected that teachers help to decrease bullying in the school environment, some teachers unconsciously or consciously, bully gifted students in front of the classroom in the mainstream schools. Participants disclosed that bullying inflicted by teachers includes name calling, sarcastic comments about gifted students. Participants mentioned that the reason behind bullying them was their resentment about their giftedness or intellect. While teachers bully gifted students, other students are encouraged to bully gifted students since bullying occurs in the group environment. This circumstance creates a vicious bullying cycle against gifted students. Besides, teachers who work in science and centers respect students' differences and talents. That's why none of the participants reported that they were bullied by teachers who work in the science and art center. Teachers have a basic role in supporting the overall well-being of the students whom they are responsible for. Based on the findings, teachers are not aware of the characteristics and psycho-social needs of the gifted students. For instance, A participant stated that:

Teachers are interested in and value us better than other students. I think that such a thing like asking me questions during the class is effective way in exposing to bullying (S5)

Öğretmenlerin bizimle daha çok ilgilenmesi, değer vermesi. Derste bana sorular sorulması gibi şeylerin zorbalığa maruz kalmamızda etkili olduğunu düşünüyorum (S5)

4.1.3.4. Competitive Environment

Participants expressed that gifted students are the target of bullying because they were perceived as popular and hard working by their peers and teachers. S13 reported that if I become in first rank in any exam, no one appreciates my achievement. On the contrary, any mistake I make exaggerates by my classmate. Based on the S13's statement, it was regarded that being a victim of bullying is related to the competitive environment in the mainstream schools. Moreover, since academic competition is the

inevitable part of our education system, parents and teachers expect their children to have a high achievement in the exams. Notably, gifted students are placed in the top 1 percent in the exams conducted by the schools, they are bullied because they are visible by other students and parents. Data also revealed that their high level of achievement makes them a target of bullying. This result implies that a context or environment which values academic achievement of students and involves intense competition can be considered as a vulnerability for gifted students. Such issue was evident in the statement of S10:

For example, when you ask a question to both gifted students and non-gifted students, as answers are evaluated, the answers gifted students responded is more explanatory and wiser than non-gifted students. We are different in terms of finding solutions and creativity. So we are subjected to a higher level of bullying than non-gifted students. a

“Mesela bir özel yetenekli öğrenciyle diğer öğrenciye soru sorduğunuzda, yanıtlara bakıldığında özel yetenekli öğrenci daha açıklayıcı ve bilgili yanıt verir. Ama normal kişi daha alt seviyede bir cevap verir. Çözüm bulma ve yaratıcılık yönünden farklıyız. O yüzden daha fazla zorbalığa maruz kalıyoruz. Sonuçta her akran arasında çekişme ve çekememe olmuştur. (S10)

4.1.4. Reactions in case of Bullying Victimization

Another sub-theme related to the how participants reacted to the experience of being bullied. A better understanding of gifted students’ reaction against bullying may improve our ability to help gifted students and develop specific anti-bullying interventions. This sub-theme included unresponsiveness, sharing with significant adults, and distancing.

4.1.4.1 Unresponsiveness

One of the ways of responding to bullying for some of the gifted students is not to respond to the bullies (n=8). Gifted students believe that in this way they feel themselves free from the bullying experience. Besides, participants drew attention to the unresponsiveness by focusing on their academic goals they set up for themselves. Gifted students try to separate themselves from the ongoing unpleasant circumstances of bullying. Besides, gifted students do not stand out in the social lives of the mainstream school, which in turn facilitate being the target of bullying.

I usually don't quarrel a lot like other girls do, when someone in my class tells me heated arguments, I just ignore them calmly because if I had a quarrel with them, there they fight I stay calm and ignore them. I do not perceive life as a simple thing. I want to view life from different angles and to question it (S11)

'Yani genelde öğretmenim çok fazla diğer kızlar gibi laf dalaşına girmiyorum bana bir şey söylendiğinde neden böyle diyorsunuz da demiyorum sakince onları sessizlikten ve görmezlikten geliyorum onları. Ben hayata basit bakmıyorum. Hayata başka açılardan bakmak ve sorgulamak.' (S11)

I try to forget what I have experienced. I do not talk about bullying with my friends. But, I try to forget it. Normally, I am the one who is obsessed with everything I lived

'Unutmaya çalışmak. Arkadaşımın o konu hakkında konuşmadım. Ama kendi kendime unutmaya çalıştım. Hatırlamamaya çalıştım. Normalde her şeyi kafaya takan biriyim.' (S13)

Extracts of participants demonstrated that victimized students used unresponsiveness as a way of stopping bullying victimization they experienced. S2 reported that I did not respond to the bullying that experience since I do not want to live it again. Gifted students dwelled on the notion that if they do not react to the bullying incidents they faced, it could not maintain in their lives.

4.1.4.2 Sharing with a Significant Adults (Parents, teachers)

Some of the participants mentioned that when they share bullying experience with significant adults surrounding them including parents, teachers make them feel relief from the detrimental impacts of bullying. Gifted students' willingness to share victimization to parents and teachers may be related to the fact that gifted students' parents and teachers might solve the problem of bullying.

My family has listened to me after realizing that I am in distress. I talked altogether about how to produce solutions to the problem. At last, process has been ended by leaving the school. (S1)

"Ailem benim sıkıntıda olduğumu gördükten sonra beni dinlediler. Nasıl çözümler üreteceğimizi beraberce konuştuk. En sonunda okuldan ayrılmamla süreç sona erdi." (S1)

I shared it with my parents and they took necessary measures. I did not resent it because I think they joked about it. Then, when it started to happen frequently, I talked to my classroom teacher and our classroom teacher talked to students who bullied' me (S2)

Ailemle paylaştım gerekli yerler zaten devreye girdi... İlk zamanlarda şaka yapıyorlardı diye çok alınmadım. Ama daha sonra sık sık olmaya başlayınca önce sınıf öğretmenimizin yanına gittim sınıf öğretmenimiz bir konuşma gerçekleştirdi." (S2)

I talked to my mother and father. They said "Annem ve babama söyledim. Onlar bana sen that you did not do anything wrong (S5) burada yanlış bir şey paylaşmamışsın dediler." (S5)

One of the participant (10) directly talked about why she consulted her parents for the bullying victimization. While she did not respond to victimization she experience, but bullies frequently maintained their bullying. Thus, she shared it with her parents. T (10) lacks knowledge and social skills to defend herself against bullying. Thus they consulted to their parents and teachers to help them to cope with their victimization.

4.1.4.3. Distancing

Some participants tend to withdraw from the environment including classroom, school as a way of reaction to their victimization experience. Participants are also inclined not to put themselves into the vicious bullying cycle by staying place where bullying happens. Some participants (n=2) revealed that their parents think that the best way to resolve the bullying victimization is to change schools where their children enroll. Participants (n=5) emphasized that distancing from the environment where they were bullied could become the best resolution to reduce bullying victimization. S13 mentioned that when she changed her school, friends in new school are friendlier, have a high degree of understanding and respect.

Process has been ended by leaving the school ... En sonunda okuldan ayrılmamla süreç sona I continued (S1) erdi." (S1)

"I mean, at first I reacted, then when I got angry, I didn't prolong it and continued on my way. If I had not continued on my way, there would have been a fight, but it was not worth fighting, I met with someone I was close to and felt relieved... Yes, I changed the environment, and I felt relieved (S12)

"Yani ilk başta tepkimi gösterdim sonra sinirlenince uzatmayıp yoluma devam ettim yoluma devam etmeseydim bir dalaş olucaktı bireyler olacaktı dalaşa değmez samimi olduğum birilerinin yanına gidip sakinleştim...Evet ortam değiştirdim işte hemen olayın üstüne arkadaşların yanına gidip düşününce neyin ne olduğu anlaşılınca rahatladım (S12)

4.1.5. Impacts of Bullying

As a result of bullying experiences, many of the gifted students suffered detrimental consequences of bullying which impacts their relations with people, academic motivation and their psychological well-being. In this sub-category, four negative

consequences of bullying were derived. These were named withdrawal, drop on academic achievement, and changes on eating habits.

4.1.5.1. Withdrawal

Withdrawal after bullying was mentioned by the participants as a reaction of the bullying victimization. Participants turn in on themselves as a way of addressing the bullying victimization. They tend to build a wall between themselves and other people which dampers their self-improvement. Withdrawal was considered as a self-protection in the analysis and meant that gifted students seem emotionally unconcerned or unaffected following bullying in order to conceal how sad or upset they had actually become by bullying.

I kept my distance from my friends. I tried to forget it by myself. I do not want to remember. S7

Arkadaşım ile arama mesafe koydum. Ama kendi kendime unutmaya çalıştım. Hatırlamamaya çalıştım S7

I withdraw into myself and I prefer to be quieter and less visible. My opinion is in this direction, I think that the less visible I am, the more I will be accepted by peers and the less I will be exposed to peer bullying.” (S6)

‘kendi içime döndüm.. Benim fikrim bu yönde yani ne kadar az görünür olursam ne kadar sili bir tip olursam o kadar çok kabullenirim ve o kadar az akran zorbalığına maruz kalırım diye düşünüyorlar bence.” (S6)

4.1.5.2. Drop on Academic Achievement

Participants emphasized that after bullying experience, their academic performance tends to decrease. Some participants highlighted that bullying victimization resulted in underachievement which is a really important issue for both gifted students and their parents since parents of the gifted students have an achievement-oriented attitude.

Because it was so hard on me. When I was depressed, I couldn't focus on my lessons. My grades weren't very high, but they weren't what I wanted either. I wouldn't want to hide behind these events, but it inevitably affects me. Being depressed all the time and crying can have a bad effect on me(S10)

Çünkü kendime çok yükleniyordum. Moralim bozuk olunca da odaklanamıyordum derslerime...Derslerimi de olumsuz etkiledi kendimi hiç gösteremedim. Derslerim çok yüksek değildi ama istediğim gibi de değildi. Ben bu olayların arkasına sığınmak istemezdim ama ister istemez etkiliyor. Sürekli moralimin bozuk olması ağlama kötü etki yaratabiliyor. S10

When such things happen, then my motivation drops a little bit, and my lessons decrease a

“Böyle şeyler yapılıncaya o zaman da motivasyon biraz düşüyor derslerim azıcık

little like this... This (bullying) affects my lessons.” (S3)

böyle azalışa geçiyor... Buda derslerime etki ediyor.” (S3)

4.1.5.3. Changes on eating habits

Some of the participants (n=2) acknowledged that eating habits have altered after experiencing bullying victimization because repeated bullying victimization at school exacerbated somatic complaints.

‘But when something like bullying happens, I eat a lot more like that, even my teacher. Sometimes if it’s a week with a lot of things like mock happenings, I eat much more than regular week for breakfast that week, I eat almost the whole table that day. ‘ (S3)

“Ama öyle bir şey olduğu zaman daha fazla çok fazla yerim böyle böyle hatta öğretmenim bazen böyle çok fazla şey olan bir haftaysa çok fazla zorladığım çok fazla alaya edilmişlerse öğretmenim o hafta kahvaltıda zaten normalde böyle çok fazla şey yaparım o gün neredeyse bütün sofrayı ben yerim.” (S3)

In sum, the core category, bullying, yielded five categories reflecting the participants’ experiences regarding bullying victimization. This core category included a variety of explanations concerning bullying experiences of gifted students such as types of bullying they were exposed to, their reactions, feelings, impacts of the victimization on gifted students.

4.2. Theme: Support System

A notable purpose of the current study was to identify resilience and vulnerabilities utilized by the participants to prevent bullying victimization. This theme illustrated participants’ perspectives regarding the support system which they consulted to prevent bullying within schools. Bullying and resilience studies has emphasized the importance of social support for positive outcomes and, the presence of a supportive and attentive adult has enabled to make notable difference in a students’ life (Malecki, Demaray, & Elliott, 2004). Research on gifted students also has demonstrated that attentive and supportive adults are influential factors in reaching out positive outcomes after negative life events they experience (Jolly & Matthews, 2012). In the support system theme, the five sub-categories emerged. These were named peer support, parent support, school support, teacher support and counseling service.

4.2.1. Peer Support

Peer interaction in the school is the crucial part of students' live. Peer support in this study revealed that it alleviated negative consequences of bullying on gifted student's adaptation. Many of the gifted students in the study specifically mentioned that the support of the peer helped them maintain their encouragement, motivation and self-esteem. These findings are of particular significance for the gifted students. Besides, some of the gifted students also stated that peers often do not understand what gifted students experience after bullying and did not provide the necessary support gifted students need. To sum up, peer support is perceived as either beneficial or insufficient by the gifted students. Peer support for this study is named as: accompanying, underestimating incident, lack of communication

4.2.1.1. Accompanying

Friends are insiders of the peer groups who play key roles in the lives of gifted students. Some participants expected their friends to remain with them against the bully. Gifted students emphasized that when their friends step in and help them out by saying something to the bullies, they make them feel supported and empowered.

They were with me while I was weeping a lot. They supported me. Their effects have been like my family. They also had an effect on my recovering after I fell on bad days (S2)

'Çok ağlıyordum o zamanlar her zaman yanımda oldular. Beni desteklediler. Ailem gibi etkileri oldu. D66üştüğümde kalmamada onların da etkisi olmuştur.' (S2)

I think they support me well. You can do better, you're not one like that. they can never underestimate you, they defend me this way (S4).

"Bence beni iyi bir şekilde desteklerler. Sen yaparsın sen öyle biri değilsin. Seni asla küçük göremezler bu şekilde beni savunurlar diye düşünüyorum." (S4)

'A few of my friends said that they don't make fun of the way people talk, it's such a bad thing. When they say like that I felt like someone is with me (S5)

"Birkaç arkadaşım zorbalık yapanlara insanların konuşmasıyla dalga geçilmez bu çok kötü bir şey dediler. Onların böyle demesi sanki yanımda birileri varmış gibi hissettirdi." (S5)

I had a friend named Nur. She said to a friend who was bullied; Why are you acting like this, be kind to people. I felt like there was someone next to me when she said that." (S7)

'Nur diye bir arkadaşım vardı. Zorbalık yapan arkadaşşıma şöyle demişti. Niye böyle davranıyorsun, insanlara kibar davran. Onun böyle demesiyle yanımda biri varmış gibi hissettim.' (S7)

Participants' statements highlighted the importance of peer responses when participants dealt with bullying. Having positive feedback from their peers was rewarding for gifted students. Therefore, accompanying gifted students in the face of bullying was an effective resilience strategy to manage the bullying they faced

4.2.1.2. Lack of communication

Participants underlined that peer to peer communication is considered to decrease or increase bullying involvement of gifted students. Gifted students mentioned that if they have a lack of communication with their peers, they can not easily cope with challenges associated with bullying. Lack of communication with peers for gifted students is thought to be a vulnerability. On the contrary, supportive and caring communication with peers were seen as valuable support for gifted students.

My friends did not understand how severe bullying I experienced. I expected them to understand (S2)

Zorbalığın katlanılamaz boyutta olduğunu arkadaşlarım anlamadı. Anlamalarını bekliyordum (S2).

It depends on peer relations. If they form a positive relationship with peers, they support each other. If they have distance with their peers, they do not support and hamper their relations with peers. Peers are more influential in resolving problems than parents and teachers which in turn depends on relationships they form

akran ilişkilerine bağlı. Olumlu ilişkiler kurabilmişse sürekli birbirlerine destek olabiliyorlar. Diğer arkadaşlarıyla arasına mesafe koymuşsa o zaman akranlarının herhangi bir yardımları olmadığı gibi tam tersine ayağına destekleyip yanında duruyorlar.” (S4)

S4 emphasized the insensitivity of her peers. S4 also underlined that this lack of communication contributes to the more victimization. If peers responded on behalf of victim; they are often effective in reducing victimization participants experienced.

4.2.1.3. Competitive environment

Academic competition within the school appeared to result in rising bullying among the peers, specifically targeting the gifted students. Some participants emphasized that the more gifted students getting accomplished in the exams, the more they will be pressured by bullies.

The success of some and the failure of others turns into pressure after a while. Sometimes it is insufficient because not all of them are

“Bazılarının başarılı olması bazılarımızın olmaması bir süre sonra baskıya dönüşmekte. Bazen yetersiz oluyor çünkü hepsinde başarı

successful. When they fail, it changes the view of others toward them. He left behind us and he is not able to keep up with us (S2) *olmuyor. Başarısız olduklarında bu onlara karşı bakış açısını da değiştiriyor. Bu geride kaldı bu bize ayak uyduramıyor (S2)*

4.2.1.4. Side with Bullies

Some participants stated that some peers backed up bullies instead of them. A few participants reported that some classmates in the mainstream school collaborated themselves with the bullies in order to ostracize gifted students. Participants underscored the importance of peer support for the gifted students. When peers supported bullies, they felt disappointed and sorrowful. They expected more understanding towards themselves and to help them make communication which gifted students feel themselves safe and happy.

I can't really tell that's enough. It would be better if my friends who bullied me would show the same tolerance. My friends could have been a little more tolerant. It would have been better if they had told me that I shouldn't have played with bullies at first. It would have been better if they had not been close friends with students whom I don't speak (S12) *Tam olarak yeterli diyemem. Keşke bana bu zorbalığı yapan arkadaşlarımda aynı anlayışı gösterselerdi daha iyi olurdu. Arkadaşlarım biraz daha anlayışlı olsalardı, hiç oynamamam gerektiğini söyleselerdi daha güzel olabilirdi. Benim konuşmadığım arkadaşlarla samimi olmasalardı daha iyi olabilirdi.” (S12)*

In sum, the participants mentioned the importance of peer support in addressing victimization while the. Notably, data indicated that the gifted students-peer relationship impacts their ability to manage bullying victimization.

4.2.2. Parent Support

Previous studies demonstrated that parent factor impacts on bullying victimization (Malm & Henrich, 2019; Harcourt et al., 2014). Most of the students stated that they were happy in their family environments and felt supported by their parents after victimization. Students also mentioned that they sought help from their parents and informed them following the bullying that was taking place at school. Parent support has four sub-categories: Thoughtful, parent pressure, intolerance and communication style.

4.2.2.1. Thoughtful

This sub-theme reflected the positive reactions that gifted students received by their parents following the victimization. Thoughtfulness shown by parents include understanding gifted students and being with them without judging them following the victimization. Several participants (n=7) mentioned that they spent more time with their parents, allowing them to express their thoughts and feelings with family members. Participants's description below showed how parents demonstrate thoughtfulness to their gifted kids.

After they witnessed that I was distressed, They listened to me. We talk about how to produce solutions altogether (S1) *Ailem benim sıkıntıda olduğumu gördükten sonra beni dinlediler. Nasıl çözümler üreteceğimizi beraberce konuştuk (S1)*

As I said, my mother and father show patience and understanding. They try to attract my attention and calm me down (S4) *Annem ile babam dediğim gibi anlayışla karşılıyorlar sabır gösteriyorlar ilgimi çekmeyi böyle beni sakinleştirmeye çalışırlar (S4)*

Participants underlined that how love and attention from their parents positively impacted their management of victimization they experience. Similarly, S6 reported that when I told them what I experience and we decided how to cope with it altogether. Then, bullying did not seem big problem for me. This statement indicates that when participants have loving and caring parents, they are easily cope with victimization they went through.

4.2.2.2. Parental Pressure

Parent pressure in this study referred to the parents' academic achievement expectations. Some participants (n=3) indicated that gifted students were oppressed by the parents which resulted in vulnerability within the gifted students against the victimization. For example, S10 stated:

My parents insisted that I do not tell anyone to enroll in the science and art center. Furthermore, They want me not to tell my brother. My brother got into this exam but he was not accepted by the science and art center. My parents should not have suppressed so much. They were afraid of the reaction which I received and They have done this to protect *“Benim bilim sanat merkezine gittiğimi kimseye söylememe konusunda çok basturdular. Hatta ben kardeşime bile söyleyemedim bir süre. Kardeşim de bu sınava girdi ama kazanamadı. Ailem bu kadar bastırmamalıydılar. Bana gelen tepkilerden korktular ve karşıdaki kişinin psikolojisini*

their mood. I wish They haven't oppressed so much (S10) *düşünerek yaptılar bu işi. Keşke bu kadar bastırmasalardı.” (S10)*

Similarly, S7 disclosed that when I oppressed about my classes and my relationship with my peers, I felt like I am in distress. I do not like the way they treated me in this way. This statements reflects the effects of parent's oppression on gifted students. S8 disclosed that her family got angry about her behavior and do not become friends with many students. Participants believed that oppression they experience starts within their family atmosphere.

4.2.2.3. Intolerance

Some participants (n=3) mentioned that parents are reluctant to understand what their gifted students experienced following the bullying victimization. This feeling of intolerance about bullying aroused the parents' perceptions and impressions about the bullying. Parents' intolerance toward gifted students and their victimization experience induced the vulnerability for participants. Participants expressed their opinion as follows:

I do not think that families understand us. Nevertheless, there are many families with gifted children who can understand their gifted children. *“Ben ailelerin bizi anladığını düşünmüyorum. özel yetenekli insanları çoğu ailenin en azından iyi olan aileler de var tabi.” S8*

I wish They had been more considerate. Because the first time I told my mother about the bullying, She did not care about it as her first reaction. She said to me, “Why do you keep saying bad events as an example”. She said “tell me nice things” (S9) *Daha anlayışlı olsalardı. Çünkü ben o olayı anneme anlattığımda ilk önce git yanımdan falan dedi dinlemedi işim var dedi. Yine kavga mı anlatacaksın dedi. Neden kötü şeyleri bana örnek olarak anlatıyorsun. Güzel şeyler anlat bana dedi.” (S9)*

The extract above highlighted that despite the participants disclosed their victimization in school, the parents provided insufficient support. S7 also mentioned that if I have shared victimization with my parrents, they could not have understood me.

4.2.2.4. Communication Style

Data revealed that how parents of the gifted students communicate about the bullying has enormous effects on the gifted students. When the parents of the gifted students have the active listening skills and provide the support their children need, gifted students who experienced bullying may feel better and recover from the detrimental impacts of the bullying victimization. Participants' views on communication style of parents were illustrated as:

My family supports me well. I always tell them what the problem is. We will find a solution together. We try to resolve it quickly. My parents talk with my teacher when it is necessary. Sometimes they share with my school counselor about how they behave in this event. I sometimes can't express myself to my parents with words. My parents understand me very well and immediately start to find solutions (S4)

"Ailem beni iyi bir şekilde destekler. Hemen onlara anlatırım. Çözüm yolu buluruz beraber. Hızlı bir şekilde üstesinden gelmeye çalışırız. Gerekğinde öğretmenimle konuşular. Bazen de rehber öğretmenimizle görüşürler. Nasıl davranmaları konusunda...Bazen kendimi onlara anlatamam. Sözcükler yetmez. Bazen de onlar beni çok iyi anlar hemen çözüm bulmaya başlarlar (S4)

My father and mother always support me. I love my siblings as well. I have grown up in great love. My father and mother warn me about bullying. Don't feel sad, do not care about it. He can not resist my sadness. He feels sad like I felt. If I feel sad, he feels sad, too (S6).

"Annem ve babam her zaman arkamdalar. Kardeşlerim de onları çok seviyorum ayrıca. Çok büyük bir sevgi içinde büyüdüm ben. Annem ve babam bu konuda beni çok uyarırlar. Üzülme, onu mu takacaksın şeklinde. Babam bu konuda çok şakacı bir adamdır. Benim üzülmem hiç katlanamaz. O da üzülür benim gibi. Ben üzülürsem babam da üzülür." (S6)

4.2.2.5. Lack of Knowledge

Some of the participants emphasized that parents are not aware of seriousness and magnitude of victimization for their children. Data revealed that parents do not have a common understanding of bullying. S7 disclosed that her parents told her you do not know your friends that is why these kinds of incidents you experienced. This statement highlighted that parents are not aware of the seriousness of bullying and perceive it as a part of friendship issue.

You will address such a person in your future life. They told me that you ignore these incidents (S12)

Hayatta hep böyle insanlar karşına çıkacak. Onlara çok kulak asmamamı söylediler. Görmezden gel bu olayları dediler (S12)

To summarize, most of the participants mentioned the importance of the parents regarding victimization. It was underlined that while intolerance of parents and lack of

knowledge regarding victimization were seen as vulnerability factors, supportive and thoughtful parenting were considered resilience against victimization.

4.2.3. School Support

It is needed to ascertain bullying with regard to school related factors. This sub-theme included school principals and teachers' interest in reducing bullying, their intervention when gifted students were victimized, and the support the gifted students were given by the school. To provide a safe and bully free environment for the gifted students, school support was needed to understand. In this-sub-theme, attitudes of school administrators, teacher's support and support of counseling services emerged on the basis of data.

4.2.3.1. Attitude of School Administrators

The school managers are the people that has the power to have an impact on all actions in school. Participants mentioned that school managers in the mainstream schools, except science and art centers, should show active interventions to the bullying taking place in their schools. Data also revealed the importance of school administrators involvement in terms of bullying prevention. For example, participants said:

All teachers and school managers should involve in bullying prevention (S7) *Tüm öğretmenlerin ve kurum idaresinin de bu işin içine girmesi gerekiyor.” (S7)*

The school administration can provide the necessary information in the meetings conducted in the school as sessions. They could tell students in the classroom by telling them not to be silent about the bullying (S10). *“Okul yönetimi şu şekilde gerekli bilgilendirmeler seanslar halinde yapılabilir. Akran zorbalığını anlatabilirdi. Bu konuda sınıfta çocuklara susmamaları gerektiğini söyleyebilirlerdi (S10)*

4.2.3.2. Taking a More Active Stance Against the Bullying

Several of the participants (n=5) highlighted the school managers should address the bullying actively. They believed that school managers have sufficient resources to resolve bullying victimization that happens in the school. S1 emphasized that school managers should call the parents whose children are bullies, a suspension from school

as well. This statement implies that parents of the bullies must be informed and bullies were punished by school administrators.

I wish that they had talked with parents whose children are bullies. They said that your children are behaving incorrectly in school. It may decrease bullying they engage in the school (S5) “Zorbalık yapan öğrencinin aileleri ile konuşsaydılar. Onlara çocuklarının yanlış davranışlarda bulunduğunu söyleselerdi. Belki bu zorbalığı azaltabilirlerdi.” (S5)

4.2.3.3. Providing Support and Attention

Some participants indicated that support and attention provided by school managers may help them overcome detrimental effects of the victimization. It also contributes to decreasing bullying victimization that took place in the mainstream schools. For example, some participants explained:

The school needs to form correct communication and healthy relationship with students (S2) ‘Okul öğrencilerle doğru iletişim, sağlıklı bir iletişim kurması gerekiyor.’ (S2)

Individual interviewing could have been increased or we can ask them what they want. I want my teachers to guide other students who are bullies as well. I want teachers to put them on activities so that they realize that these activities are very important and valuable (S11). Bireysel görüşmelerimiz arttırabilelerdi veya ne istediğimizi yanlarına çağırıp sorabilirlerdi. Öğretmenlerimin zorbalık yapan diğer kesimi de yönlendirmesini isterdim. Onları da bu tür faaliyetlere katarak bunların ne kadar önemli ve değerli olduğunu hissettirmelerini isterdim. (S11)

Statements from the participants above demonstrates what the victim of the bullying wants to be treated by school administrators after encountering a bullying victimization. It implies that victimized gifted students would receive proper help and inform the parents of bullies to solve bullying.

4.2.3.4. Preparing Bullying Prevention Plan

Some participants stated that school managers should prepare a bullying prevention plan for addressing the bullying victimization happening in their schools. Participants want school managers to prepare a prevention program, it should include firm punishments. Participants emphasized that all of the school personnel must be included in the bullying prevention plan prepared by school managers. Participant said:

Only thing is that school managers may execute punishment for students who bully other students. We know that there have been punishments ranging from suspension from school to decreasing their grades (S8).

Okul idaresinin yapabileceği tek şey ceza vermek bir öğrenciye. Gerek uzaklaştırma olsun gerek belge alamama gerek notlarında kırılma olsun, okuldan atma olsun bu tür disiplin cezalarını biliyoruz.” (S8)

As it was mentioned, there is not currently any intervention or prevention programmes related to bullying within schools. While it was mandatory to prepare a strategic plan to prevent and decrease violent behaviour in schools, the existence of this plan was not specifically known by participants.

4.2.4. Teacher Support

Teachers play a crucial role in addressing bullying victimization taking place in both schools and virtual environments. Findings of the present study in relation to both gifted students and teachers yielded three sub-categories named: Teachers’ intervention, lack of knowledge regarding bullying and being more supportive.

4.2.4.1. Teachers’ Intervention

Analysis of the data revealed that all participants (n=13) perceived that bullying is a serious problem for gifted students. In this sense, participants emphasized that teachers should intervene appropriately. Participants of the study stated as follows:

‘The first time these events happen, the teacher should intervene. They should talk with their parents. They should consider it professionally. At that moment, teachers should have reacted like: you cannot talk to your friend like in front of the class.’ (S4)

“İlk daha bu olayların yaşandığı anda öğretmen bu olaylara müdahale etmeli. Anne babayla görüşmeli. Bunu biraz profesyonelce düşünmeli. O anda sınıf ortamında arkadaşınla bu şekilde konuşamazsın.” (S4)

‘I wish my teachers would have stopped my friend's behavior. I want neither me nor my friends to be bullied. I would like that my friend were not punished but it must be done something preventive not to harm other people (S5)

“Öğretmenlerimin o arkadaşımın davranışını durdurmasını isterdim. Sadece benim değil diğer arkadaşlarımda zorbalığa maruz kalmasını istemezdim. Arkadaşımı herhangi bir ceza değil de önleyecek bir şey yapmalarını isterdim çünkü farklı kişilere de öyle zarar vermesin.’(S5)

These statements above expressed what participants want their teachers to perform when they deal with bullying. In this sense, teachers of participants need to employ

negotiation and conflict resolution, such as bringing bullies and victims together, talking with their parents and helping them form healthy relationship. Specifically, the participants highlighted that the teachers's interventions play an instrumental role in solving bullying incidents in the school.

4.2.4.2. Lack of Knowledge Regarding the Bullying

Some participants (n=5) stated that teachers working in the mainstream schools need to expand their knowledge and ability to recognize bullying. Participants are generally pleased with the knowledge of the teachers working in the science and art centers regarding identifying and intervening in the bullying. Several participants emphasized that teachers do not have sufficient to support gifted students when bullying happens. S8 reported that teachers do not ask us whether we have problem or not. They just told you are the students of the science high school and they do not care about other bullied us. One participant stated as:

Teachers do not have time to assign gifted children in crowded classrooms. They throw them behind because they have other things to teach (S6) *Öğretmenlerin kalabalık sınıflarda bu çocuklara ayıracak zamanı yok. Yetiştirmesi gereken diğer şeyler olduğu için onları ketliyorlar.” (S6)*

4.2.4.3. Being a More Attentive and Supportive

Through the analysis of the data, it was apparent that participants want teachers to be more willing to help victimized gifted students. It was evident that the more teachers are supportive and attentive to the gifted students who have the history of bullying victimization, the less gifted students feel the distress because of the bullying victimization. S7 reported that there was a student who bullied him. Teacher talked with him and his parents. Then, he stopped to bullying me with the help and support of my teacher.

4.2.5. Counseling Service

Bullying is an important public health problem. Various participants reiterated that school counselors are important stakeholders who can deal with both bullies and victims. Participants reported that school counselors may perform to identify both the

bullies who are engaged in conflictual peer interactions and gifted students who are at risk for victimization. It also revealed that school counselors can collaborate with teachers and school managers to improve learning environments at school. Findings of the present study concerning counseling services revealed two sub-themes as named: providing better support for the victims and interviewing with the bullies and victims.

4.2.5.1. Providing Better Support for The Victim

Several participants reported that school counselors may provide sufficient support for the gifted students because of their experience and knowledge when gifted students were bullied. These support include talking with victims, teaching the social skills for the victims.

I think that the most important part is to talk about it with the student, to talk about the mood of the student. In this way, the student will be less affected.” (S6)

Bence en önemli kısım bunu öğrenci ile konuşmak, öğrencinin psikolojisiyle ilgili konuşmak. Bu şekilde öğrenci daha az etkilenmiş olur.” (S6)

If we talk about victims they may experience a psychological collapse. Therefore, they should be provided psychological support. I think that it can be helped by saying you can handle it. Self-esteem of victims should be enhanced. I think social

Zorbalık yapılana gelirse onda psikolojik çöküntü yaşanabilir. O yüzden ona psikolojik destek verilmeli. Sen bunların üstesinden gelebilirsin diye yardım edilmeli bence. Öz güveni arttırılmalı. Sosyal beceriler kazandırılmalı bence.” (S10)

4.2.5.2. Interviewing with the Bullies and Victims

Analysis of data yielded that school counselors may play a critical role improving interactions between bullies and victims. Some participants emphasized that they may help students to develop most appropriate behaviors for addressing the bullying victimization.

Counseling services can interview students. Of course, counseling services conduct classroom meetings. (S6)

Rehberlik servisi görüşmeler yapılabilir. Kesinlikle sınıf görüşmeleri olabilir.” (S6)

In this process, friends who are bullies could have been referred to the counseling service. Bullies have reasons to bully other children.

“Belki bu süreçte arkadaşımı da rehberliğe gönderebilirlerdi. Neden böyle yaptığını belki onun içinde de bir nedeni vardır. Onun

After understanding the real reason for bullying, it would be easy to resolve the bullying problem in the school. Therefore, bullies should have been referred to the counseling service (S5) *neden yaptığını öğrendikten sonra nedenini buldukları zaman ona çözüm üretebilmeleri daha kolay olurdu. O yüzden rehberliğe göndermeleri lazım.” (S5)*

In sum, the support theme generated five categories reflecting the participants’ support systems regarding bullying victimization. This core category ensured a variety of explanations concerning the bullying experience of gifted students in different contexts ranging from peers to parents. Findings of this theme reflected the micro system of the gifted students and how this system impacted victimization of gifted students.

4.3. Theme: Gifted Identity

In this present study, gifted identity emerged as a third theme of the study. It represented how gifted students perceived their giftedness in the face of bullying. Gifted identity in this study emerged as thinking pattern, problem solving abilities, high level of self-esteem, self-regulation, academic accomplishment in relation to both their giftedness and bullying victimization.

4.3.1. Thinking Pattern

A number of the participants reported that advanced thinking has contributed to dealing with bullying victimization they experienced. Thinking patterns include practical thinking, intuitive, analyzing circumstances quickly. These thinking patterns have influenced how gifted students deal with bullying victimization.

After these incidents, I do not want to shape myself into a certain pattern. I am not a loser. That’s what I tried to forget about victimization. If not, I may feel like a loser, vile and worthless in the school. This could drop my academic success in the school. I tried to control myself. I have a hope to cope with victimization (S3)

“Bu olaydan sonra kendimi bir kalıba sokmak istedim. Ezik olmak istemiyordum. O yüzden o olayları hatırlamamaya çalıştım. Yoksa okulda sınıfta kendimi ezilmiş, küçük ve değersiz hissedecektim. Bu da tabii ki okuldaki başarıyı düşürecek. Kendi kendimi kontrol etmeye çalıştım. Olaya pozitif yönden baktım. Bunun üstesinden gelme umudum vardı.” (S3)

Giftedness results in reasoning ability. The one who has different thinking patterns does not tend to aggression so that tendency of being bullied diminishes, too. I can stay calm.flexibility is related to giftedness

“Özel yetenekli olmak akıl yürütmeye sebep oluyor. Düşünce biçimi farklı olanlarda şiddet eğilimi fazla olmuyor ve bu yüzden karşı şiddet zorbalık eğilimi de azalıyor. Daha sakin kalabiliyorum...Esnek fikirlilikte

because we can view events from different angles and our thinking structure is different as well (S12).

olmak da özel yeteneklilikle alakalı çünkü olaylara farklı açılardan bakıyoruz ve düşünce yapımız daha farklı.” (S12)

4.3.2. Problem solving abilities

Some of the participants acknowledged that problem-solving abilities of gifted students because of their advanced cognitive thinking abilities help them resolve bullying victimization they experienced. They reported that they analyzed the circumstance, attempted to find novel solutions to the bullying victimization. The participants described how to use the problem solving abilities as follows:

'I think we adapt quickly. Coping with bullying and protecting ourselves from both psychological and physical violence. We can overcome peer bullying more easily because we can solve problems and solve problems more easily. We perceive it as a process. Coping with the anger, resentment and sadness caused by psychological pressure or bullying victimization. we think about how to overcome this, how to deal with it. After a while, we get themselves out of this victimization (S6).

“Bence daha hızlı uyum sağlama. Onunla baş edebilme, kendimizi koruma hem psikolojik hem de fiziksel şiddetten. Problem çözebilme, problemleri daha kolay çözebildiğimiz için daha kolay akran zorbalığını aşabiliyoruz. Bunu bir süreç olarak görüyoruz. İlk başta psikolojik baskı ya da nasıl bir psikolojik zorbalığa maruz kalıyorsa bunun verdiği kızgınlık, kırgınlık, üzüntüyle baş etme. Bunu nasıl atlatabilirim diye düşünüyoruz, bununla nasıl baş ederim diye düşünüyoruz, bir değil birkaç çözüm yolu üretiyor, bunları planlayıp uygulamaya geçiriyoruz. Bir bakıyorsunuz bir süre sonra kendimizi bu zorbalığın içerisinden çıkartıyoruz.” (S6)

4.3.3. High Level Of Self-Esteem

Based on the analysis of the data, the concept of self-esteem is perceived as either asset or vulnerability by participants. Self-esteem is considered as how a person views her or himself. Some of the participants drew attention to the negative impact of self-esteem on bullying experiences of gifted students. In this study, they emphasized that high self-esteem, specifically academic domains, make them targets of bullying. Some behavior of the gifted students can be perceived as high self-esteem by non-gifted students, which make them targets of bullying. On the other hand, some of the participants reported that high levels of self-esteem may enable them to cope with bullying victimization.

Because we have high level of self-esteem (S2) *'Hocam özgüvenimiz yüksek olduğu için.'* (S2)

'Having self-esteem and having encouragement from their environment helps us to cope with bullying (S4) *"Özgüvenimizin olması ve çevreden sürekli teşvik edilmeleri zorbalıkla başa çıkmada bize yardımcı oluyor."* (S4)

"I can say self-esteem. I rely on myself and I didn't listen to them because I knew that I would accomplish something at the end of my study. I also believe in myself about how I behave. In this incident, I reacted as I believed in myself. I didn't care about them." (S11) *"Özgüven diyebilirim. Kendime güveniyordum ve yaptığım işlerin sonunda bir şeyler başaracağımı bildiğim için de onları dinlemedim. Kendime inanırım genelde nasıl davranmam konusunda da. Bu durumda da kendime inandığım şekilde davrandım. Onları umursamadım."* (S11)

4.3.4. Self-Regulation

Various participants reported that their self-regulation has impacted how to behave and think following bullying victimization. They stated that they can control themselves, their feelings, which in turn, derived from their giftedness. In this sense, self-regulation provides self-protection from the negative effect of bullying. Some of the participants commented like:

'And lastly, my self-control is good. I can control how I react (S11) *Ve son olarak oto kontrolümde iyidir. Nasıl tepki vereceğimi kontrol edebilirim."* (S11)

4.3.5. Academic Accomplishment

Based on the analysis of data, giftedness seems to be equal to academic accomplishment. Being recognized for their academic achievement is crucial to address bullying victimization. Academic accomplishment had a compensatory function for gifted students. Gifted students developed a thinking that as long as they are the top students in the school, they keep them safe from bullying victimization. Various participants stated that high academic achievement of gifted students protected them from being bullied.

I am the person who utilized his abilities very well. If you do not care about a person and exceed him in the exam, you can defeat him easily. You bully me but you are a worthless person. being hardworking conveys an important message to the bully (S10). *'Elimdeki yetenekleri iyi kullanan bir insanım. Bir insanı takmazsanız ve sınavlarda onun üstesindeyseniz bu ona bir göz bakışıyla bile yeter. Sen bana zorbalık yapıyorsun ama sen hiçbir işe yaramıyorsun demek modunda oluyor. Çalışkan olmak büyük bir mesaj karşı tarafa.'* (S10)

4.4. Theme: Coping Strategies

One of the purposes of this study was to uncover coping or resilience strategies that gifted students employ in the face of bullying victimization. Resilience strategies that gifted students employ following the bullying victimization may provide a more comprehensive understanding of bullying among gifted students and may help researchers prepare more effective prevention and intervention programs targeting gifted students. Data analysis yielded that gifted students have used different strategies to preserve themselves from bullying victimization and its detrimental effects. In this theme, five sub-themes were derived. These are focusing on himself/herself and classes, developing social skills.

4.4.1. Focusing on Himself/Herself and Classes

Data analysis revealed that gifted students endorsed internalizing strategies such as introversion to cope with bullying victimization. Some participants stated that they focused on their goals set for themselves, lived their own inner world, rather than seeking support or developing assertiveness abilities after victimization experience. Through introverting, gifted students built a territory where they were alone, felt safe and avoided bullying. For instance, participant stated as follows:

“It may be that being a gifted student is related to being successful, and academic success in classes and projects may help them to recover from it more quickly, even if they are upset.” (S2)

’Özel yetenekli öğrenci olmanın başarılı olmayla bağlantılı olduğunu düşünüp derslere, projelere akademik anlamdaki başarılar, üzülseler bile daha çabuk atlatmalarına sebep oluyor olabilir. Ben öyleydim.” (S2)

4.4.2. Developing Social Skills

This sub-theme revealed that gifted students need to develop social skills as a coping strategy in relation to bullying victimization. Participants emphasized that they should apply for social skills to adapt themselves into the both classroom and mainstream school following victimization. Social skills to understand human relationships and signals from other people were some of the benefits they gained by developing their social skills. Examples of this sub-category was as follows:

I think gifted students are educated to fit in society. They need to enhance their awareness to surpass their potential and to form their thinking system (S6).

'Bence özel yeteneklilere toplum içine daha iyi karışabilmeleri için biraz eğitim verilmeli. Dersler filan güzel ama bence düşünce sistemini oturtmaları ve kendi potansiyellerini aşabilmeleri için farkındalığın artması gerekiyor bence. (S6)

4.4.3. Increasing Their Knowledge toward Bullying Victimization

Some participants reported that all key players in the schools including peers, teachers and school managers need to improve their knowledge regarding bullying. Some participants (S2, S5, S7) stated that teachers need to expand their knowledge and ability to recognize bullying. They also ask teachers to inform them about how they solve this problem. In this regard, S8 uttered that teachers do not recognize that bullying is a crucial problem and result in serious concern. In this regard, teachers' tendency to underestimate bullying behaviours happening in the classroom increase these type of incidence in the classroom. Hence, teachers and school personnel who have sufficient knowledge concerning bullying may feel more comfortable coping with bullying when they are confronted. A participant stated as:

It is necessary to teach all of the children that they should not be involved in bullying. Teachers teach them. Unfortunately many of the teachers are not conscious concerning impacts of bullying (S1).

'Zorbalık yapmamasının gerektiğinin eğitimi bütün çocuklara verilmesi gerekiyor. Bunu verecekler de öğretmenlerdir. Öğretmenlerin bunun farkında olması gerek. Ne yazık ki öğretmenlerin birçoğu bunun farkında değil.'

4.4.4 Joining Extracurricular Activities

Some of the participants were extremely active in their both mainstream schools and science and art center, whether it was sports, music clubs. By engaging themselves in school activities, these students were able cope with the bullying. There also was a direct relationship between the number of activities that victims of bullying participated in and the severity of the bullying, The more activity, the less gifted students were bullied.

4.4.4.1 Avoiding Stress

Findings revealed that taking part in the extracurricular activities alleviate the distress gifted students feel due to bullying victimization. Some of the participants stated as:

I can say that it helps me to get away from my burdens. It definitely has an impact (S1). *'Sıkıntılarımdan biraz uzaklaşmada yardım ediyor diyebilirim. Kesinlikle etkisi var.'* (S1)

Make me feel comfortable (S4) *"... Beni rahatlatıyor."* (S4)

Make me feel better. It motivates me. It decreases the stress I experienced and witnessed (S6) *'... Beyni rahatlatıyor. Beni motive ettiğini düşünüyorum. Yaşadığım ve şahit olduğum stres azalıyor.'* (S6)

It decreases stress that lives by taying in the group (S11). *" Yaşadığım stresi azaltıyor grup içerisinde olmak."* (S11)

4.4.4.2 Forming a Relationship with New People

Several of the participants stated that they build a relationship with new students in the extracurricular activities as a way of addressing victimization.

It helps me get closer with my friend and lower my energy (S5). *...arkadaşımla yakınlaşmama ve enerjimi atmaya yardımcı oluyor."* (S5)

4.5. Summary of the Findings

As a phenomological qualitative research, this study unraveled the resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying. Aim of the study was to understand the resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying and how individual, parent, peer and school factors affected their resilience and vulnerabilities in the face of the bullying. For this aim, four research questions were prepared to serve the research aims. Here, the summary of the research findings were given based on the research questions.

Since the purposive sampling strategy was used in this study, participants who have victimization experience were included to the study. As the theme 1 (bullying

experience) indicated that participants have experienced different forms of bullying. This theme was crucial in understanding the context of the participants because when we understand the meaning attributed to their bullying experience.⁹⁹⁹

Form of the bullying participants reported that they were mainly bullied in the form of verbal bullying (teasing, derogatory comments) and exclusion from the group. As the emotions aroused from the victimization experience demonstrated that participants exhibited similar feelings in the literature: sadness, unfairness, anger and fear/anxiety. However, when looking at the intensity of these feelings, gifted students more intensely experienced those feelings than their non-gifted counterparts. They were also specific reasons that gifted students have been target of the bullies. For instance, being a gifted students make them the target of the bullies because they are perceived as a hard-working, and successful students. These characteristics also brought about jealousy. Bullies want to harm their popularity so that they applied for bullying. One of the important findings of the study is that gifted students were more likely to be excluded in the mainstram schools than science and art centers where they get extra support to develop their abilities. Participants expressed that academic achievement and competition are the main reasons for others to engage in behavior that comprises bullying. Academic achievement and competition, in turn, create an environment for exclusion and teasing. It was evident that high academic performance negatively affects the social status of gifted students in the classroom.

Similar to findings in other studies, victimized gifted students expressed behavioral reactions to their bullying experince. As the participants of the current study stated that they tend to distance from the environment that bullying happened or they did not develop any reactions. Or, participants developed some physiological reactions toward victimization. Common physiological reactions participants expressed included changes on eating habits and daily routines.

Participants in this study expressed that parent support is important for them in adressing bullying experience. They stated that when their parents provide neccessary support, they easily cope with negative impacts of the bullying. On the contarary, if they are not supported by their parents, impacts of the victimization prolonged. While

peer support was important for the gifted students who experienced victimization, some of their peers undermined the bullying incidents gifted students experienced.

One of the most salient finding for the bullying literature may be related to subtheme that addressed why victimized gifted students did not have a sufficient psychosocial support, even though some of them exhibited their needs. As read in the findings, participants could not have sufficient support because their parents and teachers were not aware of the seriousness and magnitude of the problem. Participants also expressed that both of their parents and teachers were lack of knowledge regarding how to support gifted students in the face of bullying. Participants also stated that counseling service is an ideal place to support them. They expected school counselor to provide better support for both of bullies and victims. They also expressed that school counselor could set a parent meeting to increase awareness concerning bullying and its consequences.

In this study, gifted identity encompasses several characteristics that gifted students used to deal with victimization they experienced. Gifted students stated that thinking pattern, problem solving abilities, high level of self-esteem, self-regulation, and academic accomplishment were the resilience source for them in addressing their victimization experience. Even though victimization is serious problem for the gifted students, they felt relieved when they attended to the extra-curricular activities. As the participants expressed they met with the new students who have the same interest and enthusiasm to learn new things and have a good times. They reported that they have not been bullied in an extracurricular activities such as club activities, dance, and music courses.

For analyses of data, all participants' data (N=13) were analyzed jointly. By performing this analysis, the unique experiences of gifted students after bullying victimization were investigated. Participants' statements were reported as evidence throughout all themes and sub-categories to provide the credibility and trustworthiness of the data. There were four themes obtained from the data. Themes and sub-categories derived from the data are presented in Table 3.

CHAPTER 5

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, results were discussed in light of the relevant literature. Then the implications for research were presented. The recommendations for future studies were given at the end of this chapter.

5.1. Discussion of the Findings

This study aimed to comprehend the resilient strategies and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying and to understand the effects of school, parent, and peer factors on their bullying experiences. The originality of this study comes from the fact that the resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying have been underrepresented in the national and international literature. While bullying research conducted in Turkey has mainly investigated bullying experience of mainstream students, bullying experience of gifted students was neglected. In this way, gifted students were able to reveal how resilient strategies and vulnerabilities of gifted students impacted upon bullying victimization they experienced. As previously indicated within the literature review, there is a scarcity in the literature about the bullying experience of gifted students and how they cope with its detrimental consequences. Previous research on bullying among gifted students tends to focus on the prevalence of bullying with small samples (Erwin, 2015; Peters & Bain, 2011), but the harmful effects of bullying on gifted students' well-being remained unanswered (Groman, 2019; MacFarlane & Mina, 2018).

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 13 gifted students who were the victim of the bullying and the data were analyzed with the thematic analysis following the audio recordings were transcribed. As a result of this analysis, four themes were emerged, which were named (1) bullying experience (2) support system, (3) gifted

identity, and (4) coping strategies. In the following sections, each theme was discussed in the light of relevant literature.

One of the four themes that was found as a result of the analysis was bullying experience. Bullying has been an important research topic in the last four decades. It can be conceptualized as a systematic abuse of power (Rigby, 2002). According to Olweus (1993) bullying can be seen in a single serious social and physical act. Bullying is generally categorized two types: directly and indirectly, and three types generally; physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, and pushing), verbal (e.g. name calling, threats), and relational (e.g. social exclusion, saying mean things). Most of the participants in this study disclosed that they were victimized by verbal bullying. In this context, when the participants in the study were asked what type of bullying victimization they experienced, findings revealed that they were generally victimized by the forms of verbal bullying (teasing) and exclusion. S5, one of the participants mentioned that teasing is the most common victimization he faced in the school. Similarly, Dalosto and Alencar (2013) found that gifted students were more likely to be victimized by verbal bullying and exclusion rather than other forms of bullying. Results also indicated that content of the teasing includes their physical appearance, abilities, and any mistakes gifted students made during the activities such as wrong usage of any words in the classroom. Parker and his colleague (2011) argued that gifted students who show high academic achievement and do not have shared interests with their peers were more likely to be bullied than non-gifted counterparts. These results indicated that teasing incidents are serious problem for school life of the gifted students. As it was seen that verbal bullying is dominant type of bullying gifted students reported. In this sense, since verbal bullying is a subtle incidents unlike physical bullying, it is difficult for both teachers and school administrators to recognize those kinds of bullying. Therefore, teachers working with gifted students in both mainstream schools and science and art center should be cognizant toward the verbal bullying that gifted students might face with.

Exclusion is the second prevalent form of bullying participants went through. Exclusion that participants experienced was attributed to some important factors such as their abilities, academic success, physical characteristics, and leadership

characteristics. Popularity stemming from their leadership characteristics and their academic achievement put them high social standing in the classroom. Therefore, other students excluded gifted students from classroom activities or other social contacts. All of the participants were aware that they were different from their classmates in their mainstream schools in terms of their abilities, intelligence, and achievement. However, these differences is not obvious in the science and art center where they interact with gifted students. Webb and his colleagues (2005) mentioned that many gifted students are frequently in the school environment where their peers do not understand or value them. Similar to the results of Thornberg's (2013) study with 350 adolescents, the victim is often perceived to be odd or as deviating from the norm in some respects. Moreover, results of several studies indicated that gifted students were victimized frequently because they are distinctly different from their non-gifted counterparts (Kerr & Cohn, 2001; Peterson, 2004). Robinson (2002) also reported that gifted students often struggled with forming a peer relationships with gifted and non-gifted counterparts, and therefore make them vulnerable to bullying. Similarly, Silverman (1997) emphasized importance of developmental asynchrony. Gifted students who have high cognitive development were less likely to fit in social and emotionally (Gross, 2002; Peterson, 2009). Robinson (2008) underlined that fitting in social environment becomes a development challenge for the gifted students. These findings highlights the importance of homogenous education environments where gifted students interact with other gifted students. There has not been encountered with effects of homogenous education environment on bullying experience of gifted students in the literature. However, most of the participants disclosed that they were not bullied in science and art center where only gifted students were educated. This finding shows that gifted students in the homogenous education environment might easily understand each other and have peers who share similar interests and abilities. In this regard, they may spend quality times without competing and bullying each other.

Through an analysis of the data, many relational forms of bullying were identified. In characterising this type of bullying, the participants disclosed social exclusion and gossiping. Previous studies highlighted that academic competition and academic achievement pressures influence bullying among school students (Bibou-Nakou et al.,

2012). The participants also mentioned that gifted students are socially excluded because successful students are supported more by their teachers in their mainstream schools. This circumstance links to the structure and context of the Turkish education system. Students perceive that their future career depends on their grades because students' academic performance brings personal and school prestige to them. Since gifted students are perceived as high achievers by other students, this becomes a reason to exclude them from the peer group.

The findings of the present study indicated that while most participants reported being victimized by traditional bullying, only one participant stated that she was bullied by cyberbullying. Notably, most participants claimed that they have self-phone, tablets, and laptops at home, which could increase the possibility of being cyberbullied. S9 stated that she was cyber-bullied because her friends made humiliating comments about her posts several times. It might stem from their parents actively monitoring their internet usage.

Another important finding of the present study is that gifted students were more likely excluded from their peers in mainstream schools than in science and art center. As discussed before, gifted students go to two schools. Science and art center uses homogenous grouping based on gifted students' similar abilities. Guillbault (2008) stated that the environment would impact bullying involvement. Gifted students in heterogeneous classrooms are more socially excluded than in homogenous classrooms in mainstream schools they continue. Furthermore, gifted students verbally victimized each other regarding their academic performance and motivation in the homogenous classroom in science and art centers. However, it has not been encountered regarding bullying involvement of gifted students in homogenous and heterogeneous classrooms until now. Therefore, this is an important finding to be investigated by researchers.

One of the interesting findings of the study is that all participants explained the form of victimization they experienced. However, none of them reported that they bullied other students as a reaction to their victimization. The term bully-victim was used to characterize students involved in bullying involvement as both bullies and victims (Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010). Bully victims retaliate for their victimization by playing the role of the bully to victimize others. Findings revealed that when

participants were victimized by one or a group of students, gifted students did not retaliate. In our sample, participants believe bullying is not a fair reaction because of their moral standards.

All participants in the current study emphasized that bullying resulted in intense emotions. A feeling of sadness, unfairness, anger, fear, and anxiety was disclosed by participants. In parallel with the findings of the present study, the feeling of sadness following victimization was found to be the most dominant emotion students experienced (Fleming & Jacobsen, 2010). Similarly, Glew and his colleagues' (2005) study showed that one of the prevalent feelings of the students who have victimization experience was sadness. Another study concluded that repeated victimization endured the intensity of sadness students felt (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005). Besides this study, two participants in the present study (S2 and S9) stated that the sadness they felt increased when they were bullied repeatedly. In this sense, it can be speculated that sadness may heighten the emotional intensity of gifted students that is the common characteristics of them. It may conclude that bullying victimization might cause long-term psychological difficulties for gifted students who were victimized.

Low and Espelage (2013) indicated that anger is a commonly observed emotion stemming from bullying victimization. Similarly, one of the participants, S11, reported that as an example of the anger felt following victimization, S11 felt a high level of anger and did not disclose it to anyone. The fact that the gifted students do not disclose their anger even in the time that they were victimized showed that their giftedness characteristics prevented them from disclosing their anger. It is difficult for gifted students to manage their anger and expression of anger in a constructive manner. Similar to the results of the present study, Cross (2001) pointed out that the core emotion of victimized gifted students was anger. Walters and Espelage (2018) highlighted that victims had heightened levels of anger. A study by Rieffe and his colleagues (2012) with a sample of students with special needs showed that victims might respond angrily to being teased or misunderstood. It also indicated that they apply for anger due to their lack of social competence or implement any solutions to bullying incidents.

Besides anger, four participants emphasized other negative emotions, such as fear and anxiety. Participants fear ongoing victimization and future victimization. S9 reported that she feared that exclusion incidents might repeat constantly. This situation would be explained by Spence et al., (2009) perspective, which explicated the relationship between victimization and fear. They underlined that students with special education needs who were frequently bullied might become anxious about refusing to go to school or participating in extracurricular activities to avoid bullying incidents. However, highly anxious students are easy targets for bullies, and thus the relationship between fear and victimization can be reciprocal. Patchin and Hinduja (2015) stated that victims of bullying might change their daily patterns and behaviors to escape from bullies. It would cause somatic problems for gifted students who are continuously victimized

Moreover, four participants emphasized that they felt a sense of unfairness after facing the bullying experience. S10 disclosed that he did not deserve to be bullied. Gifted students may not understand why they are the target of bullying since they are sensitive to moral reasoning (Howard-Hemilton, 1994). They developed a sense of unfairness. Gifted students are concerned with fairness and are sensitive to the rights of others. Roeper (1988) explained this sense of justice as one of the core characteristics of gifted students. Therefore, recognizing these feelings expressed by gifted students is crucial to understanding the bullying gifted students face. In this regard, it is vital to explain the reasons for bullying. All in all, findings demonstrate that participants developed internalizing symptoms such as sadness, fear, anxiety, and withdrawal and externalized symptom like anger. From the bullying literature, victims show the emotions of internalizing symptoms such as loneliness, anxiety, depression, sadness, and externalized symptoms (Lee & Vaillancourt, 2018; Lönnford & Hagquist, 2022). While all participants in the present study expressed some form of negative emotions following the victimization, participants used several coping strategies to handle being bullied.

The participants in this study expressed their victimization experience and reasons for their victimization. Findings related to the reasons for participants' victimization demonstrated that jealousy, being a gifted student, teachers' attitudes, and a

competitive environment were the main reasons for others to bully participants. Nearly all participants interpreted the core reason for bullying as jealousy of others, including their non-gifted peers and their families. One of the participants, S(13), disclosed that we are more creative and curious than others, so other students develop a feeling of jealousy. Hence, other students may use bullying to reflect their sense of jealousy. Similarly, Ayas and Horzum (2007) mentioned that students might resort to bullying for the reasons such as jealousy and performance anxiety. Similar to the results of the current study, Matthews and Foster (2005) stated that since gifted students demonstrated advanced cognitive development, high levels of curiosity, and high academic achievement, they are envied by their peers, which leads them to become a target of bullying. Similarly, Forsberg and Horton (2022) pointed out that students bully others because they feel a sense of jealousy about their academic achievement or physical characteristics. Robbins (2012) argued that gifted students praised for academic achievement by their parents and teachers are not liked by their peers, resulting in jealousy. Thus, gifted students were victimized due to their intelligence and abilities (Klein, 2007).

Six participants stated that being gifted is another factor in being bullied by other students. From the participants' emphasis, differences in advanced cognition, high working memory, high motivation, and problem-solving abilities related to being a gifted student were used by bullies as a source of name-calling, teasing, and exclusion. Notably, because of being gifted, these differences construct a platform for other students to justify their verbal bullying and exclusion of gifted students in such negative ways. Similarly, Berlin (2009) stated that being gifted is stereotyped by others, and they are punished for being smart. In a study by Teräsahjo and Salmivalli (2003) with 74 students and one focus group, a qualitative research methodology was utilized to understand the reasons for bullying among students. In this study, being different from one's peer group was found as a reason for targeting certain students to be bullied. The participants especially disclosed that victims were deviant students, the 'odd student' who deserved to be victimized.

Bergold, et al., (2020) indicated that high achievement is a risk factor for especially high-achiever gifted students for being bullied. Lim and Low (2009) pointed out that

gifted students are not understood due to their giftedness, which makes them feel alone. Praising their achievement by their teacher might be displeased by their peers and result in jealousy (Robbins, 2012). For instance, S5 stated that she was excluded because she was interested in scientific projects. Hence, gifted students were bullied due to their intelligence, abilities and result in their social exclusion (Klein, 2017). Peterson and Ray (2006a) indicated that being gifted in grade 6 was a reason for being the victim of bullying. As Rondini and Silva (2021) described, gifted students with high academic achievement and motivation are considered weird and nerd, making them vulnerable to bullying.

One of the salient findings of the current study was that teachers' attitudes were considered the reason for bullying gifted students experience. Teachers are expected to reduce bullying in schools (Davis & Nicson, 2011). Moreover, Laftman et al., (2017) pointed out that victimization is less widespread when teachers consider bullying negatively. In a similar study, Espelage (2015) indicated that how teachers approach bullying in the class is essential in how bullying is prevalent in the classroom. On the contrary, several participants disclosed that their teachers in their mainstream schools bullied them. S3 expressed that her teacher teased her in front of other students. Hence, other students were encouraged to bully gifted students. Less is known about teachers might be a bully themselves. The result of the present study indicated that teasing and aggressive behavior of the teachers who work in mainstream schools where gifted students are taught might contribute to being bullied of gifted students. Some participants reported that teachers in their mainstream schools verbally bullied them in front of the class. Therefore, teachers' attitudes encouraged other students to bully gifted students. This limited knowledge about this issue in the literature. Gusfre et al., (2022) argued that students whose teachers bullied them impact their mental health and well-being. Similarly, Zioni-Koren and his colleagues (2022) found that some teachers can bully certain students. However, teachers in the science and art center value their differences and respect their abilities. It can be speculated that teachers in mainstream schools are not aware of the characteristics of gifted students at their schools. This can be a serious matter in that it contributes to being bullied of gifted students at school. This led to the deterioration of gifted students' well-being and mental health who experienced victimization (Wolke, et al., 2015). Rigby (2020)

emphasized that teachers need to be better informed about the characteristics of gifted students and encouraged to support gifted students who were victimized.

Several participants also mentioned that the competitive environment is the reason for bullying victimization. School is an environment where students spend a great deal of their time and build social hierarchies with their peers (Volk et al., 2015). A competitive school environment involves comparing students to one another based on their academic performance or ensuring rewards only to students with more academic achievements than other students (Butler & Kedar, 1990). These competitive school environments cherish academic performance, and students are encouraged to compare their accomplishments with those of their counterparts (Roseth et al., 2008). In this sense, gifted students mentioned that gifted students who have a high level of motivation and are eager to learn new concepts are perceived as a rival by their peers. Similarly, Merten (1997) indicated that when adolescents compete with each other, they utilize subtle bullying to obtain social status in their school. Furthermore, it can be concluded that academic competition is an inevitable part of our education system; parents and teachers urge their children to get high performance in exams. Students express aggressive behavior towards gifted students who have high academic performance. The pressure of academic competition was claimed to be annoying for the gifted students directly experiencing the victimization. Specifically, teachers can take some measures against unwanted incidents that might be seen in any school by implementing bullying prevention programs based on setting up interaction between students and their environment.

The findings of the present study demonstrated contradictory results concerning the characteristics of the victims. While victims traditionally were described as shy, passive, and low-self esteem in the literature (Olweus, 1997; Warren, 2011), victims in this study were victimized due to their abilities, academic achievement, and good relationship with teachers. It can be argued that popularity and visibility in the social environment make them the target of the bullying.

The participants stated that they developed some reactions following the bullying. One of the reactions of gifted students was their unresponsiveness. It can be argued whether it is a healthy reaction or not. However, it can be speculated that it is not a useful

strategy for coping with bullying. When students do not respond or share what they experience, it might make them feel alone. Hence, the victimization they experience, the feeling of vulnerability, and the intense sense of helplessness may lead them to depression and suicide (Gonzales-Cabrera, 2019; Chiu & Vargo, 2022). Another reaction that gifted students showed that distancing from their social environment, including their peers. S1 expressed that he switched school because he was repeatedly victimized. Participants stated that changing schools would be a protective barrier for bullied gifted students. This result showed the importance of understanding the impact of bullying on gifted students.

It was evident that victimization had potential to psychological harms for the victimized gifted students. The behavioral, physical, and psychological reactions of the participants were obtained in the data. It might imply that they experienced behavioral reactions that were parallel to what were mentioned in different studies investigating bullying among gifted students. Most of the participant had developed reactions following being bullied. Feelings of anxiety, depression, and missing classes would be expected reactions from victimized students (Laffan et al., 2022; Low & Espelage, 2013; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2007).

Withdrawal was the most common psychological reaction of the gifted students in the present study. Some participants isolate themselves from their social world to manage bullying victimization. S3 stated that she isolated herself from her friends. She does not want to remember the incidents. According to Ding and Zeng (2022), students who experience victimization are inclined to withdraw from their peers to escape further bullying. In this sense, gifted students perceive withdrawal as a way of avoiding self-protection from the detrimental consequences of bullying. However, withdrawal was considered an unhealthy reaction against bullying in the literature (Coelho & Romao, 2018). Coelho et al., (2022) found that victimized students who are socially withdrawn have a higher level of anxiety than students who are not socially withdrawn. Hence, these gifted students may be at greater risk of mental health issues.

The participants reported a drop in academic achievement. Knollmann and his colleagues (2010) pointed out that bullying is one of the main reasons for school failure. S3 and S10 expressed that they do not focus on their classes and tend to miss

the classes following the victimization they experienced. In the literature, Peterson and Ray (2006a) indicated that gifted students who were victimized had lower academic performance before their victimization experience. They also stated that they might increase their academic performance if they get proper support from their parents and teachers. Similarly, Sansore et al., (2013) pointed out that a decline in academic performance due to bullying victimization may cause job insecurity and social adjustment problems in adulthood. Therefore, it is urgent research topic to understand all reasons why gifted students are becoming the target of bullying to provide the support they need to cope with bullying effectively.

In this study, one of the reactions expressed by participants was changes in their eating habits that were related to the physical or somatic impacts of bullying victimization. S3 reported that her eating habit changed after being bullied. Psycho-somatic reactions of victims in the literature were common in the literature. The same reaction was found in Galvao et al., (2022), in which victimized students showed more eating disorder symptoms than students who were not bullied. Similarly, Copeland et al., (2015) pointed out that eating disorder symptoms were the most common reactions of bullied students. While the victimization might have affected the eating habits of gifted students after being bullied, no study found this relationship in cause-and-effect relations. Therefore further research is needed to explain this association for gifted students.

Bullying is a significant social problem and links to individuals, their parents, and their schools (Mishna et al., 2006). In this study, the second theme was derived as a support system embedded in the participants' social environment. When the participants were asked what the sources of support are in their lives, they emphasized the importance of parents, peers, and school. This theme includes the support of peers, parents, teachers, and counseling services.

Having peer support was a protective factor for participants; they spent most of the day with their peers in the school. Then, peers accompanying victims helped gifted students to decrease the detrimental consequences of victimization. Several participants in the study described that peer support helped them maintain their encouragement, motivation, and self-esteem following their victimization experience.

S5 reported that when one of her classmates defended herself after verbal bullying she experienced, she felt like someone backed her up. This study finding is compatible with Coyle et al., findings (2022). They found that social support from peers was an important factor against bullying. Similarly, Ogurlu et al., (2018), which investigated bullying among gifted students, found that peers are perceived as a primary social support source for gifted students.

When considering the school atmosphere of gifted students, participants reported that their peers in their mainstream schools did not understand the magnitude of bullying for themselves. Two participants stated that their peers do not understand what they went through after the bullying. We expected them to support us. Spear (2012) asserted that social interactions have been crucial during adolescence, especially with peers. Naylor and Cowie (1999) pointed out that victimized students who have support from their peers were less likely to be affected by the emotional consequences of victimization than those who do not. Gifted students who do not have peer support in mainstream schools may develop mental health issues that adversely impact their well-being and development. Williams and Kennedy (2012) supported this finding, asserting that gifted students who were not accepted by their peers might have low self-esteem.

Bullying can be described as a type of aggression that gains dominance and power in the group (Pellegrini, 1998). In this context, students exert bullying to be popular and dominant in the group (Rose et al., 2004). Several participants reported that the classroom environment, which promotes academic competition, contributed to the increased bullying victimization they experienced. In this regard, the competitive environment in the educational lives of gifted students is considered a vulnerability to being bullied of gifted students. While in some traditional studies, victims were found as unpopular students (Scholte et al., 2007; Sheppard et al., 2019), the findings of this study are not compatible with them. However, recent research found that popular students may be at high risk of being bullied than other students (Andrews et al., 2016). Gifted students in this study expressed that since they have a high level of academic achievement, they have become attractive targets for bullies. According to Dawes and

Malamut (2020), students who are popular in terms of dominance and hierarchy might be a prime targets for being bullied.

The parent is a primary source of support and learning for children, and it is through parent experiences that many risk and resilience factors are activated. Parents have a key role in how students behave in school. Emotions, beliefs, and social skills students convey to the school are often embedded in the family environment. Parents have considerably more influence over students who are both bullies and victims than any other adult because they spend the greatest amount of one-on-one time with their children and most likely have the strongest emotional relationship with their children. Therefore, when researchers ask teachers why some students persist in acting aggressively against their peers, the answer frequently points to the students' parents and individual characteristics (Low & Espelage, 2013; Vanderbilt & Augusty, 2010). In this study, parent support provided for victimized gifted students was mentioned by several participants. Participants were aware that when their parents were thoughtful about the bullying incidence, they easily coped with the detrimental impacts of victimization. S1 disclosed that when my parents recognized that I was in distress because of bullying, they listened to me, and we tried to find ways to solve it. According to Ross et al., (2017) parents are crucial in addressing bullying. Similar findings were found in the study of Stive et al., (2021), who revealed that students with a high level of parental support were less likely to be involved in bullying victimization. In our sample, parent support is described as assigning a special time for their children, allowing them to express their concerns freely. Information sharing would be a resilience source (protective factor) for gifted students. Parents impact their children's mental health (Fletcher et al., 1999). As indicated in this study, Werner (1989) found that parents can facilitate their children's adaptation under stressful circumstances like bullying with their emotional and behavioral support. Previous studies also indicated that the resilience of gifted students is influenced by parental factors. Life satisfaction of gifted students was related to their perceptions of parents as warm, supportive, and responsive (Suldo et al., 2018).

Findings revealed that all participants talked about their victimization experience with their parents. Previous studies demonstrated that 34% of victimized students disclosed

victimization to their parents (Blomquist et al., 2020). In this regard, gifted students asked for their parents' support to deal with victimization. Expressing their victimization experience with their parents indicates that participants maintain familial connection and bond. However, analysis demonstrates that the parents of some participants showed intolerance and a lack of knowledge about victimization. Three participants emphasized that parents' intolerance and oppression significantly affect their victimization experience. It can be argued that the oppression they experienced began within their family. Similarly, this is also mentioned in studies that have examined the relationship between bullying and gifted students. For instance, Cross (2016) revealed that parents of gifted students instilled their expectations, affecting their children's attitudes regarding victimization. Furthermore, parental expectations about their academic performance and peer pressure on gifted students result in vulnerability for gifted students (Robinson, 2002).

Several participants emphasized that some of the parents lacked knowledge about the seriousness of bullying and how to respond when helping their children. A participant (S12) disclosed that her parents expressed that she would encounter this type of incident in her life. This statement reflects parents' beliefs about bullying. They believe that bullying is normal and a part of adolescent life. This finding parallels the results mentioned in Western literature on bullying (Hurd & Gettinger, 2011; Harcourt et. al., 2014). In order to reduce bullying in schools and successfully implement prevention and intervention programs, it is vital to promote parents' awareness of the effects of bullying on their children's well-being and mental health.

The findings of the current study showed that teachers, school counselors and school administrators have profound impacts on preventing bullying in school. Participants emphasized that school administrators were considered to be an important factor in supporting victimized gifted students. All participants mentioned several strategies employed by school administrators to reduce bullying incidents. Particularly, the school climate is regarded to be a crucial factor in decreasing bullying incidents (Cornell & Shukla, 2018; Hong et al., 2018). For example, several participants highlighted that school administrators should use regulations and punishment when dealing with bullying. Furthermore, some participants highlighted that school

administrators should employ an authority-based approach to confront bullying. Similar findings were demonstrated in another study emphasizing that using authority in addressing bullying was important in a prevention program (Roland & Vaaland, 2006). Some participants disclosed that school administrators should punish bullies such as warning or suspension from the school. Participants also want school administrators to prepare a bullying prevention plan to deal with bullying. The prepared plan should encompass all staff, including peers, teachers, counseling services, and administrators. However, prevention programs prepared by researchers and practitioners have been extremely scarce in Turkey. As Duy (2013) pointed out that despite the Ministry of National Education developed a strategic plan to decrease violence in Turkish schools, this plan does not specifically refer to bullying prevention. Similar to the findings of the present study, nearly all state-funded schools in Turkey did not release any anti-bullying program proposed to prevent bullying (Duy, 2013).

The results of the study revealed that participants who experienced bullying consulted for support from counseling services. Participants stated that school counselors played an important role in coping with bullying experiences. Based on the participants' statements, supports that victimized students need contain teaching social skills to cope with bullying, increasing victims' motivation to deal with bullying. Participants also highlighted that school counselors should interview bullies and victims individually and talk to parents of students involved in bullying. Evidence suggests that counselors are best suited to tackle bullying problems in schools since they are professional and responsible for serving all students (Roberts et al., 2010). Swearer et al., (2009) found that counselors can help students break the cycle of bullying.

While participants disclosed their support system in dealing with bullying experience, some participants shared their opinion regarding parents' and teachers' lack of awareness about bullying. Since the paucity of guidelines and training regarding bullying, some participants were not provided for sufficient support following being bullied. These findings are consistent with the previous studies investigating bullying among mainstream students (Olweus, 1991; Smith, 1991). Results showed that teachers and parents shrink the magnitude of bullying incidents due to their lack of awareness and knowledge about bullying. The inefficiency of social support to address

the adverse effects of bullying incidents would be the source of vulnerability for gifted students.

In this study, gifted identity represented how participants perceived their giftedness, either a resilience factor or a vulnerability factor concerning the bullying framework. Gifted identity in this study emerged as thinking patterns, problem-solving abilities, high self-esteem, self-regulation, and academic accomplishment in relation to their giftedness and bullying victimization. Almost all participants (n=11) exclaimed that they use problem-focused coping strategies to deal with bullying victimization. Problem-focused coping refers to addressing bullying directly by thinking about the reason for bullying, analyzing possible solutions, and implementing them. The findings demonstrated that participants analyze the problem and try to decide the best options to reach better strategies to manage bullying. Likewise, S6 asserted that she needs to ask them why they execute such a behavior. I need to research and find answers. In literature, studies revealed that victimized students employed problem-focused coping to deal with bullying (Evans et al., 2017).

Based on the data analysis, the concept of self-esteem is perceived as either asset or a vulnerability by participants. Self-esteem refers to how a person views her or himself. Some participants drew attention to the negative impact of self-esteem on the bullying experience of gifted students. S2 emphasized that a high sense of self-esteem, specifically in the academic domain, makes them the target of bullying. She also disclosed that some behavior of gifted students could be perceived as having high self-esteem by non-gifted students, which makes them the target of bullying. On the other hand, S6 and S12 reported that a high level of self-esteem might enable them to cope with bullying victimization. This study demonstrated a contradiction between self-esteem and victims. Relevant literature denoted that victims of bullying show a lower level of self-esteem than other students (Craig et al., 2000; Huitsing et al., 2012). On the other hand, other studies pointed out that a high level of self-esteem would be a resilient factor for victims in dealing with bullying (Alvarez, & Szücs, 2022; Quillet-Morin et al., 2013). In this sense, the self-esteem of the gifted students would be the resilience factor for them to deal with bullying victimization.

Findings of the study demonstrated that the self-regulation of gifted students is a part of their gifted identity. Self-regulation is described as the ability to control our own emotions, acts, and thoughts (Fuente et al., 2014). It was revealed that gifted students can manage their feelings, and thoughts due to their giftedness characteristics. However, no study has been encountered in the literature examining relationships between bullying and self-regulation.

Several participants stated that joining extracurricular activities has protected them from the harmful consequences of bullying and felt relieved. At this point, creating extracurricular activities in the schools would be the resilience factor for gifted students. Participants reported that joining extracurricular activities functions for them as avoiding stress due to victimization and creating a space for meeting with new students. In other words, attending extracurricular activities expands gifted students' opportunities for social connection with other students with similar interests. Previous studies indicated that students involved in extracurricular activities were less likely to engage in victimization than students who do not attend any extracurricular activities (Peguero, 2008; Sheridan et al., 2022).

5.2. Implications

The results of the study indicated that bullying is an important problem for gifted students, and the resilience of gifted students in the face of bullying was affected by different individual, school, and parent factors. In order to ascertain the resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying, the researcher has investigated the resilience of victimized gifted students qualitatively through semi-structured interviews. This study enabled gifted students who experienced bullying to share their experiences and to understand their resilience and vulnerabilities in the face of bullying. This study has also contributed to ascertaining whether gifted students were sufficiently supported by their teachers, parents, peers, counselors, and school administrators. It was revealed that some parents and teachers needed sufficient knowledge about bullying and its seriousness. Thus, to increase the resilience of gifted students in the face of bullying, participants believe that teachers and parents are trained to raise their awareness toward bullying.

5.2.1 Implications for Policy Makers

Bullying has short and long-term consequences for those involved in bullying incidents. The findings of the study showed that gifted students in homogenous environments like science and art centers were less likely to be bullied than in mainstream schools. In this sense, policymakers may consider different educational placements for gifted students to reduce bullying victimizations of gifted students. Furthermore, gifted students revealed that they might not have sufficient support following bullying victimization. Policymakers may prepare bullying intervention programs to consider the needs of gifted students in the face of bullying. Prevention programs might include personal and environmental resilience strategies gifted students employ against bullying.

5.2.2 Implications for Teachers

In this study, several participants talked about how teachers have a key role in supporting gifted students toward bullying. Supports offered by teachers include creating a positive atmosphere in the classroom and caring about what happened to students since teachers are the first adult who can manage bullying occurrences and ones whom students disclose to when bullying has happened. At this point, teachers' efficacy in dealing with bullying, communication with students related to bullying experience, and teachers' attitude toward bullying were important peculiarities (Veenstra et al., 2014; Craig et al., 2000). Thus, teachers' role is crucial in preventing bullying within mainstream schools. In this sense, giving training for teachers to increase their knowledge and awareness about bullying and prevention bullying within school would reduce bullying in school. Although a few students emphasized that teachers oppressed them in front of the classroom, which made them vulnerable to bullying. If the teachers in mainstream schools do not know the characteristics of bullying and consciously or unconsciously impact the other students' behavior, they contribute to the negative school atmosphere where gifted students are bullied. Teacher training would be useful in decreasing bullying in school (O'Moore, 2000; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). Teacher training should include instructions about how to build a better relationship with all students, including gifted students. Through teacher training, teachers need to better understand the bullying and peculiarities of gifted

students and advocate for them in terms of providing better support. Gifted students want to feel safe in school. Teachers working in mainstream schools should evaluate their attitudes toward gifted students and provide safety for gifted students within their classrooms. In this regard, it is critical to build a safe school environment for gifted students by considering their unique characteristics of them. Establishing prevention programs tailored to the needs of gifted students can aid to build a positive school climate. In this way, gifted students would express their fear, sadness, and anxiety about their victimization in a safe place. Some participants emphasized that rules and regulations should be implemented to deal with bullying within the school. Thus, expressing precise rules and behavioral expectations for all students in mainstream schools would be an important feature of bullying prevention. Teachers working in mainstream schools actively monitor gifted students' relations with their peers. When other students bully gifted students, teachers working in mainstream schools take the necessary precautions to protect gifted students from the adverse consequences of bullying. Teachers working in mainstream schools might organize classroom activities.

5.2.3 Implications for Parents of Gifted Students

As findings revealed that while many participants stated that their parents were thoughtful in dealing with victimization, some of the parents were not aware of the seriousness and magnitude of bullying. It is crucial that parent should understand that the bullying experience of gifted students are different and challenging. Importantly, some parents do not realize what their children really experience in mainstream school, and thus, parents do not provide sufficient support for their children. Therefore, conducting parent meetings in mainstream schools may increase their awareness about the effects of their attitudes on their gifted students. Cultural expectations of parents may shape the attitude that parents behave toward their gifted children (Virgolim, 2021). In Turkey's context, since the academic performance of gifted students is crucial, some parents neglect their psycho-emotional needs of them. In this sense, parent training about bullying and its impacts are crucial. Parent training should include information about bullying, how to help their children cope with it, and effective communication with them. Raising parents' awareness about bullying

incidents and their children's specific needs would help them establish a more appropriate environment for their children's well-being and healthy development. In this study, nearly all participants needed to share their victimization experience with their parents. Therefore, parents of gifted students should have sufficient knowledge about how to help their children in the face of bullying. The present study's findings demonstrated that parents' thoughtfulness, caring, and communication style improve gifted students' resilience against bullying.

5.2.4 Implications for School Counselor

School counselors have a unique position to address the needs and struggles of all students. School counselors provide support for gifted students by listening, finding ways to express victims' feelings, and teaching social skills for victims to deal with bullying. School counselors show more empathy for victims of bullying than teachers (Jacobsen & Bauman, 2007). In this regard, school counselors may conduct individual counseling sessions with victimized gifted students based on the needs of gifted students. In order to increase the effectiveness of school counselors in mainstream schools, school counselors conduct training such as the characteristics and unique counseling needs of gifted students, as well as effective intervention strategies specific to the needs of gifted students. Participants emphasized that solving the bullying problem in school requires teamwork. Thus, it is crucial to establish a schoolwide bullying prevention team to define strategies to tackle bullying problems within the school. School counselors would be at the center of this team because school counselors easily communicate with all of the agents in the school. School counselors may provide parent meetings to augment awareness of parents and students about bullying and its detrimental effects on a regular basis in school. Counselors may take into consideration resilience factors in this study -parents' thoughtfulness, peer support, self-esteem, and self-regulation -while establishing intervention programs. School counselors in mainstream schools might teach gifted students about effective communication skills and stress management techniques.

More specifically, counselors may consider the detrimental effects of bullying on gifted students' development. They may utilize environmental resources such as establishing school or classroom programs and activities, allowing peers to support

each other. Findings demonstrated that school counselors working in mainstream schools did not adequately support gifted students in the face of bullying. Increasing the perception and knowledge of school counselors working in mainstream schools may help them to better support gifted students in the face of bullying. School counselors working in mainstream schools may increase their knowledge about risk factors for gifted students and take precautions to mitigate the negative impacts of those risk factors. Building collaboration between parents and schools is important for gifted students to boost their resilience. Findings also showed that peer relations and their attitudes toward gifted students in mainstream schools were of great importance to gifted students in dealing with bullying. In this sense, school counselors working in mainstream schools might conduct social skills training for gifted students struggling with peer relation problems to improve themselves. Hence, the resilience of gifted students may be boosted.

5.3. Future Directions

The results of the study have provided multiple opportunities for future studies investigating the resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying. As mentioned before, the research design for this study is qualitative research, and the resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying were ascertained in a comprehensive manner. This research has drawn attention to resilience and bullying literature that various intra-personal and social factors could impact the bullying victimization of gifted students. The importance of parent, peer, and teacher support, gifted identity, and coping strategies would be examined through quantitative research methodologies. Whereas this research offered in-depth data on the resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying, the underlying mechanism between the intra-personal and social factors could be elucidated (validated) by quantitative methods.

The present study gathered data from gifted students who experienced bullying. Future studies would collect data from the parents and teachers of gifted students to determine the similarities and differences in the bullying experience of gifted students. In this way, a more holistic view would be gained to develop bullying prevention programs tailored to the needs of gifted students. While the current study understands the peer

bullying of gifted students, it was revealed that gifted students were bullied by their peers and their teachers. Therefore, further studies would examine the bullying experience of gifted students inflicted by their teachers.

Although there is very limited knowledge available regarding the resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying in international and national literature, the current research has promoted new and interesting knowledge to be addressed. This study was conducted with gifted students located in eastern Turkey, a replication of the study could be performed in different geographical areas of Turkey. It would also be appealing to notice if the resilience and vulnerabilities of gifted students in the face of bullying vary among gifted students from different cities with diverging population densities and socioeconomic contexts. Another suggestion for future research is to investigate cyberbullying among gifted students. In this way, it would be ascertained whether the same gifted students may experience both traditional and cyberbullying.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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Sayı: 28620816 / 39

29 OCAK 2021

Konu : Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi : İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof.Dr. Özgür Erdur BAKER

Danışmanlığınızı yaptığınız Halil ASLAN'ın "Özel Yetenekli Öğrencilerin Akran Zorbalığı Durumunda Psikolojik Sağlık Stratejileri ve Kırılganlıkları" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve **039-ODTU-2021** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Prof. Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY
İAEK Başkanı

B. INFORM CONSENT KATILIM

ARAŞTIRMAYA GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

Bu tez çalışması, Prof. Dr. Özgür ERDUR-BAKER danışmanlığında Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık doktora programı kapsamında Halil ASLAN tarafından yürütülmektedir.

Çalışmanın Amacı Nedir?

Araştırmanın amacı, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığı durumunda psikolojik sağlıklarını ve kırılganlıklarını anlamaya çalışmaktır. Ayrıca, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin kişisel özellikleri ve çevresel etmenlerinin (aile, okul ve akran), akran zorbalığıyla başa çıkmalarında onları nasıl etkilediğini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz?

Çalışmanın amacı doğrultusunda yapılan görüşmelerde yarı-yapılandırılmış sorular kullanılacak olup, katılımcılarla bir görüşme yapılması planlanmıştır. Yalnızca, ihtiyaç olması durumunda, katılımcıların da onayıyla ek görüşmeler yapılabilir. Sizinle gerçekleştirilen bu yüz-yüze görüşmenin yaklaşık 40-45 dakika süreceği tahmin edilmektedir.

Görüşmede size, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin yaşadıkları akran zorbalıkları sonucu psikolojik sağlıklarını ve kırılganlıklarının onları nasıl etkilediği ve özel yetenekli öğrencilerin kişisel özellikleri ve çevresel etmenlerinin (aile, okul ve akran) akran zorbalığıyla başa çıkmalarında onları nasıl etkilediği ile ilgili sorular sorulacak olup, görüşme sırasında ses kaydı alınacaktır. Alınan bu ses kayıtları sadece araştırmacı Halil ASLAN ve bazı durumlarda tez danışmanı tarafından dinlenecektir ve çalışmanın bitiminde bu kayıtlar kesinlikle yok edilecektir.

Sizden Topladığımız Bilgileri Nasıl Kullanacağız?

Bu çalışmada isminiz, sizi çağrıştırma olanağı olan her türlü bilginin tarafımızca gizli tutulacağını bilmenizi isteriz. Araştırmanın katılımcılarına ait gerçek

bilgiler sadece arařtırmacı tarafından bilinecek, alıřmada isim kullanılması gerektiđi durumlar olduđunda ise isminizin yerine takma isim kullanılacaktır. Katılımcılardan elde edilecek bilgiler toplu halde deđerlendirilecek ve bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Katılımnızla ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler:

Bu alıřmaya katılım gönüllülük esasına göre yapılmaktadır. Arařtırmanın herhangi bir ařamasında katılımcıyı rahatsız eden bir durumda, katılımcı kendi isteđiyle herhangi bir kısıtlama olmaksızın alıřmadan ayrılabilir. Ayrıca, katılımcı görüřme sürecinde fikrini, ya da duygularını açıklamak istemediđi bir durum olduđunda, istediđi soruya cevap vermeme hakkına da sahiptir

Görüşmede duygu ve düşüncelerinizi samimi bir şekilde anlatmanız ve soruları içinizden geldiđi gibi cevaplamamız sonuçların geçerli olması açısından önemlidir.

Bu alıřmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz:

Bu alıřma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz ařađıda yazılı iletiřim bilgilerini kullanarak ulařabilirsiniz.

Yukarıda yer alan açıklamaları okudum. Bu bilgilerin içeriđi ve anlamı, yazılı ve sözlü olarak bana açıklandı. Bu kořullar altında, bu arařtırmaya kendi isteđimle gönüllü olmayı istiyorum.

Bu formun imzalı bir kopyası bana verildi.

İsim Soyad

Tarih

İmza

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C. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (TURKISH FORM)

GÖRÜŞME PROTOKOLU

Tarih:

Başlangıç Saati:

Bitiş Saati:

Görüşmenin Gerçekleştirildiği Yer:

"Araştırmanın herhangi bir aşamasında sizi rahatsız eden bir durum olduğunda, kendi isteğinizle herhangi bir kısıtlama olmaksızın çalışmadan ayrılabilirsiniz. Görüşme sürecinde fikrinizi ya da duygularınızı açıklamak istemediğiniz bir durum olduğunda, istediğiniz soruya cevap vermeme hakkına da sahipsiniz.

I.Bölüm: Demografik Bilgiler (Görüşülecek kişiyi tanımaya yönelik sorular)

Öncelikle) sizinle ilgili sorular sormak istiyorum

- 1.Cinsiyetinizi öğrenebilir miyim?
2. Yaşınızı öğrenebilir miyim?
3. Kaç kardeşiniz var? (Varsa)
4. Yaşları nelerdir? (Varsa)
5. Anne ve Babanızın Eğitim durumu nedir? (Küçük harfle)
6. Anne ve Babanızın Meslekleri nelerdir?
7. Oturduğunuz ev (kime ait?
8. Evinizde kendine ait bir oda var mı?
9. Kendine ait dizüstü bilgisayar, tablet veya cep telefonu var mı?
10. Teknolojik araçlara günde kaç saat vakit ayırıyorsunuz

II. BÖLÜM: Özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığı ile ilgili deneyimleri

11. Öğrenciler; alay etmek, vurmak veya akran grubundan dışlanmak gibi birçok şekilde birbirlerine zorbalıkta bulunabilirler. Ya da bazen birbirlerini rahatsız etmek, korkutmak, tehdit etmek veya incitmek için akıllı telefonları ya da interneti kullanırlar.

- Okulunda veya sanal ortamda böyle bir davranış gözlemledin mi?
- Böyle bir davranışa okulda veya sanal ortamda hiç maruz kaldın mı?(Evet ise) Ne olduğunu anlatır mısın?
- Böyle bir durumda kendini nasıl hissettin?
- Böyle bir durumda neler düşündün?
- Bu durumda nasıl bir tepki verdin?
- Sen diğer çocuklara hiç bu tarz davranışlarda bulundun mu? (Evet ise) Bu davranışın ne olduğunu anlatır mısın?

12. Şimdi senin yaşadığın deneyimi düşünürsek:

- Özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığına diğer öğrencilere oranla daha az veya daha fazla maruz kaldığını mı düşünüyorsun? Sebebini izah eder misin?
- Özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığına karşı daha çok kırılğan olduğunu mu düşünüyorsun? Cevabın evet ise sebebini açıklar mısın?
- Akran zorbalığına maruz kaldığında, seninle aynı olayları yaşamış diğer öğrencilerle, düşüncelerin, hislerin ve davranışların benzerlik gösterdi mi? Cevabın evet ise bunların neler olduğunu açıklar mısın?
- Sana göre, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığına maruz kalmalarının sebepleri nelerdir?

III. Bölüm: Akran zorbalığıyla ilişkili olarak özel yetenekli öğrencilerin psikolojik sağlamlıkları

13) Psikolojik sağlamlık sözcüğünü hiç duydunuz mu?

- Eğer duyduysanız, sizin için ne anlama geldiğini açıklayabilir misiniz?
- Eğer duymadıysanız, psikolojik sağlamlık, insanların akran zorbalığı, hastalık, sakatlık gibi yaşadıkları olumsuz olayların üstesinden gelme becerisi olarak tanımlanabilir.

14) Senin deneyimlerine göre, akran zorbalığıyla başa çıkmanda özel yetenekli olmanın rolü nedir?

15) Özel yetenekli bir öğrenci olarak sahip olduğun kişisel özellikler, akran zorbalığının üstesinden gelebilmede sana nasıl yardımcı oldu?

16) Akran zorbalığının üstesinden gelebilmen için ailenin seni nasıl desteklediğini açıklayabilir misin?

- Bu destek yeterli miydi?
- Ailen hangi yönden yetersizdi, neden?

17) Akran zorbalığının üstesinden gelebilmen için arkadaşlarının ve yaşitlarının seni nasıl desteklediklerini açıklayabilir misin?

- Bu destek yeterli miydi?
- Hangi yönden yetersizdi, neden?

18) Okul ortamını düşündüğünde (öğretmenler, okul yönetimi, psikolojik danışman) akran zorbalığının üstesinden gelebilmen için okulunun sana nasıl destek olmasını isterdin?

19) Sizin deneyimlerinize göre, akran zorbalığını çözmede en iyi yöntem nedir?

20) Ders dışı etkinliklere katılır mısınız? Evet, ise bu etkinlikler, akran zorbalığının üstesinden gelmede nasıl yardımcı oldu?

Konu ile ilgili sorularda size sorulmamış ancak size göre önemli olup da paylaşmak istediğiniz bir şey varsa dinlemeye hazırım.

Çalışmaya katılıp zaman ayırdığınız için çok teşekkür ederim. Aklınıza takılan bir soru olursa, ya da araştırmayla ilgili merak ettikleriniz için size verdiğim iletişim bilgilerinden bana ulaşmaya çekinmeyin lütfen.

D. PARENT INFORMED CONSENT

Sevgili Anne/Baba,

Bu çalışma, Prof. Dr. Özgür ERDUR-BAKER danışmanlığında, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Psikolojik Danışmanlık ve Rehberlik Doktora Programı öğrencisi Halil ASLAN tarafından doktora tezi kapsamında yürütülmektedir

Bu çalışmanın amacı nedir? Çalışmanın amacı, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığı durumunda psikolojik sağlamlıklarını ve kırılganlıklarını anlamaya çalışmaktır. Ayrıca, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin kişisel özellikleri ve çevresel etmenlerinin (aile, okul ve akran), akran zorbalığıyla başa çıkmalarında onları nasıl etkilediğini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Çocuğunuzun katılımcı olarak ne yapmasını istiyoruz?: Bu amaç doğrultusunda, çocuğunuzdan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme sorularını, ses ve görüntü kaydı alarak cevaplamalarını isteyeceğiz. Sizden çocuğunuzun katılımcı olmasıyla ilgili izin istediğimiz gibi, çalışmaya başlamadan çocuğunuzdan da sözlü olarak katılımıyla ilgili rızası mutlaka alınacak.

Çocuğunuzdan alınan bilgiler ne amaçla ve nasıl kullanılacak?: Çocuğunuzdan alacağımız cevaplar tamamen gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Elde edilecek bilgiler sadece bilimsel amaçla (yayın, konferans sunumu, vb.) kullanılacak, çocuğunuzun ya da sizin ismi ve kimlik bilgileriniz, hiçbir şekilde kimseyle paylaşılmayacaktır.

Çocuğunuz ya da siz çalışmayı yarıda kesmek isterseniz ne yapmalısınız?: Katılım sırasında sorulan sorulardan ya da herhangi bir uygulama ile ilgili başka bir nedenden ötürü çocuğunuz kendisini rahatsız hissettiğini belirtirse, ya da kendi belirtmese de araştırmacı çocuğunuzun rahatsız olduğunu öngörürse, çalışmaya sorular tamamlanmadan ve derhal son verilecektir.

Bu çalışmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz: Bu çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Psikolojik Danışmanlık ve Rehberlik Doktora Programı öğrencisi Halil ASLAN'a e-posta (halil295@yahoo.com) ile ulaşabilirsiniz. Desteğiniz için teşekkür ederim.

Halil ASLAN

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve çocuğumun bu çalışmada yer almasını onaylıyorum (Lütfen alttaki iki seçenektten birini işaretleyiniz.

Evet onaylıyorum_____

Hayır, onaylamıyorum_____

Annenin adı-soyadı: _____

Bugünün

Tarihi: _____

Çocuğun adı soyadı ve doğum tarihi: _____

(Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra araştırmacıya ulaştırınız).

E. CURRICULUM VITAE

Halil Aslan

EDUCATION

M.S: Middle East Technical University, Psychological Counseling and Guidance
(2016)

B.A: Ege University, Faculty of Education, Psychological Counseling and
Guidance (2005)

WORK EXPERIENCE

07/09/2005 - School Counselor (Ministry of National Education)

PUBLICATIONS

Erdur-Baker, Ö., Aslan, H. & Aksoy, N. (2023). *Cyber Bullying among gifted
and talented students (In press)*

Aslan, H. & Aksöz-Efe İ. (2017). Zihinsel Yetersizliği olan Bireylerde Yas. In
Erdur-Baker, Ö. & Aksöz-Efe İ. (Eds.) *Yas Danışmanlığı* (pp. 83-112). Anı
Yayıncılık.

HONORS & REWARDS:

Ege University Guidance and Psychological Counseling - Honor Graduate
TUBITAK - 2224 Yurt Dışı Kongre Katılım Desteği

F. TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET

ÖZEL YETENEKLİ ÖĞRENCİLERİN AKRAN ZORBALIĞI KARŞISINDA İNCİNEBİLİRLİKLERİ VE PSİKOLOJİK SAĞLAMLIK STRATEJİLERİ

1. GİRİŞ

Ruh sağlığı uzmanları, tüm öğrencilerin sağlıklı ve başarılı bir şekilde gelişmesine her zaman ilgi duymuşlardır. Öğrencilerin olumsuz koşullarda sağlıklı ve başarılı bir gelişime nasıl yön verdiğini ortaya çıkarmak için çok sayıda çalışma yürütmüşlerdir (Luthar ve Cicchetti, 2000; Rutter, 2012; Shinner ve Masten, 2012; Masten ve Coatsworth, 1995). Ancak, çok az bilimsel bir zaman ve enerji bir azınlık grubuna ayrılmış durumdadır: özel yetenekli çocuklar (Peterson ve Watcher, 2010; Peterson, 2009). Örneğin Amerikan Psikologlar Birliği en az 54 bölüme sahip olmasına karşın hiçbiri özel yetenekli öğrencilere (Silverman, 2013) odaklanmamaktadır. Özel Yetenekli öğrencilere yönelik literatürde gerçekleştirilen araştırmalara yönelik ilgi azlığı, öz güvenli ve motive olmuş özel yetenekli öğrencilerin gelişimsel zorluklarla kolayca başa çıkacağına dair yanlış bir inançtan kaynaklanmaktadır (Connolly, 2018; Peterson ve ark., 2009). Ayrıca, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin sosyal ve duygusal açıdan nispeten iyi bir uyum ve iyi oluş haline sahip olduklarını belirten yanlış bir algı (Pfeiffer ve Stocking, 2000; Bland ve ark., 1994) psikolojik danışmanlık ve özel yetenekliler eğitimi alanındaki araştırmacıları, bu öğrencilerin yaşadığı zorlukları ele almamaya yönlendirmektedir. Ancak, özel yetenekli öğrenciler ciddi aile içi çatışma, travma, zorbalık, yoksulluk (Mendaglio ve Peterson, 2007; Peterson, 2002; Reis ve McCoach, 2002) gibi birçok sürekli zorluklar ve risklerle karşılaşmaktadırlar ve özel yeteneklilik onların tepkilerini etkilemektedir. (Yermish, 2010). Özel Yetenekli öğrencilerin karşı karşıya olduğu risk faktörlerini anlamak ve önlemek, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin iyi oluşlarını arttırmak, psikolojik sorunları önlemek ve sağlıklı

gelişimlerini desteklemek için hem ruh sağlığı uzmanları hem de özel yetenekli eğitimciler açısından kritik önem taşır.

Özel yeteneklilik kavramı tartışmalı bir konudur çünkü özel yeteneklilik ve onunla ilişkili kavramlar örneğin insan zekası, yetenek, beceri bağlamlara ve kültürlere göre farklılık göstermektedir (Chen ve Wong, 2013; Davis ve Rim, 1998) Örneğin, ABD'de özel yetenekli öğrencileri belirlemek için ulusal kriterler olmadığı için her eyalet özel yeteneklileri belirlemek için farklı uygulamalar gerçekleştirir (Fisher ve Kennedy, 2016). Tarihsel olarak Psikoloji ve eğitim alanıyla ilişkili olan özel yeteneklilik, yüksek zeka katsayısı (IQ) yoluyla tespit edilmiştir (Delisle, 1986; Foley-Nicpon ve Assouline, 2015). Francis Galton, fiziksel güç ve motor koordinasyonu gibi psikofiziksel yetenekleri test ederek zekayı ölçen ilk araştırmacıdır (Sternberg ve ark., 2011). Geleneksel olarak, 90. ve 98. yüzdeler arasında zeka katsayısını geçen öğrenciler özel yetenekli olarak belirlenir ve bu öğrenciler, özel yetenekliler eğitimi programına kayıt olurlar (Worrell ve Erwin, 2011). Cigman (2006), yetenekli öğrencileri öğrencilerin ilk %1'i olarak ifade eder. Bununla beraber, IQ temelli özel yeteneklilik tanımının katılığı konusunda memnuniyetsizliğin bir sonucu olarak, özel yetenekliliğin daha kapsayıcı tanımları ortaya çıkmıştır (VanTassel-Baska ve Stambaugh, 2005). Çeşitli araştırmalar, özel yetenekliliği belirlemek için uygulanan kriterlere bağlı olarak, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin genel öğrenci sayısının yaklaşık yüzde beş ile 20'ini oluşturduğunu göstermiştir (Gardner, 1993; Sternberg, 1985).

Özel yeteneklilik yapısındaki değişken ve durumsal niteliklere rağmen, araştırmacılar ve bilim adamları devinimi oluşturan genel ve temel özellikler üzerinde fikir birliğine varmışlardır. McClain ve Pfeiffer (2012), yetenekli öğrencileri “olağanüstü fikri kabiliyet sahip olağanüstü performans ve başarılar gösterebilen kişiler olarak” tanımladı. Özel yetenekli çocuklar, aynı yaştaki (Brüt, 2004) özel yetenekli olmayan yaşıtlarıyla karşılaştırıldığında testler ve/veya diğer yetenek ölçütleri konusunda olağanüstü performans gösterebilirler. Sonuç olarak, yetenekli öğrenciler bilim, sanat, müzik, atletizm veya liderlik gibi alanlarda olağanüstü performans sergiler. Ancak özel yetenekli öğrencilerin olumlu özellikleri veya profillerine rağmen, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin her zaman iyi sosyal ve duygusal uyum, zihinsel sağlık ve iyi oluş hali göstermediği düşünülmelidir. Özel Yetenekli Öğrenciler Ulusal Derneği (2011), çeşitli

kişisel ve kişilerarası risk faktörlerinin yetenekli öğrencilerin gelişimini engellediğini belirtmiştir. Bu anlamda akran zorbalığı, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin sosyal, duygusal ve psikolojik gelişimini olumsuz yönde etkileyen ciddi risk faktörlerinden biridir. Akıl sağlığı uzmanları ve araştırmacılar, zorbalığın, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin iyi oluşlarını, uyumlarını ve performanslarını nasıl ve ne ölçüde etkilediğine dair şimdiye kadar dikkat tememişlerdir.

Aynı şekilde, Whitney ve arkadaşları (1994) genellikle önemli bir şekilde farklı olmanın akran zorbalığına olmak için bir risk faktörü olacağını bildirmiştir. Özel yetenekli öğrencilerin farklı olarak algılanmaları, özel yetenekli olarak tanımlanmayan öğrenciler tarafından akran zorbalığı hedefi haline gelmelerine katkıda bulunmaktadır (Brüt, 2002; Peterson, 2009). Örneğin, özel yetenekli öğrenciler genellikle diğer öğrenciler tarafından dalga geçilir ve "her şeyi bilmiş" ve "tuhaf" gibi isimlerle çağrılar (Alvino, 1991). Peterson ve Bay (2006b) tarafından yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalık deneyimiyle ilgili yürütülen çalışmada, özel yetenekli öğrenciler, özel yetenekliliğin kendisinin başkaları tarafından zorbalığa yol açtığını ifade etmişlerdir. Bu nedenle, özel yetenekli öğrenciler için bu "fark"ı daha da şiddetlendiren faktörlere dikkat edilmelidir. Buna ek olarak, özel yetenekli bazı çocuklar yeterli sosyal becerilere sahip olmayabilir ve bu da onların arkadaşları tarafından akran zorbalığına uğrama olasılığını artırır (Peterson, 2009). Araştırma bulgular, özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasında akran zorbalığın acil bir araştırma konusu olduğu ve özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığı deneyimlerini kapsamlı bir şekilde anlamak için daha fazla araştırma yapılması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır.

Özel yetenekli öğrencilerin yaşayabileceği düşük akademik başarı konusundaki endişe özel yeteneklilerle ilgili birçok araştırmanın odağı olmuştur. Yüksek akademik başarıları nedeniyle özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığına maruz kalmaları literatürde pek yer almamaktadır. Ancak, yüksek akademik başarıya sahip 3928 Alman öğrenci örneğinde yüksek akademik başarının akran zorbalığı mağduriyeti üzerinde akademik başarının etkisini araştırdıkları çalışmada, yüksek akademik başarının özellikle yüksek akademik başarıya sahip erkeklerin akran zorbalığına maruz kalmada bir risk unsuru olduğunu göstermiştir (Bergold ve ark., 2020). Bu nedenle, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığına karşı etkili bir şekilde başa çıkmak için ihtiyaç

duydıkları desteği sağlamak için zorbalık hedefi haline gelmesinin ardındaki tüm nedenleri anlamak zorunludur.

Özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasında zorbalığa maruz kalmayla ilgili ikinci görüş, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin diğer öğrencilere benzer oranlarında akran zorbalığına maruz kaldığını savunuyor (Peters ve Bain, 2011; Mitchell, 2011). Bu görüş, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin öz değerlendirme ve zorbalık gibi stresli olaylarla başa çıkma konusunda daha donanımlı olduğunu, bu nedenle özel yetenekli olmayan öğrencilerden daha uyumlu olduklarını da savundu (Bland ve ark., 1994). Sameroff ve Rosenblum (2006), yüksek düzey bilişsel işlevlerin zorbalık gibi stresli olaylara tepki olarak uyarlanabilir stratejilerin kullanılmasını kolaylaştırabileceğini ifade etmişlerdir. Ayrıca, özel yetenekli öğrenciler için özel yetenekliliğin risk faktörü olup olmadığını araştıran çalışmalar, özel yetenekliliğin sosyal bir risk olmadığını, ancak bu sosyal bir değer olduğunu, bunun da özel yetenekli çocukları, özel yetenekli olmayan çocuklara göre sosyal bir avantajdır (Knepper ve ark., 1983; Lopez ve Sotillo, 2009; Merrell ve Gill, 1994; Richards ve ark., 2003). Özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasında zorbalık hakkında yapılan farklı araştırma bulguları, sorunun karmaşıklığını ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca, yetenekli öğrenciler arasında akran zorbalığını açıklamak için kapsamlı bir model olmaması, özel yetenekli öğrencilerle çalışan danışmanlar ve eğitimciler için uygun bilgileri acile gerekli kılmaktadır (Neihart ve ark., 2016). Özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasında zorbalığa uğrayan iki farklı ve zıt görüş nedeniyle, bu karmaşık olayı açıklayan daha fazla çalışmalara gerek duyulmaktadır.

Akran zorbalığının, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin duygusal ve bilişsel işlevleri, gelişimlerini ve iyi oluşları olumsuz yönde etkilediği açıktır. Örgün eğitim kurumlarına devam eden öğrenciler arasında akran zorbalığını inceleyen araştırma bulguları, zorbalığı zayıf sosyal uyum, kötü davranış ve hastalık ile ilişkilendirdi (Nansel ve ark., 2001; Gini ve Pozzoli, 2009). Ayrıca, dışsallaşmış davranış problemleri (Solberg ve Olweus, 2003), içselleşmiş problemler (Bernstein ve Watson, 1997), depresyon (Olweus, 1993), öz saygı seviyesinin (Beaty ve Alexeyev, 2008) de dahil olmak üzere) iç içe geçmesiyle ilgili birçok psikolojik sorunun olduğu tespit edildi. Son sistematik incelemeler, yetişkinlik döneminde zorbalık sonunun sonuçlarının (Zych ve ark., 2015; Ttofi, 2011) olduğunu gösterdi. Dahası, zorbalık

mağduriyetinin kötü akademik başarılar yol açtığını gösteren çok sayıda çalışma var (Schwartz, 2006; Nishina, 2005). Ancak şimdiye kadar zorbalık mağduriyetinde akademik başarının rolü gözardı edildi (Bergold ve ark., 2020). Kısacası, temel düzeyde öğrencilere zorbalık yaptırmanın doğası ve etkileri hakkında yapılan kapsamlı araştırma çalışmalarına rağmen, yetenekli öğrenciler arasında zorbalık konusunda çok az şey bilinmektedir.

Özel yeteneklilik tanımı konusunda daha az uzlaşma olmasına rağmen, akran zorbalığı tanımı konusunda giderek artan bir uzlaşma var. Zorbalık genellikle fiziksel, sözel, ilişkisel olumsuz eylemlerin yer aldığı ve daha güçlü bireyler tarafından zaman içinde daha düşük bir güce (Olweus, 1993) sahip kişilere yapılan bir saldırı biçimi (örn. Doğrudan, dolaylı) olarak tanımlanır. Craig ve Pepler (2007) ayrıca zorbalığı yıkıcı bir ilişki sorunu olarak nitelendirerek zorbalığın netleşmesini ve zorbalığın ilişkisel yönünü de ortaya çıkarmıştır. Zorbalık, dünya çapında önemli bir toplumsal sorun olarak kabul edilir (Bauman ve ark., 2013). Akran zorbalığı sonucunda üç öğrencinin intihar etmesiyle 1970'lerde Olweus tarafında ilk sistematik araştırma başlatılmıştır. O zamandan bu yana, zorbalığın niteliğini ve dünya genelinde buna katkıda bulunan faktörleri anlamak ve ele almak için büyük çaba sarf edilmiştir. (Solberg ve Olweus, 2003; Ziraat ve ark., 2000; Popp ve Peguero, 2012; Borg, 1999; Craig ve Harel, 2004; Roland, 2011).

Zorbalık, dünyanın dört bir yanındaki ülkelerde yaygın bir sorundur (Olweus, 1994; Spriggs ve ark., 2007; Himel ve Tatlı, 2015; Gaffney ve ark., 2019). Örneğin, akran zorbalığının sıklığıyla ilgili yapılan bir meta analiz çalışması sonucunda 80 ülkede akran zorbalığı görülme ortalaması yüzde 34.5 bulunmuştur (Modecki, 2014). Benzer şekilde, 43 ülkede ergenler arasında zorbalığın yaygınlığını belirlemek amacıyla yürütülen uluslararası bir ankette, ergenlerin %32'sinin zorba olduğu, ergenlerin %36'sinin ise zorbalık mağduru olduklarını bildirdiği belirtildi (Currie ve ark., 2012). Bu araştırma bulgularına dayanarak zorbalığın önemli bir araştırma konusu olduğu ve öğrenciler arasında zorbalığı azaltmak için önleme ve müdahale programları geliştirmenin gerektiği sonucuna varılabilir.

Zorbalık, doğrudan ve dolaylı olarak biçimde ve genellikle üç türe ayrılır: Fiziksel (ör. vurma, vurma, itme), sözlü (örn. Ad arama, tehditler) ve ilişkisel (örn. Sosyal dışlama,

anlamı şeyler söylemek) (Bauman ve Del Rio, 2005; Olweus, 1993; Smith, 2014; Prinstein ve Cillessen, 2003). Zorbalık arařtırmaları, zorbalığın sözlü ve ilişkiyel biçimlerinin en sık meydana geldiğini göstermiştir (Ziraat ve İsveçli, 2004). Wang ve ark., (2009), ABD'li öğrenciler arasında zorbalık türlerini incelemek üzere 7128 ABD'li öğrenciyle bir çalışma yürüttü. Sonuçlar, son iki ayda en az bir kez zorba ve mağdur oranlarının fiziksel zorbalık için %20.8, sözel zorbalık için %53.6 ve ilişkiyel zorbalık için 51.4 olduğunu gösterdi. Ayrıca birçok araştırma, isim takma ve sosyal dışlama gibi zorbalık davranışlarının okul bağlamlarında en yaygın olduğunu göstermiştir (Hicks ve ark., 2018; Cullerton-Sen ve Crick, 2005; Menesini ve Salmivalli, 2017).

Teknolojinin gelişmesiyle, bilgisayarlar, dizüstü bilgisayarlar, akıllı telefon öğrencilerin yaşamlarının sıradan bir parçası haline geldi ve bu teknolojilerin kullanımının artması öğrencilerin birbirlerini zorlama şeklini deęiřtirdi. Sonuç olarak, siber zorbalık adı verilen yeni bir zorbalık ortaya çıktı. Literatürde siber zorbalığın çeşitli tanımları vardır. Siber zorbalık, bilgisayar, cep telefonu ve dięer elektronik cihazların (Hinduja ve Patchin, 2009) kullanımıyla kasıtlı ve tekrarlanan bir zarar olarak tanımlanabilir. Siber zorbalık; hakaret edici mesajlar, tehdit e-postaları ve hatta özellikle bir kişiyi hedeflemek için oluşturulmuş web sitelerini içerir (Connolly, 2018).

Okuldaki ebeveynler, meslektaşlar, öğretmenler zorbalığın anlaşılmasına ilişkin önemli ve etkili faktörlerdir. Aile, fiziksel, bilişsel, psikolojik, sosyal ve duygusal gelişim gibi çocukların ve ergenlerin gelişimindeki temel faktörlerden biri olarak kabul edilir (Bornstein, 2013; Rowe, 2002). Bu bağlamda aile, zorluklarla karşılaşan öğrenciler için önemli bir rol oynar. Zorbalık arařtırmaları konusunda, geniş bir araştırma literatürü ebeveyn desteęi, ebeveyn katılımı, olumsuz ebeveyn etkileşimi, otoriter ebeveynlik ve ebeveyn yolsuzluęundan yoksun kalmanın zorbalık davranışını etkileyen faktörler olduğunu göstermiştir (Flouri ve Buchanan, 2003; Espelage ve ark., 2001; Christie ve Mizell, 2003). Örneğin, Lereya ve arkadaşları (2013) ebeveynlik davranışlarını ve kurban ve zorba/kurban olma riskini incelemek için meta analiz çalışması gerçekleřtirmiştir. Ebeveynlik davranışları açısından, ebeveyn katılımı ve duygusal ilişkiler zorbalık mağduriyetine karşı koruyucu etkenler bulundu. Ebeveynlerin zorbalık durumunu nasıl ele aldıklarını açıklamak, ebeveynlerin

çocuklarının daha zorbalıklara maruz kalma olasılığını azaltabileceği için ebeveynlerin bakış açılarını ortaya çıkarmak önemlidir (Sawyer ve ark., 2011).

Diğer önemli faktör kesinlikle akran ilişkileridir. Araştırmalar, akran ilişkilerinin gelişimi (Bukowski & Adams, 2005) ve olumlu psikolojik uyum (Criss ve ark., 2002; Luthar ve Cicchetti, 2000) etkilediğini göstermektedir. Ergenlik döneminde akranlar, olumlu psikolojik uyumu etkileyen duygusal ve sosyal desteğin önemli bir kaynağı haline geldikleri için çok önemlidir (Steinberg ve ark., 2011). Zorbalık ve akran ilişkileriyle ilgili literatür incelemesi, güç dinamiği, farklılıkları kabul etme seviyesi, ve sözde dostluk ağı (Lee, 2010) gibi akran ilişkileri faktörüne işaret eder. Sosyal destek, öğrencilerin zorbalık davranışlarıyla başa çıkmalarına yardımcı olan önemli bir faktördür. Demeray ve Malecki (2003), zorbalığa karşı koruyucu bir tampon etki olarak sosyal desteğin rolünü araştırmışlardır. Sonuçlar, akran zorbalığı mağdurların toplam sosyal destek düzeyinin karşılaştırma grubuna göre daha düşük olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca araştırmacılar, zorbalığın zararlı sonuçlarını hafifletmede sosyal desteğin rolünü bulmaya başlamışlardır (Rigby, 2000; Rigby ve Slee, 1999). Sosyal desteğin özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasında zorbalık yaratmadaki etkisi konusunda bir araştırma yoktur.

Öğrenciler zamanlarının büyük bir bölümünü okulda geçirdikleri göz önüne alındığında, okul ortamının özellikleri akran zorbalığı üzerinde önemli bir etkiye sahip olabilir. Okulun normları, değerleri, kuralları ve yapısı, öğretmenlerin iletişim tarzı ve öğrencilere sağlanan destek gibi okul faktörleri, öğrencilerin gelişimi üzerinde rol oynar (Brewster ve Bowen, 2004; Griffith, 1999; Cohen ve ark., 2009). Önceki araştırmanın bulguları, öğretmenlerin desteğinin ve aktif izlemenin okulda zorbalık oluşumunun azalttığını göstermiştir (Astor ve Benbenishty, 2007; Nansel, 2001). Birçok çalışma, güvenlik (Gregory ve ark., 2010), sosyal ilişkiler (Chen ve ark., 2020), doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak zorbalık ile ilişkilendirilmiştir. Sosyo-ekolojik teoriye göre, okulda zorbalık yapan çocuklar aile, akran grubu, okul ve mahalle/topluluk (Espelage ve Swearer, 2004) gibi birçok alanda sorunlarla karşılaşılıyor. Hem kişisel hem de çevresel faktörler ve özel yetenekli öğrencilerin özellikleri, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığıyla nasıl baş ettiklerini etkileyebilir.

Zorbalık alanındaki en önemli araştırma sorularından biri, hem geleneksel hem de siber ortamda zorbalığın nasıl azaltılacağıdır. Psikolojik sağlamlık, zorbalığı açıklamak ve zorbalığa karşı bir önleme ve müdahale programı oluşturmak için kullanılabilir. Her ne kadar psikolojik sağlamlığın evrensel olarak kabul edilmiş bir tanımı olmasa da, psikolojik sağlamlık çoğu zaman yoksulluk, ölümcül hastalıklar veya travmatik olaylara (Coleman ve Hagell, 2007; Prince-Embury ve Saklofske, 2014) rağmen iyi bir uyumun göstergesi olarak kabul edilir. 1970'lerden bu yana psikologlar tarafından yoksulluk, aile psikopatolojisi ve travma bağlamında, bireylerin olumsuz koşullar altında başa çıkma yeteneklerini artırmak amacıyla psikolojik sağlamlık üzerine kapsamlı bir araştırma yapıyordu. Psikolojik sağlamlıkla ilgili ilk araştırma dalgası, kişisel nitelikleri ve olumsuz koşullarda yaşayan bireylerin pozitif adaptasyonunu sağlayan faktörleri ortaya çıkarmak için küresel teoriler oluşturuyordu (Masten, 2014). Psikolojik sağlamlığın araştırmasının bu ilk aşamalarında, terim bir kişilik özelliği olarak tanımlanmıştır ve dirençli bir sonuç psikopatoloji eksikliği olarak nitelendiriliyordu.

Birkaç çalışma, zorbalık ve psikolojik sağlamlık arasındaki ilişkiyi doğrudan inceledi. Zorbalık ve psikolojik sağlamlık arasındaki ilişkiye ilişkin araştırma bulguları, yüksek düzeyde psikolojik sağlamlığı olan öğrencilerin zorbalık davranışına daha az katıldıklarını göstermiştir (Donnon, 2010). Ayrıca, öğrencilerin sosyal desteğe (River ve Cowie, 2006) sahip olması halinde zorbalığa karşı psikolojik sağlamlıkları artmaktadır. Benzer şekilde, psikolojik sağlamlık, zorbalık ve öz yeterlilik arasındaki ilişkilerde arabuluculuk rolü olduğu bulunmuştur (Narayanan ve Betts, 2014; Beightol ve ark., 2009) Bowes ve arkadaşları (2010) zorbalık mağduriyetine karşı psikolojik sağlamlığı destekleyen koruyucu faktörlerin tanımlanmasının akran zorbalığına yönelik müdahale stratejilerinin iyileştirilmesine yol açabileceğini vurgulamışlardır. Akran Zorbalığı araştırmalarında psikolojik sağlamlıkla ilgili temel düşünce, bazı öğrencilerin mağdur olma deneyimlerine rağmen neden psikolojik sağlamlıklarının yüksek olduklarını araştırmaktır. Yukarıda bahsedilen çalışmanın sonuçları, psikolojik sağlamlığın akran zorbalığı mağduriyetine karşı önemli bir koruyucu faktör olduğunu göstermiştir. Ancak mevcut bulgular, örgün eğitim okullarında okuyan öğrenciler arasında zorbalık ve psikolojik sağlamlık arasındaki ilişkiyi inceleyen araştırmalara dayanmaktadır.

Birlikte ele alındığında, başkaları tarafından zorbalığa maruz kalan veya zorbalığa yapan öğrenciler çeşitli psikolojik, fiziksel, sosyal ve duygusal sorunlar yaşayabilir. Ne yazık ki, arasında zorbalık alanında yapılan araştırmaların büyük bir çoğu örgün eğitim okullarında okuyan öğrenciler ve bireysel risk faktörleri üzerine yoğunlaşmıştır. Araştırmacılar, akran zorbalığı veya mağduriyeti riski altında olabilecek özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasında zorbalığa gözden kaçırmışlardır. Ancak, bazı öğrenciler akran zorbalık mağduriyetinde daha etkili bir mücadele ve daha iyi uyum sergilemişlerdir (Hinduja ve Patchin, 2017; Donnon ve Hammond, 2007; Montero-Carretero ve ark., 2020; Narayanan ve Betts, 2014). Psikolojik sağlık, öğrencilerin zorbalığın olumsuz etkilerini daha verimli bir şekilde aşmalarına yardımcı olabilir. Bu öğrencilerin uyumunu etkileyen bazı dış faktörler ve iç koruyucu faktörler olabilir. Akran zorbalığındaki psikolojik sağlamlığın, zorbalığa karşı etkili bir önleme yolu olabileceği ve zorbalığa karşı müdahale geliştirmek için kullanılacak önemli bir tampon mekanizma olabileceği yönünde bir gelişme bulunmaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, kişisel, ailesel, çevresel koruma faktörleri ve incinebilirlikleri arasındaki etkileşimin zorbalık karşısında yetenekli öğrenciler için bir psikolojik sağlık modeli geliştirmek mevcut araştırmanın odak noktası olacaktır. Bu nedenle, bireysel ve çevresel faktörleri dikkate alarak özel yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalık ve psikolojik sağlık arasında kapsamlı bilgi üreten araştırmalar, hem danışmanlık hem de özel yeteneklilik eğitim alanlarında teorik ve uygulamalara katkıda bulunur. Özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasında zorbalık karşısında, özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasındaki psikolojik sağlamlığı inceleyen Türkiye’de çalışmalara rastlanmamıştır. Mevcut çalışma, literatürdeki bu boşluğu doldurmak üzere tasarlanmıştır. Bu nedenle, bu araştırmanın amacı, zorbalık karşısında yetenekli öğrencilerin, olgusal araştırma yoluyla özel yetenekli öğrencilerin incinebilirliklerini ve psikolojik sağlık stratejilerine araştırmaktır.

1.2 Araştırmanın Amacı

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalık karşısında algılarını kendi bakış açılarından araştırmak ve kişisel özelliklerin ve çevresel özelliklerin onları baş etmek için nasıl etkilediği ve psikolojik sağlamlıklarını artırmak için kullandıkları stratejileri elde etmektir.

Özellikle, bu çalışmada aşağıdaki araştırma soruları ele alınmıştır:

- Özel yetenekli öğrenciler zorbalık ile nasıl deneyimledi?
- Özel yetenekli öğrencilerin yaşamındaki kişisel ve çevresel faktörler zorbalıkla başa çıkmalarına nasıl yardımcı oldu?
- Özel yetenekli öğrencilerin hayatlarında zorbalığın üstesinden gelmelerini engelleyen kişisel ve çevresel faktörler nasıl oldu?
- Özel yeteneklilik koruyucu bir faktör olarak nasıl çalıştı, psikolojik sağlamlıklarına nasıl katkıda bulundu ve özel yetenekli öğrenciler için nasıl incinebilirliğe sebep oldu?

1.3 Araştırmanın Önemi

Bu olgusal araştırma, özel yetenekli öğrencilerle nitel bir araştırma yöntemiyle gerçekleştirilerek akran zorbalığı ve psikolojik sağlamlık konusunda öncü bir çalışmadır ve böylece yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalık için seslerinin duyurulması sağlanmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın temel önemi, Akıl sağlığı uygulayıcıları, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin eğitimcileri ve araştırmacılar için özellikle faydalı olabilecek teorik katkıdır. Örgün eğitim kurumlarına devam eden öğrenciler arasında zorbalığa çözüm bulmak için çok sayıda önleme ve müdahale stratejisine geliştirildi (Rigby, 2002; Kärnä ve ark., 2013; Bauer ve ark., 2007; Limber ve Olweus, 2010), özel yetenekli öğrencilere yönelik onların özel ihtiyaçlara göre uyarlanmış bir müdahale programı geliştirmek gereklidir. Özel yetenekli öğrenciler için gelişmiş müdahale programı, özel yetenekli öğrencilere, ebeveynlerine ve öğretmenlerine danışarak ideal bir şekilde elde edilir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın bulguları, zorbalık karşısında özel yetenekli öğrencilerin psikolojik sağlamlığını destekleyen önleme ve müdahale programları tasarlamak için değerli bilgiler sağlayacaktır.

Ayrıca, önceki araştırmaların aksine, bu çalışma, zorbalık karşısında özel yetenekli öğrencilerin kullandığı incinebilirlikleri ve psikolojik sağlamlık stratejilerini anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın önemi, özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasında zorbalığa çözüm bulmada esnekliğin rolü hakkında daha derin bilgi edinmeye de bağlıdır. Buna göre, bireysel ve çevresel (ebeveynler, okul ve eşler gibi) faktörleri ve akran zorbalığıyla olan ilişkileri anlamak, özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasındaki zorbalığı

azaltmanın temeli olabilir. Bu çalışmadan elde edilen bulgular, uzun vadede zorbalık önleme ve müdahale geliştirilmesine de katkıda bulunacaktır.

Akran zorbalığının ve mağduriyeti tüm dünyadaki öğrenciler için yaygın bir sorun olduğu gerçeğine rağmen (Walters, 2021; Gaffney ve ark., 2019), akran zorbalığı mağduru öğrencilerin psiko-sosyal desteği ihmal edildi, yani mağdur olan öğrenciler ruhsal sağlık uzmanlarından yeterli sosyal ve psikolojik desteğe sahip olamıyordu. Zorbalık mağduriyeti yaşayan yetenekli öğrenciler için bu çalışmadan elde edilen ima, edebiyat ve danışmanlık, ileri öğretim uygulamalarıyla ilgili değerli veriler hakkında bilgi sağlayacaktır. Örneğin, yetenekli öğrencilerin ebeveynleri, meslektaşları tarafından nasıl destekleyebilecekleri veya öğretmenlerin ve okul danışmanlarının yetenekli öğrencilere ne tür psikolojik hizmetler sunacakları tartışıldı. Politika belirleyiciler için, yetenekli öğrenciler için tasarım önleme tartışıldı. Bulguların farklı bağlamlarda uygulanabilirliği ile ilgili çalışmanın önemi, edebiyata acil bir ihtiyaç duymasından kaynaklanıyor.

Özel yetenekli öğrenciler gelişim dönemlerinde çeşitli sorunlara yol açan kendilerine özgü değişiklikler ve zorluklarla karşı karşıya kalırlar (Peterson, 2009; Baily, 2007; Cross ve Frazier, 2010). Zorbalık yaşayan özel yetenekli bazı öğrenciler, akran zorbalığı mağduriyetinin zararlı sonuçlarından korunmak için bazı ek korucuyu faktörlere ihtiyaç duyabilir. Bu çalışmanın temel unsuru olan psikolojik sağlamlık, özel yetenekli öğrencilere eğitim veren eğitimcilerin ve akıl sağlığı uzmanlarının zorbalık karşısında özel yetenekli öğrencilerin sağlıklı gelişimine nasıl katkıda bulunabilecektir. Ayrıca, akran zorbalık mağduriyeti deneyimine rağmen başarılı bir uyum sağlamaya yarayan faktörleri keşfetmek zorbalığa maruz kalan yetenekli öğrenciler için koruyucu bir aracı görevi görecektir.

Son yıllarda, psikolojik sağlamlık alanındaki araştırmacılar koruyucu süreçleri/mekanizmaları incelemeye ve bireylerin, ailelerin, çevresel faktörlerin psikolojik sağlamlığa veya pozitif sonuçlara nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu anlamaya odaklanmıştır (Luthar ve ark., 2000). Bu tür bir perspektiften psikolojik sağlamlığın anlaşılmasının, uygun önleme ve müdahale programlarının hazırlanması açısından oldukça önemlidir (Fergus ve Zimmerman, 2005; Luthar ve ark., 2015; Kaltén, 2014). Ancak, koruyucu veya risk faktörü olarak özel yetenekliliğin rolünü ortaya çıkarmak

özel yetenekliliğin akran zorbalığıyla ilişkili bilgilerimizi arttıracaktır. Bu nedenle, mevcut çalışma, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalık deneyimlerini ele almada psikolojik sağlık ve özel yetenekliliğin rolünün anlaşılması açısından literatürdeki önemli bir boşluğu dolduracaktır.

Ayrıca, Türkiye'de, psikolojik sağlık çalışmaları bireysel risk ve örgün eğitim okullarındaki öğrenciler arasında koruyucu etkenlere ilişkin psikolojik sağlamlığı büyük ölçüde araştırılmıştır (Esen-Aktay, 2010; Onat, 2010; Yılmaz ve Sipahioğlu, 2012; Turgut, 2015; Sevil-Gülen; Demir, 2020; Özden ve Atasoy, 2020; Yakıcı ve Traş, 2018; Türk-Kurtça ve Kocatürk, 2020). Bu çalışma, psikolojik sağlamlığı bir risk veya koruyucu faktör olarak tanımlamak yerine, çevresel ve kişisel faktörlerin birbiriyle olan bağlantılarını keşfederek akran zorbalığı durumunda özel yetenekli öğrenciler psikolojik sağlamlıklarını ve iyi oluşlarını nasıl koruduklarını veya geliştirdiklerini anlamaya çalışır. Mevcut çalışmanın bulguları, psikolojik sağlık ve psikolojik danışmanlık literatürüne katkıda bulunacaktır.

Bu çalışma, akran zorbalığını ile akran zorbalığını etkileyen faktörler arasındaki iyi kurulmuş ilişkinin ötesine geçmeyi çalışmaktadır. Akran zorbalığı ile ilişkili özel yetenekli öğrencilerin psikolojik sağlık stratejileri ve incinebilirlikleri keşfedildikten sonra, örgün eğitim okullarına devam eden öğrenciler için geliştirilen stratejiler yerine, özel yetenekli öğrencilere özel yeni danışmanlık stratejileri geliştirilebilir. Diğer bir deyişle, bu çalışma, akran grubu, sınıf, okul ve aile gibi sosyal bağlamların, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığı mağduriyeti açısından etkileşimini keşfederek hem danışmanlık hem de özel yetenekliler eğitim alanları için girdi olarak hizmet sunar. Psikolojik sağlık stratejilerini ve incinebilirliklerini açıklayan değerli veriler, özel yetenekli öğrenciler ve örgün eğitim kurumlarına devam eden öğrenciler için de gelecekteki araştırmalar için temel teşkil eder. Bulgular, gelecekteki zorbalık ve psikolojik sağlık çalışmaları için bazı ipuçları sağlayabilir. Bu araştırmadan elde edilen bulgular, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarına uygun müdahale programları oluşturulmasında eğitimcilere ve araştırmacılara yardımcı olacaktır.

Ebeveynler çocuklarının eğitim deneyimlerinde ve psiko-sosyal gelişmelerde kilit rol oynamaktadırlar (Grolnick, 2009). Stockdale ve arkadaşları (2002) ayrıca,

ebeveynlerin ve öğretmenlerin zorbalığa daha fazla dikkat etmeleri ve kapsamlı ve işbirliği içerisinde akran zorbalığına karşı bilgilerini artırmaları gerektiğini belirttiler. Ancak araştırma bulguları, çoğu ebeveyn ve öğretmenin zorbalığın ciddiyetinden farkında olmadıklarını göstermektedir (Wachs ark., 2019; Demaray ve ark., 2013). Bu nedenle, bu çalışmayla ebeveynler ve öğretmenler zorbalığın büyüklüğü ve mağdur olmuş özel yetenekli öğrenciler için zararlı sonuçları hakkındaki farkındalıklarını artıracaklar.

Son olarak, literatürde özel yetenekli öğrencilere ilişkin sınırlı sayıda zorbalık araştırması batı ülkelerinde, çoğunlukla ABD ve Avustralya'da çalışılmıştır. Bu nedenle, bulgular büyük oranda Batılı insanların bakış açılarını yansıtır. Bu çalışmanın önemi, özel yetenekli Türk öğrencilerin zorbalık karşısında psikolojik sağlıklarını açıklamada yatıyor. Bu çalışma, özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasında zorbalık üzerine daha fazla kültürler arası çalışma yürütmek için bir veritabanı olarak kullanılabilir.

2. YÖNTEM

Bu bölümde, çalışmanın yöntemi sunulmuştur. Bölüm, çalışmanın genel deseniyle başlar. Ardından katılımcıların açıklamaları, bağlamı ve araştırmacı rolü sunuldu. Ardından, veri toplama prosedürü ve veri analizi açıklandı. Ardından, çalışmanın nitelik niteliğine ilişkin olarak geçerlilik ve güvenilirlik sorunları açıklandı. Son olarak bölüm, çalışmanın sınırlamalarının bir sonlanmasıyla sona erdi.

2.1 Araştırmanın Deseni

Çalışmanın amacı, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalık karşısında sahip olduğu incinebilirliklerini ve psikolojik sağlamlık stratejilerini araştırmaktır. Daha da önemlisi, bu çalışma, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin okul ortamında yaşadıkları akran zorbalığı azaltmayı amaçlayan psikolojik sağlamlık stratejilerine ilişkin bakış açılarını ortaya çıkarmada önemli bir amaca sahiptir. Bu hedefe ulaşmak için, nitel metodoloji uyarlanmıştır. Bu nedenle, nitel çalışmanın kullanımıyla, duyguları, motivasyonları gibi katılımcıların yaşam dünyaları, Olaylara iliştiirdikleri anlamlar, bireylerin ve grupların olağan ortamlarında yaşadıkları doğal yaşamlar (Lune & Berg, 2017) dikkate

alınmaktadır ve bilgi birikiminin insanlar tarafından (Stake, 2010) yaratıldığı varsayılarak ortaya çıkmıştır.

2.2 Veri kaynakları

Nitel arařtırmalar, ayrıntılı bir inceleme ile belirli vakalardan zengin bilgiler elde etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Arařtırma kapsamındaki fenomen hakkında zengin ve ayrıntılı bilgi sağlama potansiyeline sahip bir nitel çalışma için örnek olayların belirlenmesini ifade eder (Patton, 2002). Arařtırmanın ana amacı, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalık karşısında psikolojik sağlamlık stratejilerini kırılganlıklarını derinlemesine bir şekilde anlamaktır. Bu nedenle, çalışma katılımcıları, amaçsal örnekleme yöntemi ile seçilmiştir.

Farklı tür amaçsal örnekleme yöntemleri vardır. Mevcut çalışmada tipik örneklem alma yöntemi uygulanmıştır. Bu nedenle katılımcılar, arařtırmanın ele aldığı olgunun özelliklerine sahiptir (Merriam, 2009). Bu nedenle, katılımcılar olarak seçilen arařtırma hedefleriyle ilgili tipik özellikleri yansıtan arařtırmacılar. Bilim ve Sanat Merkezi'ne kaydolmuş özel yetenekli öğrencilerden mevcut çalışmaya katılanlar seçildi. Arařtırmanın amacı göz önüne alındığında, mevcut arařtırmada on üç yetenekli öğrenci işe arařtırmaya katıldı.

Arařtırmaya dahil etme kriterleri, arařtırma soruları, temel amaçlar ve çalışmanın amaçları hakkında zengin bilgilere sahip katılımcılara ulaşmayı amaçlamıştır. Dahil etme kriterleri, arařtırma konusunun önemli noktalarının kaydedildiğinden emin olmak için belirlenmiştir. Önceki çalışmalar, okul ortamlarında özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasında zorbalık artışının yaşandığını ve lise boyunca zorbalık biçiminin değiştiğini göstermiştir (Peterson & Ray, 2006b).

3.6. Veri Analizi

Veri analizi, nitel verilerin sistematik bir şekilde incelenmesi ve yorumlanmasıdır. Bu çalışma, hem uluslararası hem de Türk bağlamında zorbalık karşısında yetenekli öğrencilerin psikolojik sağlamlıkları ve incinebilirlikleri üzerine yapılan sınırlı ampirik çalışmalar nedeniyle keşfedici bir çalışma olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Görüşme protokolü, arařtırmacının verilerden yeni temalar ve alt temalar oluřturmasına yardımcı olan tematik analiz kullanılarak analiz edildi. Tema tanım olarak, veride arařtırma sorularıyla ilgili olarak önemli görölen örüntüleri ifade etmektedir (Braun ve Clarke, 2006). Tematik analizde ise veri içerisindeki tema ya da örüntülerin bulunması, analiz edilmesi ve raporlařtırılması kast edilmektedir (Braun ve Clarke, 2006). Bu nedenle, zorbalık karřısında özel yetenekli öđrencilerin (N=13) psikolojik sađlamlıkları ve incinebilirliklerine iliřkin bireysel öykü, tematik analiz (Vaismoradi vd., 2013) ile analiz edilmiřtir. Temalar, hem tümevarım (verilerin ortaya ıkardığı) hem de tümdengelim olarak (alıřmadan önceki literatüre ve alıřmalara göre) (Ryan ve Bernard, 2003) yöntemiyle üretilebilir. Bu alıřmada, temalar tümevarım yöntemiyle oluřturulmuřtur, yani katılımcıların anlatılarından oluřturulan kodlar vardır. Bu alıřmada 13 özel yetenekli ile yapılan ve kayıt altına alınan görüşmeler, öncelikle deřifre edilmiř daha sonra her bir katılımcının verisi bireysel olarak analiz edilmiřtir. Verilerin analiz edilmesinde MAXODA 2022 programından yararlanılmıřtır. Program kullanılmasının nedeni kod ve temaların organize edilmesinde kolaylık sađlamasıdır.

3. BULGULAR

Arařtırma verilerinin, MAXQDA 2022 programı kullanılarak yapılan tematik analizi sonucunda 4 temel tema belirlenmiřtir. Bu temalar ařađıdaki řekilde isimlendirilmiřtir:

Tema 1: Akran Zorbalığı Deneyimi

Bu tema, yetenekli öđrencinin zorbalık deneyimini iliřkilendirdiđi için özel yetenekli öđrencilerin akran zorbalığı deneyimi bađlamı ile ilgili bilgi verdi. Özel yetenekli öđrencilerin bakıř açıları genellikle literatürde incelenmediđi için bu konu, uzmanlıkla yařadıkları zorbalığı anlamak açısından deđerliydi. Ayrıca, bu temel tema, özel yetenekli öđrencilerin psikolojik sađlıklı stratejilerini nasıl kullandıđını da gösterir. Zorbalık öđrenciler arasında yaygın bir sorun olsa da, özel yetenekli öđrencilerin zorbalık deneyimi kendi bađlamına sahiptir. Bu alıřmaya katılan özel yetenekli öđrencilerin çođu, zorbaların, özel yetenekli öđrencilerin konumunu bozmayı amaladıkları ve akranları tarafından farklı algılandıkları için arkadaşlarının yanında

olduklarında zorbalığa maruz kalmaktadırlar. Akran zorbalığı deneyimine bağlı olarak bu tema beş alt kategoride açıklandı: Zorbalık türleri, zorbalık durumunda duygular, zorbalık nedenleri, zorbalık durumunda gösterilen tepkiler, zorbalık etkileri.

Tema 2: Destek Sistemi

Bu çalışmanın önemli bir amacı, zorbalık mağduriyetini önlemek için katılımcılar tarafından kullanılan psikolojik sağlamlığı ve incinebilirliklerini anlamaktır. Bu tema, katılımcıların okullarda zorbalık oluşmasını önlemek için başvurduğu destek sistemiyle ilgili bakış açılarını yansıtmıştır. Zorbalık ve psikolojik sağlamlık çalışmaları, pozitif gelişimsel sonuçlar için sosyal desteğin önemini vurgulamıştır ve destekleyici ve özenli bir yetişkinin varlığı, öğrencilerin yaşamında önemli bir fark yaratmaya olanak sağlamıştır (Malecki ve ark., 2004). Özel yetenekli öğrenciler hakkındaki araştırmalar, ilgili ve destekleyici yetişkinlerin yaşadıkları olumsuz yaşam olaylarından sonra olumlu sonuçlara ulaşmada etkili faktörler olduğunu göstermiştir (Jolly ve Matthews, 2012). Destek sistemi temasında beş alt kategori ortaya çıktı. Bunlara akran destek, ebeveyn desteği, okul desteği, öğretmen desteği ve psikolojik danışma servisi adı verildi.

Tema 3: Özel yeteneklilik Kimliği

Bu mevcut çalışmada, özel yeteneklilik kimlik çalışmanın üçüncü teması olarak ortaya çıktı. Bu, yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığı yüzünden özel yetenekliliklerini nasıl fark ettiklerini göstermiştir. Bu çalışmada özel yeteneklilik kimliği; düşünme düzeni, problem çözme yetenekleri, yüksek düzeyde öz güven, öz düzenleme,

Tema 4 : Baş Etme Stratejileri

Bu çalışmanın amaçlarından biri, zorbalık mağduriyeti karşısında öğrencilere özel yetenekli öğrencilerin sahip olduğu başa çıkma veya psikolojik sağlamlık stratejilerini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Zorbalık mağduriyeti sonrasında öğrencilerin kullandığı psikolojik sağlamlık stratejileri, özel yetenekli öğrenciler arasında zorbalık konusunda daha kapsamlı bir anlayış sağlayabilir ve araştırmacıların özel yetenekli öğrencileri hedefleyen daha etkili önleme ve müdahale programları hazırlamalarını sağlayabilir.

Araştırma bulguları, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin kendilerini zorbalık mağduriyetinden ve zararlı etkilerinden korumak için farklı stratejiler kullanmış olduğunu ortaya çıkardı. Bu temada beş alt tema türetilmiştir.

4. TARTIŞMA

Analizin sonucu olarak bulunan dört temadan biri zorbalık deneyimidir akran Zorbalığı, son kırk yılda önemli bir araştırma konusu olmuştur. Bu, gücün sistematik bir şekilde kötüye kullanılması olarak kavramsallaştırılabilir (Rigby, 2002). Olweus'a (1993) göre akran zorbalığı tek bir ciddi sosyal ve fiziksel eylemde görülebilir. Zorbalık genellikle iki tür olarak sınıflandırılır: Doğrudan ve dolaylı olarak ve genellikle üç tür; fiziksel (ör. vurma, vurma ve itme), sözlü (ör. ad arama, tehditler) ve ilişkisel (ör. sosyal dışlama, anlamı şeyler söylemek). Bu çalışmada katılımcıların çoğu sözel olarak akran zorbalığına maruz kaldıklarını açıkladılar. Bu bağlamda, çalışma sırasında katılımcılara ne tür bir zorbalık kurbanı yaşadıkları sorulduğunda elde edilen bulgular, genellikle sözlü zorbalık (teasing) ve dışlama biçimlerinde akran zorbalığına maruz kaldıklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. S5 Katılımcılardan biri, okulda karşılaştığı en yaygın kurbanın dalga geçilmesi olduğunu söyledi. Benzer şekilde, Dalosto ve Alencar (2013) özel yetenekli öğrencilerin diğer zorbalık türleri yerine sözlü zorbalık ve dışlama mağduru olma olasılığının daha yüksek olduğunu buldular. Sonuçlar ayrıca, dalga geçilmesinin içeriğinin fiziksel görünüşleri, yeteneklerini ve sınıfta herhangi bir kelimenin yanlış kullanımı gibi aktiviteler sırasında öğrenci tarafından yapılan hataları içerdiğini de belirttiler. Parker ve arkadaşları (2011), yüksek akademik başarı gösteren ve akranlarıyla ortak ilgi alanı olmayan özel yetenekli öğrencilerin özel yetenekli olup ortak ilgi alanı olanlardan daha fazla akran zorbalığına maruz kalmalarının yüksek olduğunu öne sürdüler. Bu sonuçlar, dalga geçme olaylarının özel yetenekli öğrencilerin okul hayatında ciddi bir sorun olduğunu gösterdi. Bu açıdan, sözlü zorbalık fiziksel zorbalığın aksine daha soyut bir olay olduğu için, hem öğretmenler hem de okul yöneticileri bu zorbalık türlerini fark etmesi zordur. Bu nedenle, hem örgün okullarda hem de bilim ve sanat merkezinde özel yetenekli öğrencilerle çalışan öğretmenler, öğrencilerin karşılaşılabileceği sözlü zorbalığa karşı dikkatli olmalıdır.

Dışlanma, katılımcıların bildirdiği ikinci yaygın akran zorbalığı türüdür. Katılımcıların yaşadıkları dışlama; yetenekleri, akademik başarısı, fiziksel özellikleri ve liderlik özellikleri gibi bazı önemli faktörlerden kaynaklanmaktadır. Liderlik özellikleri ve akademik başarılarından kaynaklanan popülerlik, onları sınıfta yüksek bir sosyal statü içine sokmaktadır. Tüm katılımcılar, yetenekleri, zekaları ve başarıları açısından sınıflarındaki sınıf arkadaşlarından farklı olduklarını biliyorlardı. Ancak, bu farklılıklar, diğer özel yetenekli öğrencilerle etkileşim kurdukları bilim ve sanat merkezinde belirgin değildir. Webb ve iş arkadaşları (2005), özel yetenekli öğrencilerin çoğunun, çalışma arkadaşlarının kendilerini anlamadığı veya onlara değer vermediği okul ortamında sıklıkla yer aldığından belirtmişlerdir. Thornberg'in (2013) 350 ergenle yaptığı çalışmada, benzer şekilde, akran zorbalığı mağdurların genellikle tuhaf algılandığı veya bazı açılardan norm dışına saptığı görülür. Ayrıca, çok sayıda araştırmanın sonuçları, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin yetenekli olmayan akranlarından (Kerr ve Cohn, 2001; Peterson, 2004) çok farklı oldukları için sık sık mağdur olduklarını göstermektedir. Robinson (2002), özel yetenekli öğrencilerin genellikle yetenekli ve yetenekli olmayan akranlarıyla ilişkiler kurmakta zorlandıklarını ve dolayısıyla zorbalığa karşı savunmasız olduklarını da bildirdi. Benzer şekilde Silverman (1997) da eş zamanlı olmayan gelişimin önemini vurgulamıştır. Üst düzey bilişsel gelişime sahip özel yetenekli öğrencilerin sosyal ve duygusal açıdan daha az uyum göstermeleri muhtemeldir (Brüt, 2002; Peterson, 2009).

Verilerin analizi yoluyla akran zorbalığının birçok ilişkisel biçimi tespit edilmiştir. Katılımcılar, bu tür bir zorbalık nitelerken sosyal dışlama ve dedikodu olduğunu açıklamıştır. Önceki çalışmalar, akademik rekabet ve akademik başarı baskılarının okul öğrencileri arasında zorbalığı etkilediğini göstermiştir (Bibou-Nakou vd., 2012). Katılımcılar, başarılı öğrencilerin örgün eğitim okulundaki öğretmenleri tarafından daha fazla desteklendikleri için, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin sosyal olarak dışlandıklarını da belirttiler. Bu durum, Türk eğitim sisteminin yapısı ve içeriği ile bağlantıdır. Öğrencilerin akademik performansı kendilerine kişisel ve okul prestijini kazandırdığı için, öğrenciler gelecekteki kariyerlerinin notlarına bağlı olduğunu düşünmektedir. Özel yetenekli öğrenciler diğer öğrenciler tarafından yüksek başarılar olarak algılandığından, bu durum onları arkadaş grubundan çıkarmak için bir neden olmaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın bulguları, katılımcıların çoğunun geleneksel zorbalık mağdur olduğunu bildirmesine karşın, yalnızca bir katılımcının siber zorbalık yoluyla zorbalığa maruz kaldığını belirttiğini gösterdi. Özellikle çoğu katılımcı, evde kendi telefonu, tablet ve dizüstü bilgisayarları olduğunu bildirmesine rağmen ki bu da siber zorbalığı arttıran bir etmendir. S9, arkadaşlarının gönderileri hakkında birkaç kez aşağılayıcı yorumlar yaptığı için siber zorbalık mağduru olduğunu ifade etti. Bu durum ebeveynlerinin internet kullanımını aktif olarak takip etmesinden kaynaklanıyor olabilir.

Mevcut araştırmanın bir diğer önemli bulgusu da, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin bilim ve sanat merkezinden çok daha fazla örgün eğitim kurumlarındaki akranları tarafından akran zorbalığına uğrama olasılığının yüksek olmasıdır. Daha önce de belirtildiği gibi, özel yetenekli öğrenciler iki okula gidiyor. Bilim ve sanat merkezi, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin benzer yeteneklerini temel alan homojen bir gruplandırma kullanılmaktadır. Guillbault (2008), çevrenin zorbalık müdahalelerini etkileyeceğini belirtti. Heterojen sınıflardaki özel yetenekli öğrenciler, devam ettikleri örgün eğitim kurumlarındaki homojen sınıflardan daha fazla sosyal açıdan dışlanmaktadır. Ayrıca, öğrencilere akademik performansları ve motivasyonlarıyla ilgili olarak bilim ve sanat merkezlerindeki homojen sınıfta sözlü zorbalığa maruz kalmatadırlar. Ancak şimdiye kadar, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin homojen ve heterojen sınıflarda zorbalık konusunda karşılaştırılmalı bir çalışmaya rastlanamamıştır. Bu nedenle, bu ilerde araştırmacılar tarafından araştırılması gereken önemli bir bulgudur.

Bu çalışmadaki tüm katılımcılar akran zorbalığı mağduriyetinin yoğun duygularla sonuçlandığını vurguladılar. Katılımcılar üzüntü, adaletsizlik, öfke, korku ve endişe duygularını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu çalışmanın bulgularına paralel olarak, akran zorbalığı mağduriyetten sonra üzüntü duygusu, en baskın duygu olarak bulundu (Fleming ve Jacobsen, 2010). Benzer şekilde Glew ve arkadaşlarının (2005) yaptığı çalışma, akran zorbalığı sonucu mağdur olan öğrencilerin yaygın duygularından birinin üzüntü olduğunu bulmuşlardır Yapılan bir diğer çalışma, tekrarlanan akran zorbalığı mağduriyetlerin öğrencilerin hissettiği üzüntü duygusunun yoğunluğunu arttırdığını belirtti(Camodeca ve Goossens, 2005). Bu çalışmanın yanı sıra, mevcut çalışmada (S2 ve S9) yer alan iki katılımcı, tekrarlanan akran zorbalığı mağduriyeti durumunda hissettiklerinde üzüntü duyduklarını belirttiler. Bu açıdan, üzüntünün özel

yetenekli öğrencilerin duygusal yoğunluğunu arttırabileceği ve bu öğrencilerin ortak özellikleri olduğu öne sürülebilir Zorbalık mağduriyetinin mağdur olan özel yetenekli öğrenciler için uzun vadeli psikolojik zorluklara yol açabileceği sonucuna varılabilir.

Low ve Espelage (2013), öfkenin zorbalık mağduriyetinden kaynaklanan sık görülen bir duygu olduğunu gösterdi. Aynı şekilde, S11 yaşındaki katılımcılardan biri de mağduriyetten sonra hissedilen öfkeye örnek olarak S11'in yüksek seviyede öfke hissettiğini ve bunu kimseye açıklamadığını bildirdi. Özel yetenekli öğrencilerin öfkelerini mağdur oldukları zamanlarda bile açıklamamaları, özel yeteneklilik özelliklerinin öfkelerini ifşa etmelerini engellediğini göstermektedir. Özel yetenekli öğrencilerin öfkelerini ve öfkelerini yapıcı bir şekilde yönetmeleri zordur. Cross (2001), mevcut çalışmanın sonuçlarına benzer şekilde mağdur olan özel yetenekli öğrencilerin temel duygusu öfke oluşturduğuna dikkat çekti. Walters ve Espelage (2018), kurbanların öfke seviyesini artırdığını vurguladı. Öfkeye ek olarak, dört katılımcı korku ve endişe gibi diğer olumsuz duyguları da vurguladı.

Katılımcılar sürekli akran zorbalığına maruz kalmaya ve gelecekte de mağdur olmaktan korkmaktadırlar S9, dışlama olaylarının sürekli olarak tekrarlanmasından korktuğunu bildirdi. Bu durum, mağdur olma ile korku arasındaki ilişkiyi açıklayan bir çalışmada, sık sık zorbalıya maruz kalan özel eğitime gereksimi olan öğrencilerin, zorbalık olaylarından kaçınmak için okula gitmeyi reddetmeleri veya müfredat dışı faaliyetlere katılmaları konusunda endişeli olabileceğinin altını çizdiler (Spence ve ark., 2009). Ancak son derece endişeli öğrenciler zorbalılar için kolay hedeflerdir ve bu nedenle korku ile mağdur olma arasındaki ilişki karşılıklı olabilir. Patchin ve Hinduja (2015) zorbalık kurbanlarının günlük düzenlerini ve davranışlarını zorbalardan kaçmak üzere değiştirebileceğini belirtmişlerdir. Sürekli olarak akran zorbalığı mağduru olan özel yetenekli öğrenciler için bu durum somatik sorunlara neden olabilir.

Bu çalışmadaki katılımcılar akran zorbalığına mağdur olma deneyimlerini ve mağdur olma nedenlerini ifade ettiler. Katılımcıların mağdur olma nedenleriyle ilgili bulgular, kıskançlık, özel yetenekli bir öğrenci olma, öğretmenlerin tutumları ve rekabetçi bir ortamın, diğerlerinin katılımcıların zorbalığa maruz kalmasının başlıca nedenleri olduğunu gösterdi. Neredeyse tüm katılımcılar zorbalığın temel nedenini, yetenekli

olmayan akranları ve aileleri de dahil olmak üzere başkalarının kıskançlığı olarak yorumladılar. Katılımcılardan biri olan S (13) diğerlerine göre daha yaratıcı ve meraklı olduğumuzu açıklayıp diğer öğrencilerin onlara yöneik kıskançlık duygusunu geliştirdiklerini söyledi. Bu nedenle, diğer öğrenciler kıskançlıklarını yansıtmak için zorbalık kullanabilir. Benzer şekilde Ayas ve Horzum (2007), öğrencilerin kıskançlık ve performans kaygısı gibi nedenlerle zorbalığa başvurabileceklerinden bahsetmiştir. Bu araştırmanın sonuçlarına benzer şekilde Matthews ve Foster (2005), özel yetenekli öğrenciler gelişmiş bilişsel gelişim, yüksek merakı seviyeleri ve yüksek akademik başarı sergilediklerinden, kendilerini zorbalığın hedefi haline getirmek için akranları tarafından hedef alındıklarını öne sürmüştür. Benzer şekilde, Forsberg ve Horton (2022) öğrencilerin akademik başarıları veya fiziksel özellikleri hakkında kıskanç hissettikleri için başkalarına akran zorbalığı yaptıklarını belirttiler. Robbins (2012), öğrencilerin ebeveynleri ve öğretmenlerinin akademik başarılarından ötürü övgü topladığını ve bu başarıyı akranlarının sevmediğini ve bunun da kıskançlığa yol açtığını savundu. Böylece, özel yetenekli öğrenciler zekaları ve yetenekleri nedeniyle mağdur olmuşlardı (Klein, 2007).

Bergold ve arkadaşları (2020) yüksek başarının özellikle yüksek başarılarla sahip öğrenciler için zorbalığa maruz kalma sebebiyle risk unsuru olduğunu belirtti.. Öğretmenlerinin başarılarına övgüde bulunmaları, arkadaşları tarafından hoşnutsuzluk yaratabilir ve kıskançlığa neden olabilir (Robbins, 2012). Örneğin S5, bilimsel projelerle ilgilendiği için dışlandığını belirtti. Bu nedenle, özel yetenekli öğrenciler akılları, yetenekleri ve sosyal dışlanmasıyla sonuçlandıkları için zorbalık tutuyorlar (Klein, 2017). Peterson ve Ray (2006a), 6. Sınıfta özel yetenekli olmanın akran zorbalığı kurbanı olmalarının bir nedeni olduğunu belirttiler. Rondini ve Silva'nın (2021) açıkladığı gibi, yüksek akademik başarı ve motivasyona sahip özel yetenekli öğrenciler garip ve sinirli sayılırlar, bu da onları zorbalığa karşı savunmasız hale getirir.

Mevcut araştırmanın en belirgin bulgularından biri, öğretmenlerin tutumlarının özel yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalık deneyimlerinin nedeni olarak değerlendirilmesiydi. Öğretmenlerin okullardaki zorbalığı azaltmaları bekleniyor (Davis ve Nicson, 2011). Ayrıca, Laftman ve arkadaşları (2017), öğretmenlerin zorbalığı olumsuz olarak

değerlendirdiklerinde akran zorbalığının daha az yaygın olduğuna işaret etti. Benzer bir çalışmada, Espelage (2015) öğretmenlerin sınıfta zorbalığa nasıl yaklaştıklarının sınıfta zorbalık durumunda ne ölçüde yaygın olduğunu göstermiştir. Tam tersine, çok sayıda katılımcı, örgün eğitim okullarındaki öğretmenlerinin bu öğretmenlere zorbalığı olduğunu açıkladı. S3, öğretmenin onu diğer öğrencilerin önünde eğittiğini ifade etti. Bu nedenle, diğer öğrenciler zorbalık yapmaya teşvik edildiler. Öğretmenler hakkında daha az şey bilinmektedir. Mevcut çalışmanın sonucu olarak, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin devam ettiği örgün ortaokullarda çalışan öğretmenlerin temerrli ve agresif davranışlarının yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalığına katkıda bulunabileceğini gösterdi. Bazı katılımcılar, öğretmenlerin ders sırasında sözlü olarak zorbalık yaptıklarını bildirdiler. Bu nedenle, öğretmenlerin tutumları diğer öğrencileri zorbaca yetenekli öğrencilere teşvik etti. Bu konuyla ilgili bilgi, literatürde sınırlı. Gusfre ve arkadaşları, (2022) öğretmenleri tarafından zorbalığa maruz kalan öğrencilerin zihinsel sağlıklarını ve iyi oluş hallerini etkilediğini savundu. Benzer şekilde, Zioni-Koren ve meslektaşları (2022) bazı öğretmenlerin belirli öğrencilere zorbalık yaptıklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Ancak bilim ve sanat merkezindeki öğretmenler bu öğrencilerin farklılıklarına değer veriyorlar ve yeteneklerine saygı gösteriyorlar. Örgün eğitim kurumlarındaki öğretmenlerin okullarındaki yetenekli öğrencilerin özelliklerinin farkında olmadığı spekülasyonlar olabilir. Okulda yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalığına katkıda bulunması ciddi bir sorun olabilir. Bu da yetenekli öğrencilerin mağdur olma ve zihinsel sağlığının bozulmasına yol açtı (Wolke, vd., 2015).

4.2 Öneriler

Çalışmanın sonuçları, akran zorbalığının özel yetenekli öğrenciler için önemli bir sorun olduğunu ve akran zorbalığı karşısında özel yetenekli öğrencilerin psikolojik sağlamlıklarının farklı bireysel, okul ve aile faktörlerden etkilendiğini gösterdi. Araştırmacı, akran zorbalığı karşısında özel yetenekli öğrencilerin psikolojik sağlamlıklarını ve incinebilirliklerini belirlemek için, yarı yapılmı mülakatlar aracılığıyla akran zorbalığına maruz kalan özel yetenekli öğrencilerin psikolojik sağlamlıklarını nitel araştırma yöntemiyle incelemiştir. Bu çalışma, zorbalık yaşayan özel yetenekli öğrencilerin deneyimlerini paylaşmalarını ve zorbalık karşısındaki psikolojik sağlamlıklarını ve incinebilirliklerini anlamalarını sağladı. Ayrıca, bu

çalışma özel yetenekli öğrencilerin öğretmenleri, ebeveynleri, akranları, psikolojik danışmanları ve okul yöneticileri tarafından yeterince desteklenip desteklenmediğini belirlemesine de katkı sağlamıştır. Bazı ebeveynlerin ve öğretmenlerin akran zorbalığı ve onun büyüklüğü hakkında yeterli bilgiye sahip olmaları gerektiğini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu nedenle, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığı karşısında psikolojik sağlamlıklarını artırmak için katılımcılar, öğretmenlerin ve ebeveynlerin akran zorbalığına yönelik farkındalıklarını artırmak üzere eğitilmeleri gerektiğine inanmaktadırlar.

4.2.1 Politika Belirleyiciler için Öneriler

Akran zorbalığı, zorbalık olayları içerisinde yer alan kişiler için kısa ve uzun vadeli sonuçları vardır. Araştırmanın bulguları, bilim ve sanat merkezleri gibi homojen ortamlardaki özel yetenekli öğrencilerin, örgün okullara göre akran zorbalığına maruz kalma olasılıklarının daha düşük olduğunu gösterdi. Bu açıdan, politika yapıcılar özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığı mağduriyetlerini azaltmak için farklı eğitim seçeneklerini düşünebilirler. Ayrıca, özel yetenekli öğrenciler akran zorbalığı mağduriyeti sonrasında yeterli desteği almadıklarını belirttiler. Politika yapıcılar, akran zorbalığı karşısında özel yetenekli öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarını göz önünde bulundurmak için akran zorbalığına yönelik müdahale programları hazırlayabilir. Önleme programları özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığına karşı kullandıkları kişisel ve çevresel psikolojik sağlamlık stratejilerini içerebilir.

4.2.2 Öğretmenler için Öneriler

Bu çalışmada, çok sayıda katılımcı öğretmenlerin akran zorbalığına karşı özel yetenekli öğrencileri desteklemede nasıl kilit bir rol oynadıklarını açıklamışlardır. Öğretmenler, akran zorbalığı olaylarına karşı başa çıkabilen ilk yetişkin insanlardır ve akran zorbalığı meydana geldiğinde öğrencilerin kendilerini açtıkları kişilerdir. Bu noktada, öğretmenlerin zorbalık ile başa çıkma yeterlilikleri, zorbalık deneyimiyle ilgili öğrencilerle iletişim şekilleri ve öğretmenlerin akran zorbalığına karşı tutumları önemli özelliklerdir (Veenstra ve ark., 2014; Craig, 2000). Bu nedenle, öğretmenlerin örgün eğitim kurumlarındaki akran zorbalığını önlemedeki rolleri çok önemlidir. Bu anlamda, öğretmenlere okul içinde akran zorbalığı ve akran zorbalığı önleme

konusunda bilgi ve farkındalıklarını artırmaları için eğitim vermek okullarda görülen zorbalığını azaltır. Ancak birkaç öğrenci, öğretmenlerin onları sınıfın önünde baskı altına aldıklarını ve bu yüzden zorbalığa karşı savunmasız olduklarını vurgulamıştır. Örgün eğitim kurumlarındaki öğretmenler zorbalığın özelliklerini bilmiyorlarsa bilinçli veya bilinçsiz şekilde diğer öğrencilerin davranışlarını etkilemektedir ve özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığına maruz kaldıkları negatif okul ortamına katkıda bulunmaktadır. Öğretmen eğitimi, okullarda yaşanan akran zorbalığını azaltmada yararlı olacaktır (O'More, 2000; Ttofi ve Farrington, 2011). Öğretmen eğitiminde, özel yetenekli öğrenciler de dahil olmak üzere tüm öğrencilerle nasıl daha iyi bir ilişki kuracağıyla ilgili bilgiler yer almalıdır. Öğretmenlerin eğitimleriyle, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin özellikleriyle ve akran zorbalığını daha iyi anlamaya ihtiyaç duymaktadır ve özel yetenekli öğrencileri daha iyi desteklemek anlamında savunmalıdır. Özel yetenekli öğrenciler okulda kendilerini güvende hissetmek istemektedirler. Örgün eğitim okullarında çalışan öğretmenler, özel yetenekli öğrencilere karşı tutumlarını değerlendirmeli ve sınıflarında özel yetenekli öğrencilere güvenlik duygusu sağlamalıdır.

4.2.3 Ebeveynler için Öneriler

Araştırma bulgularının ortaya çıkardığı gibi, pek çok katılımcı ebeveynlerinin akran zorbalığı mağduriyeti konusunda duyarlı olduklarını belirtse de, bazı ebeveynler zorbalığın ciddiyeti ve büyüklüğünün farkında değildir. Ebeveynlerin, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığı deneyiminin daha farklı ve zorlu olduğunu anlaması gerekmektedir. Daha da önemlisi, bazı ebeveynler çocuklarının örgün eğitim okullarında ne yaşadığını fark etmediği için, ebeveynler çocuklarına yeterli destek sağlayamamaktadır. Bu nedenle, örgün eğitim kurumlarında ebeveyn toplantıları yapmak, ebeveynlerin tutumlarının özel yetenekli öğrenciler üzerindeki etkileri hakkında farkındalıklarını artırabilir. Ebeveynlerin kültürel beklentileri, ebeveynlerin özel yetenekli çocuklara karşı tavırlarını şekillendirebilmektedir (Virgolin, 2021). Türkiye'de, yetenekli öğrencilerin akademik performansı çok önemli olduğu için, bazı ebeveynler özel yetenekli çocuklarının psiko-duygusal ihtiyaçlarını göz ardı etmektedirler. Bu anlamda, akran zorbalığı ve etkisi konusunda ebeveynlerin eğitilmesi çok önemlidir. Ebeveynlerin eğitiminde akran zorbalığı, çocuklarının

bununla başa çıkmalarında onlara nasıl yardımcı olabilecekleri ve onlarla nasıl etkili iletişim kurabilecekleriyle ilgili bilgiler içermelidir. Ebeveynlerin akran zorbalığı olayları ve çocuklarının özel ihtiyaçları hakkında bilinçlendirilmesi, çocuklarının sağlıklı ve sağlıklı gelişimi için daha uygun bir ortam oluşturmalarına yardımcı olur. Bu çalışmada, hemen hemen tüm katılımcıların akran zorbalığı mağduriyeti deneyimlerini ebeveynleriyle paylaşma ihtiyacı duymuşlardır. Bu nedenle, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin ebeveynleri, zorbalık karşısında çocuklarına nasıl yardımcı olabilecekleri konusunda yeterli bilgiye sahip olmalıdır. Bu araştırmanın bulguları, ebeveynlerin duyarlılığı, anlayışlı olmaları ve iletişim tarzlarının özel yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalığa karşı psikolojik sağlamlıklarını artırdığını göstermiştir.

4.2.4. Okul Psikolojik Danışmanları için Öneriler

Okul psikolojik danışmanlarının, tüm öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarını ve zorluklarını ele almak için benzersiz bir pozisyonu vardır. Okul psikolojik danışmanları dinleyerek, akran zorbalığı kurbanlarının duygularını ifade etmelerinin yollarını bularak ve akran zorbalığı kurbanlarına akran zorbalığına karşı sosyal beceriler öğretmek özel yetenekli öğrencilere destek sağlar. Okul psikolojik danışmanları akran zorbalığı kurbanlarına öğretmenlerden daha empati göstererek yaklaşabilir (Jacobsen ve Bauman, 2007). Bu bağlamda okul psikolojik danışmanları, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarına göre akran zorbalığına maruz kalmış öğrencilerle bireysel danışma oturumları yapabilir. Okul psikolojik danışmanları, örgün eğitim kurumlarında okul psikolojik danışmanlarının etkililiğini artırmak için özel yetenekli öğrencilerin özellikleri ve özel yetenekli öğrencilere özgü psikolojik danışmanlık ihtiyaçlarının yanı sıra özel yetenekli öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarına özel etkili müdahale stratejileri gibi eğitimler düzenleyebilirler. Katılımcılar, okuldaki akran zorbalığı probleminin çözülmesi için bir takım olarak çalışılması gerektiğini vurguladılar. Bu nedenle, okulda meydana gelen akran zorbalığı sorununu çözmek için stratejiler belirlemek üzere tüm okulu kapsayacak şekilde bir akran zorbalığı önleme ekibi oluşturmak çok önemlidir. Okul danışmanları okuldaki tüm paydaşlarla kolayca iletişim kurdukları için okul danışmanları bu ekibin merkezinde yer alabilir Okul psikolojik danışmanları, ebeveynlere akran zorbalığı ve öğrenciler üzerindeki olumsuz etkileri hakkında daha fazla bilinçlendirmeleri için ebeveyn toplantıları düzenlemelidir. Okul psikolojik

danışmanlar, müdahale programları belirlerken bu çalışmada elde edilen psikolojik sağlık faktörleri -ebeveynlerin duyarlılığını, akran desteğini, özsaygısını ve öz düzenlemeyi- göz önünde bulundurmalarıdır. Örgün eğitim kurumlarında çalışan okul psikolojik danışmanları, özel yetenekli öğrencilere etkili iletişim becerileri ve stres yönetimi tekniklerini öğretmelidir.

4.2.5. İlerde yapılacak Çalışmalar için Öneriler

Çalışmanın sonuçları, akran zorbalığı karşısında özel yetenekli öğrencilerin psikolojik sağlıklarını ve incinebilirliklerini araştırmak üzere gelecekteki çalışmalar için birden çok olanak sağlamıştır. Daha önce de belirtildiği gibi, bu araştırma nitel bir araştırma desenine sahiptir ve zorbalık karşısında özel yetenekli öğrencilerin psikolojik sağlıklarını ve incinebilirliklerini kapsamlı bir şekilde ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu araştırma, çeşitli kişisel ve sosyal faktörlerin özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığı mağduriyetini etkilediği konusunda psikolojik sağlık ve zorbalık literatürüne dikkat çekti. Ebeveynlerin, akranların ve öğretmenlerin verdiği desteğin, özel yeteneklilik kimliği ve başa çıkma stratejilerinin önemi nicel araştırma yöntemleri aracılığıyla araştırılabilir. Bu araştırma, akran zorbalığı karşısında özel yetenekli öğrencilerin psikolojik sağlıkları ve incinebilirlikleri hakkında ayrıntılı bilgiler sunmasına karşın, kişisel ve sosyal faktörler arasındaki temel mekanizma, nicel yöntemlerle açıklanabilir.

Bu çalışma, verileri zorbalık yaşayan özel yetenekli öğrencilerden topladı. Gelecek çalışmalar, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalık deneyimindeki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları belirlemek için özel yetenekli öğrencilerin ebeveynlerinden ve öğretmenlerinden de veri toplayabilir. Bu şekilde, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarına göre tasarlanmış zorbalık önleme programları geliştirmek için daha bütünsel bir görüş elde edilebilir. Bu çalışma, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akran zorbalığını zorbalığını açıklasa da, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin akranları ve öğretmenleri tarafından zorbalığa maruz kaldıklarını ortaya çıkardı. Bu nedenle, gelecekteki çalışmalar öğretmenleri tarafından zorbalığa uğratılan özel yetenekli öğrencilerin zorbalık deneyimini araştırabilir.

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