

PARENTAL AND PEER ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION AND CROSS-  
CONTEXT INTERACTIONS

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ZEYNEP SU ALTINÖZ

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submitted by **ZEYNEP SU ALTINÖZ** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of **Master of Science in Psychology, the Graduate School of Social  
Sciences of Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI  
Dean  
Graduate School of Social Sciences

---

Prof. Dr. Sibel KAZAK BERUMENT  
Head of Department  
Department of Psychology

---

Prof. Dr. Sibel KAZAK BERUMENT  
Supervisor  
Department of Psychology

---

**Examining Committee Members:**

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dilek SARITAŞ ATALAR (Head of the Examining  
Committee)  
Ankara University  
Department of Psychology

---

Prof. Dr. Sibel KAZAK BERUMENT (Supervisor)  
Middle East Technical University  
Department of Psychology

---

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Başak ŞAHİN-ACAR  
Middle East Technical University  
Department of Psychology

---



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**Name, Last Name:** Zeynep Su ALTINÖZ

**Signature:**

## **ABSTRACT**

### **PARENTAL AND PEER ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION AND CROSS- CONTEXT INTERACTIONS**

ALTINÖZ, ZEYNEP SU

M.S., The Department of Psychology

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Sibel KAZAK BERUMENT

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The present study aims to investigate the protective role of parental (maternal and paternal) acceptance against peer rejection and the protective role of peer acceptance against parental rejection among children and adolescents. Children from third, fourth, and fifth grades ( $N = 196$ ), adolescents from ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades ( $N = 119$ ), and their mothers ( $N = 315$ ) participated in the study. Children's and adolescents' reports on perceptions of parental and peer acceptance and rejection and mothers' reports on their children's externalizing and internalizing problems were measured. Hierarchical regression analyses and simple slope analyses were conducted. The findings demonstrated that maternal acceptance has a protective role in the association between peer rejection and externalizing problems for children. Peer acceptance has a protective role in the association between paternal rejection and externalizing problems for adolescents, and internalizing problems for adolescent girls. Peer acceptance might also be a risk factor for children with high paternal rejection and for adolescents with high maternal rejection.

**Keywords:** Parental Acceptance and Rejection, Peer Acceptance and Rejection, Cross-Context, Externalizing, Internalizing.

## ÖZ

### EBEVEYN VE AKRAN KABUL VE REDDİ VE BAĞLAMLAR ARASI ETKİLEŞİMİ

ALTINÖZ, Zeynep Su

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Bu çalışmanın hedefi ebeveyn (anne ve baba) kabulünün akran reddine karşı ve akran kabulünün ebeveyn reddine karşı koruyucu rol oynamasını araştırmaktır. Katılımcılar üçüncü, dördüncü ve beşinci sınıfa giden çocuklardan (N = 196), dokuzuncu, onuncu ve on birinci sınıfa giden ergenlerden ve çocuk ve ergenlerin annelerinden (N = 315) oluşmaktadır. Çocuk ve ergenlerin algıladığı ebeveyn ve akran kabul ve reddi ve anneler tarafından raporlanan dışa vurum ve içe vurum problemleri ölçülmüştür. Hiyerarşik regresyon analizleri ve basit eğim analizleri uygulanmıştır. Sonuçlar, anne kabulünün çocuklar için akran reddi ve dışa vurum problemleri arasındaki ilişkide koruyucu rol oynadığını göstermiştir. Akran kabulüyle ergenler için baba reddi ve dışa vurum problemleri arasındaki ilişkide ve ergen kızlar için baba reddi ve içe vurum problemleri arasındaki ilişkide koruyucu rol oynamıştır. Sonuçlar ayrıca akran kabulünün baba reddi yüksek olan çocuklar için risk faktör olabileceğini göstermiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ebeveyn Kabul ve Reddi, Akran Kabul ve Reddi, Bağlamlar Arası Etkileşim, İçe Vurum, Dışa Vurum



*To My Mother, Elif*

*&*

*To My Partner, Ozan*

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Overview

The feeling of being loved, accepted, and belonged is one of the basic needs of human beings. As no person can live in solitude, people are highly motivated to form social relationships and secure acceptance by their social environment. The functions and sources of social acceptance vary based on different developmental needs (Sullivan, 1955). While an infant seeks social acceptance in order to satisfy their physical needs such as hunger, an adolescent strives it to fulfill their higher-order needs such as companionship. Since people need different social relationships in every stage of their lives, they continually seek social acceptance and try to escape social rejection.

In their 1961 book, Carl Rogers draws our attention to the importance of unconditional acceptance and suggests that social acceptance promotes psychological safety and psychological freedom. In other studies, social acceptance was indeed shown to predict psychological well-being, adjustment, and physical health, whereas rejection was associated with anxiety, depression, and problems in physical well-being (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; DeWall & Bushman, 2011; Leary, 2010). According to Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection Theory (IPARTheory), people have an evolutionary need to be accepted by the essential people in their lives (Rohner, 2016; Khaleque, 2007). In children's lives, parents and peers are the essential people for their social and emotional development (Buckholdt, 2016). Especially in adolescence, a significant amount of emotional investment is made to peers, while parents continue to be a prominent source of social support throughout childhood and adolescence (Collins & Laursen, 2000). Teachers and grandparents, on the other hand, become less important as children grow older (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992). Therefore, as parents and peers make up most of the children's social environment, parental and peer acceptance and

rejection have various psychological and behavioral consequences for children and adolescents.

Perceiving acceptance by parents and peers predicts psychological well-being (Rohner, 1986; Carrasco et al., 2019; Buhs, & Ladd, 2001), whereas perception of rejection from those two social agents predicts impairments in adjustment (Dwairy, 2010; Buhs, & Ladd, 2001). Thus, it is consequential to investigate possible remedies that would ameliorate the negative impact of rejection on children's and adolescents' psychological maladjustment.

One interesting topic of research would be the compensatory effect of acceptance in one social context against the rejection in the other social context. The current study aimed to examine the cross-context interactions of parental acceptance (maternal and paternal) and rejection and peer acceptance and rejection. Considering the developmental needs of children and adolescents, it was expected that in childhood, parental acceptance would have a buffering effect on peer rejection, and in adolescence, peer acceptance would have a buffering effect on parental rejection against internalizing and externalizing behaviors.

## **1.2. Parental Acceptance and Rejection**

IPARTheory places parental acceptance and rejection on the dimension of parental warmth (Rohner, 2016). On the one end of the spectrum, the parental behaviors and attitudes are affectionate, caring, and supportive, and the child perceives acceptance by their parent. On the other end, the parent does not show positive parental behavior and attitudes and demonstrates hostile and aggressive behaviors. On this end of the spectrum, the child perceives rejection by their parent. Rohner (2016) highlights that there is no categorical differentiation of parental acceptance and rejection, rather it is a spectrum of warmth where every child goes through different levels of acceptance and rejection. There are four major classes of behaviors of parental acceptance and rejection: warmth and affection, hostility and aggression, indifference and neglect, and undifferentiated rejection (Rohner, 2004).

One of the complementary sub-theories of the IPARTheory, the personality sub-theory, intends to investigate the consequences of parental rejection on children's personalities (Rohner & Britner, 2002). The perceived parental rejection was shown to have detrimental effects on children's psychological adjustment and result in a specific syndrome called the acceptance-rejection syndrome (Rohner, 2004). Children who experience the syndrome tend to have behavioral maladjustments such as aggression or hostility, emotional maladjustments such as emotional unresponsiveness, emotional instability, and extreme dependence or extreme independence on parents, and cognitive maladjustments, including forming a negative worldview. The results from several meta-analytic studies from different countries confirmed the generalizability of the IPARTheory and the negative consequences in adjustment that the acceptance-rejection syndrome asserts (Khaleque, 2017; Ali et al., 2015; Khaleque & Rohner; 2012; Rohner & Britner, 2002). A key limitation of the personality sub-theory, and the IPARTheory in general, is that the researchers tended to focus on parental rejection rather than parental acceptance. In order to justify their particular interest in rejection, Rohner and Britner (2002) stated that parental rejection is a superior predictor of problems in children's psychology. However, as parental acceptance and rejection is a continuum and children do not experience sole rejection or sole acceptance, it is also important to explain the positive outcomes of parental acceptance.

In addition to the IPARTheory, Social Learning Theory might also be considered in understanding the effects of parental acceptance and rejection. Social Learning Theory states that children learn by observing their parents' behaviors and attitudes and modeling their actions (Bandura, 1977). In their book, Bandura (1977) argues that infants tend to imitate whatever is happening around them, and as children's cognitive capabilities develop with age, they become even more capable of observational learning. This could lead to two conclusions. First, in families where at least one of the parents demonstrates aggressive and hostile behavior, children would learn by observing their models and perform the newly learned aggressive behavior. This effect would especially be more pronounced when children observe their aggressive model's behaviors are not punished (Bandura 1978). So, children in aggressive families would also be aggressive in their social interactions with others. Second, when children

observe physical and verbal affection and warmth by their parents, they would be expected to demonstrate similar positive behaviors and act sensibly in their social interactions. Although Social Learning Theory falls short in explaining the negative consequences of the other major forms of parental rejection, such as indifference and neglect in which there are no overt hostile parental behaviors for children to model, it still could be studied in understanding the positive consequences of parental acceptance. The next section reviews studies that aimed to investigate the positive consequences of parental acceptance.

### **1.2.1. The Role of Parental Acceptance**

Perceived parental acceptance refers to children's reports of their parents' verbal or physical demonstrations of warmth. In the literature, both maternal and paternal acceptance were shown to have a positive impact on the behavioral and emotional development of children from different age groups. For instance, some studies showed that high parental acceptance was positively associated with psychological adjustment of children between the ages 11 and 13 (Lee & Chyung, 2014), and nine and 16 (Carrasco et al., 2019). Di Maggio and Zappulla (2013) studied the effects of parental acceptance on life satisfaction of adolescents aged from 14 to 16 and showed that maternal acceptance predicted life satisfaction, whereas paternal acceptance predicted a decrease in internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Another study that was conducted with university students also showed that students' memories of parental acceptance when they were child predicted higher life satisfaction and social achievement goals, which was associated with better learning strategies (Pang & Leung, 2015). Additionally, one study showed that maternal acceptance was associated with decreased anxiety, specifically decreased anxious self-talk in children between the ages seven and 14 (Wei et al., 2014).

A cross-national study that was conducted in nine different countries recently showed that parental acceptance at the age of 10 predicted an increase in children's prosocial behaviors at the age of 12 (Putnick et al., 2018). Although this effect was reciprocal at the earlier ages, meaning that children's prosocial behaviors at the age of nine also predicted an increase in parental acceptance at the age of 10, children's prosocial

behaviors no longer predicted parental acceptance in the transition to adolescence. The authors noted that this effect was observed because in adolescence, the prosocial behaviors were not aimed at parents, but peers.

One recent review of literature examined the difference between the effects of maternal acceptance and paternal acceptance on various ages of children from different cultures (Li & Meier, 2017). It was found that maternal acceptance was more likely to enhance children's socioemotional development and improve self-worth and self-esteem. On the other hand, paternal acceptance was shown more frequently to reduce externalizing behaviors. Furthermore, one parent's acceptance was found to protect children against the negative consequences of other parent's lack of acceptance. Some studies in the literature tested whether the dissimilarity among parents' attitudes is protective or detrimental for child outcomes by examining the interaction of maternal and paternal parenting behaviors. In line with the Li and Meier (2017) study, some findings in the literature illustrated that inconsistent parenting might be beneficial for children and adolescents, as one parent's positive parenting behaviors and attitudes might buffer the effects of other parents' negative parenting behaviors and attitudes (McKinney & Renk, 2008; Laiable & Carlo, 2004). On the other hand, another line of research suggests that positive parenting should be perceived from both of the parents in order to be effective (Berkien et al., 2012). Thus, since there might be different effects of the interaction between maternal and paternal parenting behaviors, in the present study the interaction of maternal and paternal acceptance and the interaction of maternal and paternal rejection were controlled for. By examining and controlling for the interaction between maternal and paternal acceptance and rejection in the analyses, the cross-context interactions between parental and peer acceptance and rejection were expected to be observed more clearly.

### **1.2.2. The Role of Parental Rejection**

Perceived parental rejection is marked by the absence of warmth and the presence of aggressive and hostile parental behaviors. While studies repeatedly showed that parental acceptance had a positive impact on children's development, the parental rejection was shown to have adverse effects. As it is also mentioned in the previous

sections, according to the parental acceptance-rejection syndrome, the children who perceive parental rejection, experience several psychological problems (Rohner, 2004). One study that was conducted with Spanish children between the ages nine and 18 investigated the effects of parental rejection on the specific forms of maladjustments that were suggested by the parental acceptance-rejection syndrome (Ramírez-Uclés et al., 2017). The results of the study supported the previous findings of Rohner and colleagues (Rohner & Britner, 2002; Khaleque, 2017) and showed that parental rejection was associated with specific psychological maladjustments such as hostility and decreased self-esteem. In one of their more recent papers, Rohner (2016) concluded that parental rejection also predicts substance abuse and depression.

Literature repeatedly showed support for the effects of parental rejection on problem behaviors. The problem behaviors mainly fall into two groups: externalizing and internalizing problems. Externalizing problems are overt social problems and delinquent behaviors such as fighting or stealing, whereas internalizing problems refer to somatic, obsessive, or anxious behaviors such as worrying or being withdrawn (Achenbach, 1966). In the early 1990s, a meta-analysis suggested that parental rejection is one of the most important predictors of children's externalizing behaviors (Rothbaum & Weisz, 1994). Similarly, parental rejection was positively associated with externalizing and internalizing problems of children aged nine to 16 (Carrasco et al., 2018) and of adolescents in the 10th and 11th grade (Direktör & Çakıcı, 2012). Further, a longitudinal study also showed that parental rejection at 10 years of age predicted an increase in internalizing and externalizing behaviors at 11 years of age (Jager et al., 2016).

Some of the past studies reported differential effects of maternal and paternal rejection. For example, one study showed that paternal rejection, but not maternal rejection in the sixth grade, predicted social anxiety and loneliness in the seventh and eighth grades (Mak et al., 2018). Mak and colleagues (2018) suggested that the effect of maternal parenting on children's adjustment decreases in adolescence. On the other hand, another study found that maternal rejection rather than paternal rejection was positively associated with decreased emotional competence and increased anxiety in

adolescents between the ages 12 and 18 (Niditch & Varela, 2012). Nevertheless, Miranda and colleagues (2016) suggested that the effects of maternal and paternal rejection are alike, yet the inconsistency between the mother and father's acceptance-rejection is what had unfavorable effects on children. As mentioned before, this study aimed to shed further light on the interaction between maternal and paternal rejection as well as maternal and paternal acceptance.

### **1.3. Peer Acceptance and Rejection**

Parents are not the only source for the sense of belonging in children's lives. The relationships that children have with their peers are quite important for them since peers provide help, support, and understanding and contribute to children's identity (Giardano, 1995). Several variables are being used in investigating peer relationships, such as friendship quality, bullying, and peer acceptance (Kingery et al., 2010). Those different dimensions of peer relationships have different functions in children's lives. For instance, friendships enhance children's self-worth and intimacy needs (Bukowski & Hoza, 1989), whereas peer acceptance fulfills the need to belong by providing children a group membership (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Peer acceptance refers to the extent to which children are included in groups and loved and respected by their friends, whereas peer rejection refers to exclusion from the groups. In the same manner as parental acceptance and rejection, in peer acceptance and rejection, children are not solely accepted or solely rejected by their peers. Although acceptance and rejection are correlated, children experience both of them in different degrees (Bukowski et al., 2000). Therefore, it is quite important to examine the effects of peer acceptance and rejection on children's adjustment individually.

In their seminal book, Sullivan (1955) argued that particular interpersonal needs occur in different developmental stages. According to Sullivan's theory (1955), the need for acceptance first occurs in middle childhood, and the need for interpersonal intimacy occurs in preadolescence. The theory suggests that fulfilling those needs has a "therapeutic effect" on the adversities in children's and adolescents' lives. On the other hand, difficulties in fulfilling those interpersonal needs would result in loneliness and further maladjustments.

There is one critical aspect of the studies on peer acceptance and rejection that requires attention. In the literature, different methods were used in assessing peer acceptance and rejection such as peer nominations (e.g., Bellmore & Cillessen, 2003; Verschueren et al., 2019; Onder et al., 2019), teacher reports (e.g., Zhang et al., 2017; Flook et al., 2005; Healy & Sanders, 2018), and self-reports (e.g., Lopez, & DuBois, 2005; Guerra et al., 2004; Ramírez-Uclés et al., 2017). Peer nomination technique, which is one of the most commonly used techniques in the literature, is a sociometric measure that requires each child in a classroom to name the children they like, and the children they dislike. Although this measure is face-valid, it tends to categorize children into two groups: liked and disliked (Parker & Asher, 1987). So, the method fails to capture the emotional complexity of the dimension of peer acceptance and rejection. Another technique that was repeatedly used is teacher reports, and it is highly correlated with peer nominations (Ladd et al., 2011) and more reliable than mother reports (Rudasill et al., 2014). However, relying on only teacher reports might be inadequate and misleading as teachers might be biased towards their students. On the other hand, self-perceptions were shown to be reliable and valid measures of peer acceptance and rejection (Harter & Pike, 1984; Harter, 2012). Although self-reports of social acceptance might sometimes be inaccurate (Bellmore & Cillessen, 2003), Hymel and Franke (1985) maintained that perceived acceptance and rejection has an impact on children's emotions and behaviors, regardless of the social reality. Therefore, in the current study, self-report is used since perceived peer acceptance and rejection reflects the children's feelings and perceptions of their peers' behaviors and is expected to have more clear effects on children's development.

### **1.3.1. The Role of Peer Acceptance**

Perceived peer acceptance refers to the children's perceptions of being liked by their peers. A growing number of studies on peer acceptance has shown that it has positive effects on multiple domains of children's and adolescents' adjustment. One of those domains is academic adjustment. Zhang and colleagues (2018) recently showed that peer acceptance was positively correlated with the academic achievement of seven-year-old children. Peer acceptance of third and fourth-grade students was also shown



to have a positive effect on the teacher-pupil relationship and enhance students' academic skills, including reading and arithmetic comprehension (Kiuru et al., 2015). In a longitudinal study, rather than actual academic abilities of children, their perceptions of academic skills were examined (Flook et al., 2005). The results showed that higher peer acceptance in the fourth grade was positively associated with positive perceptions of academic self-concept in the fifth grade and greater academic skills in the sixth grade. The positive effects of peer acceptance on academic skills might be present because children feel more attached to the school and are more willing to study as peer acceptance fulfills the need for belongingness in the school setting (Boulton et al., 2011).

Peer acceptance was also found to foster children's socioemotional functioning. For instance, third to sixth-grade children were shown to experience less loneliness and depression when their peer acceptance levels were high (Erdley et al., 2001). Additionally, peer acceptance predicted increased self-worth of children aged between seven and 11 (Maunder & Monks, 2018) and increased self-esteem of children and adults aged between 12 and 21 (Daniels & Leaper, 2006). Furthermore, children who were accepted by their peers demonstrated high levels of prosocial behaviors between the ages seven and 12 (Tur-Porcar et al., 2018) and high levels of socio-empathy between the ages 10 and 12 (Esturgó-Deu & Sala-Roca, 2019). However, the direction of the latter effects of peer acceptance is not yet clear since peer acceptance affects and is affected by children's social skills (Schwartz et al., 2006).

In addition to enhancing academic and socioemotional adjustment, peer acceptance was shown to mitigate behavioral problems. Higher peer acceptance in the first grade predicted a decrease in the internalizing behaviors between the first and sixth grades (Zarra-Nezhad et al., 2019). Furthermore, some studies found that peer acceptance in the fourth grade was negatively associated with internalizing and externalizing behaviors in the sixth grade (Klima & Repetti, 2008; Flook et al., 2005). One longitudinal study revealed the protective effect of peer acceptance on externalizing behaviors (Prinstein & La Greca, 2004). The results showed that peer acceptance in the third, fourth, and sixth grades diminished the effects of aggression on children's

externalizing behaviors six years later. Further consideration of the possible buffering effects of peer acceptance will be discussed in the later sections.

### **1.3.2. The Role of Peer Rejection**

Perceived peer rejection can be defined as children's perceptions of being disliked by other children in their age group. While higher peer acceptance was shown to have positive effects on children's development, higher peer rejection was often shown to have detrimental effects on children's lives. Being socially excluded by the peer group was even found to stimulate the same area of the brain that is stimulated by physical pain (Eisenberger et al., 2003).

One longitudinal study that followed 10-year-old Italian children for five years revealed that high levels of peer rejection at 10 years of age were negatively associated with the academic aspirations (i.e., expectations of the educational level they will complete) of the 15 and 16-year-old adolescents (Di Giunta et al., 2017). A number of longitudinal studies reported that higher peer rejection predicted a decrease in the academic performance of children second through third grade (Greenman et al., 2009), third through fourth grade (Veronneau et al., 2010), and third through fifth grade (DeRosier & Mercer, 2009). Peer rejection in childhood was also found to predict attention problems in adolescence (Ji et al., 2019) and lower levels of executive functioning (Holmes et al., 2015).

Besides academic maladjustments, peer rejection was shown to predict psychological maladjustments, including internalizing symptoms such as depression. Nolan and colleagues (2003) claimed that higher peer rejection in the sixth and seventh grades predicted depressive symptoms in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively. In a longitudinal study, peer rejection at the ages 10 and 11 was indirectly related to depression and directly related to feelings of loneliness at the ages 12 and 13 (Pedersen et al., 2007). In another longitudinal study that followed children in the first grade throughout the 12th grade, higher peer rejection was positively associated with later depressive symptoms (Lansford et al., 2007). In a more recent study, peer rejection

was found to be negatively related to children's positive self-views and expectations, especially among elementary school children (García-Bacete et al., 2019).

A considerable number of studies highlighted peer rejection's effects on externalizing behaviors as well. In one of their early reviews, Parker and Asher (1987) asserted that children who were rejected by their peers tended to demonstrate antisocial behaviors in adolescence and adulthood. Further, empirical evidence suggested that even after controlling for early antisocial behavior, peer rejection in the first, second, and third grades was positively associated with aggressive behaviors in the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades (Dodge et al., 2003). In another study, third-grade boys that experience high levels of peer rejection were found to be more physically aggressive six months later (Guerra et al., 2004). One manipulation study has shown that when 16-17-year-old adolescents perceived peer rejection, they became less tolerant of distress and experienced more negative emotions (King et al., 2017). Those results suggest that the experiences of peer rejection might make children and adolescents more vulnerable to anger and negative affect, and thus they would perform aggressive and antisocial behaviors.

#### **1.4. Cross-Context Interactions**

Considering the apparently robust association between social rejection and adverse developmental outcomes, it holds great importance to detect protective factors that would mitigate the negative impact of parental and peer rejection.

The stress-buffering model suggests that social support might play a buffering role between a stressful event and its outcomes and ameliorate the negative effect of stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985). According to this model, social support may take different forms based on their functions. For example, esteem support, or in other words, emotional support, enhances people's self-worth regardless of the threats against their self-esteem. Informational support helps people to reappraise the stressful problem and find solutions. Social companionship is another form of social support that helps people to de-stress as people spend time with others and distract their minds from problems.

For the purpose of the current study, the social support in the stress-buffering model is parental or peer acceptance, and the stressful event is peer or parental rejection. As one of the sources of social support, parents provide esteem or informational support to their children in the face of peer difficulties. For instance, parents were shown to improve their rejected children's effortful control to enhance social preference and create opportunities for their children to solve their problems with their peers (Chang et al., 2016; McDowell & Parke, 2009). Peers, on the other hand, may provide esteem support and social companionship to children who experience adversity in their families, as peers may listen to children's family problems and spend leisure time with them to distract them from those problems.

One plausible expectation then would be that acceptance in one social context might play a protective role against rejection in the other social context. IPARTheory also suggested that perceiving at least one source of social support helps people to cope with perceived rejection effectively (Rohner, 2016).

Positive parent-child relationships were recurrently shown to ameliorate the effects of negative peer experiences. Studies showed that warm and supportive parenting protected children aged between 6 – 12 and adolescents aged between 11 – 18 from the negative consequences of peer victimization such as depression (Healy & Sanders, 2018; Stadler et al., 2010). Additionally, associations between fighting with peers and depressive symptoms was found to be stronger for third, sixth, and ninth graders who perceived low levels of parental relationship quality (Hazel et al., 2014). A study of children aged 10 and 12 showed that bullied children who received high maternal warmth demonstrated less emotional and behavioral problems compared to the bullied children who received low maternal warmth (Bowes et al., 2010). Thus, in the present study the protective role of parental acceptance against peer rejection was examined.

Contrary to the protective role of positive parenting, there are surprisingly few examples of the buffering effect of positive peer experiences on negative parent-child interactions. For instance, Birkeland and colleagues (2013) suggested that high peer acceptance protected adolescents aged between 13 and 23 against the low parental closeness, and the effect was more pronounced for older adolescents. The researchers

found that although low parental closeness affected adolescents' self-esteem adversely, this effect was mitigated when adolescents perceived peer acceptance.

The studies, as mentioned earlier, provide support to the possible cross-context interactions of parental and peer acceptance and rejection. However, they did not investigate the exact relation between those variables. To the best of our knowledge, there is only one study in the literature that examined the buffering effects of acceptance in one context against rejection in the other. Sentse and colleagues (2010) found that children of ages 11, 12, and 13 that experienced parental rejection, showed less externalizing and internalizing problems when they were more accepted by their peers. In other words, peer acceptance was ameliorative for adolescents who perceived parental rejection. However, the findings showed that parental acceptance did not protect adolescents from the negative impacts of peer rejection. It should be noted that the study included only one age group. Thus, comparing the different effects across age groups was not possible.

In studying the protective role of one social context against the other, one point that deserves extra attention is that as children grow up, their developmental needs also change. In the transition from childhood to adolescence, the relative importance of one context over the other context may also be expected to change. The next section discusses the possible differences in the cross-context interactions across different age groups.

### **1.5. Developmental Needs**

In infancy, parents, mostly mothers, are children's most frequent if not only source of emotional support (Ainsworth, 1989). After starting to the first grade, children begin to spend more time with their peers, and the importance of peers in children's lives increases (Zarra-Nezhad et al., 2019). In middle childhood, when children's cognitive capacities for more complex social interactions develop, such as interpersonal understanding, their social environment expands (Fischer & Bullock, 1984) and through adolescence peer influence becomes increasingly more important (Bornstein, 2002).

In middle childhood, children and parents experience fewer negative interactions and more positive interactions in their relationships (Bornstein, 2002). Hence, children might be more sensitive to negative parental experiences during this period. One study that investigated children and adolescents between the ages nine and 18 showed that the negative effect of maternal rejection on self-esteem was more evident for children aged between nine and 12, compared to older children (Ramírez-Uclés et al., 2017). This finding suggested that younger children were more vulnerable to parental rejection than adolescents.

Compared to preadolescence years, in adolescence parent-child relationship becomes more complicated. Parents become less warm towards the adolescents, the arguments between parents and adolescents increase, and the positive regard towards parents and perceived positive regard from parents decrease (Shanahan et al., 2007; Parra et al., 2013; McGue et al., 2005).

After the onset of puberty, the importance of peer groups increases tremendously and adolescents start to spend more time with peers, may seek more support from their peers, and care more about peer acceptance (Fuligni & Eccles, 1993). The sensitivity towards social evaluation is heightened, and social fears start to replace physical fears (Somerville, 2013; Westenberg et al., 2004). One of the explanations regarding this change in adolescence is that in adolescence, the social brain develops (Blakemore, 2008). The social brain has functions in assisting adolescents in evaluating other people's feelings and mental states and enhancing communication with other people. As peer experiences start to gain more importance, the sensitivity towards peer acceptance and rejection is also intensified (Blakemore, 2008).

With the ongoing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes in the period of adolescence, the adolescents who grow apart from their parents may intend to satisfy their emotional needs through their peers. One longitudinal study that followed children through 4th, 7th and 10th grades showed that in preadolescence, mothers and fathers are the most reported sources of support, whereas in middle adolescence parents and peers were equally reported, and in late adolescence, peers replaced the parents' place (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992). A more recent longitudinal study that

investigated adolescents at the ages 12 and 16 found that adolescents reported their parents as main confidants both in early and middle adolescence, yet they tended to report increasing importance of peers throughout adolescence (Nomaguchi, 2008). In their study Nomaguchi (2008) also argued that in late adolescence, peers might even replace parents as main confidants. Similarly, Buhrmester and Furman (1987) showed that parents had greater importance in companionship and intimacy in young children than peers. On the other hand, adolescents tended to be more intimate with their peers and choose their friends as companions. Reorganization of attachment hierarchies might be one of the reasons for the abovementioned findings. Parents' primary position in the hierarchy may be replaced by a peer or a romantic partner as the attachment hierarchy is reorganized in adolescence (Kobak et al., 2007). This change in adolescents' social context might be observed as having intimate relations with parents satisfies the need of nurturance and support, whereas having intimate relations with peers satisfies adolescents' newly emerged needs, such as autonomy, sense of power, or socialization among equals (Collins & Laursen, 2000; Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Kobak and colleagues (2007) argued that reorganization in adolescence is a gradual and natural process, and the premature or delayed reorganization may have adverse effects on children's development. For instance, premature autonomy from parents was found to increase delinquent behavior and substance abuse in 12- and 14-years old adolescents (Nomaguchi, 2008). On the other hand, adolescents who do not have close peer relationships may be overly dependent on parents and demonstrate internalizing behaviors (Kobak et al., 2007).

Hence, based on different developmental needs children and adolescents have, one might predict that in childhood, parental acceptance might have a buffering effect on peer rejection, and in adolescence, peer acceptance might have a buffering effect on parental rejection.

## **1.6. The Present Study**

There were two main goals of the present study. The first goal was to investigate whether parental (maternal and paternal) acceptance served as a protective factor in the relationship between peer rejection and problem behaviors (externalizing and

internalizing problems) among children. It was hypothesized that for children with high parental acceptance, peer rejection would not be associated with problem behaviors, whereas for children with low parental acceptance, peer rejection would be positively associated with problem behaviors. On the other hand, considering their developmental needs, it was expected that parental acceptance would be less likely to protect adolescents than children against peer rejection. In order to provide further confirmation for the hypothesis, the protective role of parental acceptance was also tested among adolescents.

The second goal was to investigate whether peer acceptance served as a protective factor in the relationship between parental rejection and problem behaviors among adolescents. It was hypothesized that for adolescents with high peer acceptance, parental rejection would not be associated with problem behaviors. However, for adolescents with low peer acceptance, parental rejection would be positively associated with problem behaviors. Based on their developmental stage, it was expected that peer acceptance would not protect children against parental rejection. Therefore the protective role of peer acceptance was also tested among children to provide additional support for the hypothesis.

To the best of our knowledge, there are no other studies that investigated the cross-context interactions between parental and peer acceptance and rejection in different age groups. Furthermore, most of the Turkish studies regarding peer relationships focused on bullying, and the ones focused on peer acceptance and rejection examined those dimensions among preschool children (e.g, Ummanel, 2007; Ogelman & Erten, 2013). Thus, this study aimed to fill the gap in the literature by examining cross-context interactions in children and adolescents, and the gap specifically in Turkish literature by studying peer acceptance and rejection in a Turkish sample.



## CHAPTER 2

### METHOD

#### 2.1. Participants

The data of the current study were collected as part of a nationwide project funded by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) that aims to investigate the effects of parenting attitudes and parent-child interactions on child and adolescent developmental outcomes (Project code: 118K033). A representative Turkish sample was determined, and 181 primary and secondary schools and high schools were selected by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK). In the schools, the classes were randomly selected for each grade between 1<sup>st</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades.

The total sample of the project was planned to include 5500 children and adolescents and their mothers. However, due to COVID-19 precautions, the schools were closed in March. Thus, the researchers were able to collect data from 897 children and adolescents and their mothers in 18 cities and 31 schools. Because of the closings of the schools, some data from mother-child dyads were not completed. There were 653 mother-child dyads in which both the mothers and the children completed the questionnaires. Out of 653 pairs, 20 were excluded because they did not complete the scales used in the current study. Additionally, as the current study was concerned with 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> graders, the other grades in the data were removed. After data cleaning, the final sample included 196 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade children ( $M_{age} = 9.06$ ,  $SD = 0.81$ ), 119 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade adolescents ( $M_{age} = 15.08$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ), and their mothers ( $M_{age} = 37.40$ ,  $SD = 5.55$ ) from 16 different cities. Table 1 and Table 2 illustrate the mean scores, standard deviations, minimum and maximum scores, and percentages regarding the demographics of the participants.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Children and Adolescents

Characteristic	Children	Adolescents
Age	$M = 9.06$ $SD = .81$	$M = 15.08$ $SD = .98$
Grades ( <i>n</i> )		
3 <sup>rd</sup>	76	
4 <sup>th</sup>	62	
5 <sup>th</sup>	58	
9 <sup>th</sup>		45
10 <sup>th</sup>		34
11 <sup>th</sup>		40
Gender ( <i>n</i> )		
Female	106 (54.1 %)	76 (63.9 %)
Male	90 (45.9 %)	43 (36.1 %)

Note.  $N = 315$ . Percentages are presented in parentheses. Children's age range = 7-12 years; Adolescents' age range = 14-18 years

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Mothers

Characteristic	Mothers
Age	$M = 37.40$ $SD = 5.55$
Missing ( <i>n</i> )	56
Educational Status ( <i>n</i> )	
Illiterate	2 (0.6 %)
Literate	4 (1.3 %)
Primary School	128 (40.6 %)
Middle School	63 (20 %)
Highschool	85 (27 %)
Bachelor	29 (9.2 %)
Master	4 (1.3 %)
Employment Status ( <i>n</i> )	
Employed	79 (25.1 %)
Unemployed	236 (74.9 %)
Marital Status ( <i>n</i> )	
Married	303 (96.2 %)

Table 2 (cont'd)

Separated	1 (0.3 %)
Divorced	10 (3.2 %)
Widowed	1 (0.3 %)

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*Note.*  $N = 315$ . Percentages are presented in parentheses. Mothers' age range = 26-52 years

## 2.2. Procedure

TACEP (Turkish Family Child Adolescent Project) is a cross-sequential project funded by TÜBİTAK. The project was held in collaboration with Boğaziçi University, Ege University, and the Ministry of Education. Prior to the data collection, the ethical approvals were obtained from the Ministry of Education and the Middle East Technical University Human Ethics Committee (see Appendix A). After TUIK selected the schools that would participate in the study, the project team visited the schools and randomly selected classes. Children, adolescents, and mothers who did not speak Turkish, who were immigrants, or who had a developmental or psychological disorder that would prevent them from participating in the study were excluded. The team sent letters that included information about the project and informed consent to parents through students in the selected classes. Mothers who agreed to participate in the study were invited to the school. The informed consents of mothers and verbal consents of children and adolescents were collected (see Appendix B). Mothers, children, and adolescents completed the questionnaires through tablets at schools. Mothers who could not visit the schools but agreed to participate in the study received a link to the online survey. After completing the questionnaires, small gifts were given to mothers and children for their participation. Out of the questionnaires that were filled by the participants, mother-reports of children's and adolescents' externalizing and internalizing problems, and child-reports of perceived parental and peer acceptance and rejection were used in the present study.

## **2.3. Measures**

### **2.3.1. Demographic Information Form**

Mothers answered demographic questions regarding their age, education level, employment status, and marital status. Children and adolescents answered questions regarding their age, gender, and school grade.

### **2.3.2. Internalizing and Externalizing Problems**

Children's and adolescents' internalizing and externalizing problems were measured by the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001). The scale was translated into Turkish by Dumenci, Erol, Achenbach, and Simsek (2004). Anxious/depressed, withdrawn/depressed, and somatic complaints subscales were used to assess internalizing behaviors, and aggression and rule-breaking subscales were used to assess externalizing behaviors. Participants responded to the items on a 3-point Likert type scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 3 (very often). In the current study, sum scores of Internalizing and Externalizing scales were used. The possible minimum and maximum scores were 33 and 99 for the Internalizing and the Externalizing scale.

The internalizing scale consisted of 33 items (13 items in the anxious/depressed, 8 items in withdrawn/depressed, and 12 items in somatic complaints subscales). In the current sample, the Cronbach's alpha was .88 for the Internalizing scale.

The externalizing scale consisted of 33 items (18 items in the aggression and 15 items in the rule-breaking subscales). In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha for the externalizing subscale was .84. However, one of the items (i.e., "Drinks alcohol without parents' approval.") had a negative corrected item-total correlation, and therefore, it was removed from the scale in the further analyses. The final alpha was .85.

### **2.3.3 Parental Acceptance and Rejection**

The Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ; Rohner and Khaleque, 2005) was used in assessing perceived parental acceptance and rejection. Anjel (2003)

translated and adapted the scale to Turkish. The 24-item short version of the scale was used in the study. The scale consisted of four subscales: warmth and affection, hostility and aggression, indifference and neglect, and undifferentiated rejection. The items were coded on a 4-point Likert type scale, ranging from “never” to “always.”

In the current study, participants completed the scales separately for their mothers and fathers. The acceptance scores were calculated by reverse coding the hostility and aggression, indifference and neglect, and undifferentiated rejection subscales. The rejection scores were calculated by reverse coding the warmth and affection subscale. Anjel (2003) reported that Cronbach’s alpha for the scale was .89. In the present study, Cronbach’s alphas for Maternal Acceptance and Paternal Acceptance were .90 and .92, respectively.

#### **2.3.4 Peer Acceptance and Rejection**

The Peer Acceptance and Rejection Scale composed by Erel-Gozagac and Berument (2016) was used to measure perceived peer acceptance and rejection. For the peer acceptance subscale, the authors selected four items from the “Self-Perception Profile for Children-Social Acceptance Subscale” (Harter, 1985) and wrote two new items. For the peer rejection subscale, they selected six items from the exclusion subscale of the Child Behavior Scale (CBS; Ladd & Profilet, 1996; Gulay, 2008). The items were rated on a 4-point Likert type scale ranging from “never” to “always”. The mean scores were used in the present study.

In examining model fit to data, confirmatory factor analyses were conducted. The fit indices revealed that the data did not fit the model well,  $\chi^2 (53) = 164.85, p < .001, \chi^2/df = 3.11, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .06$ . One item (i.e., “I wish other children would like me more.”) had low factor loading, so it was excluded from the study. When the item was excluded, the fit indices were improved.  $\chi^2 (43) = 115.65, p < .001, \chi^2/df = 2.69, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .05$ . Further analyses were conducted with 11 items. Erel-Gozagac ve Berument (2016) reported that the internal consistency was .77 for peer acceptance and .72 for peer rejection. In the current study, the internal consistency of peer acceptance was .79, and the internal consistency of peer rejection was .77.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESULTS**

#### **3.1. Data Screening**

Prior to the data analyses, data were screened to check for missing values, outliers, multicollinearity, and normality using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26. The system used in data collection did not allow any missing values. To check for univariate outliers, all of the raw scores were transformed into standardized scores. There were eight outliers in the children group and eleven outliers in the adolescents group that exceeded 3.29 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Those twenty-nine scores were transformed into the scores that were above one unit of the next acceptable score. After transformation, in order to detect the multivariate outliers, standard residuals were checked. Three outliers from the children group and two outliers from the adolescent group were detected and deleted from the data set.

Next, the multicollinearity assumption was checked, and the results showed that the highest correlation between the variables was .66, so the assumption was met. Normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity tests revealed that the skewness and the kurtosis values were in the acceptable range.

Further analyses were conducted with 315 cases.

#### **3.2 Descriptive Statistics**

Means and standard deviations of and correlations among maternal acceptance, paternal acceptance, peer acceptance, peer rejection, externalizing, and internalizing behaviors of children and adolescents were demonstrated in Table 3 and Table 4. As maternal and paternal rejection scales were obtained by reverse coding maternal and paternal acceptance scales, they were not included in the tables.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for and Correlations Among Variables for Children

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Gender	1						
2. Maternal Acceptance	0.08	1					
3. Paternal Acceptance	0.20**	0.64**	1				
4. Peer Acceptance	-0.01	0.38**	0.27**	1			
5. Peer Rejection	-0.14*	-0.41**	-0.44**	-0.28**	1		
6. Externalizing	-0.09	-0.31**	-0.30**	0.23	0.22**	1	
7. Internalizing	0.11	-0.11	-0.04	0.05	0.08	0.50**	1
<i>M</i>		85.83	84.37	3.02	1.36	38.52	44.37
<i>SD</i>		8.33	10.47	0.66	0.47	4.85	7.13

Note. Gender (1 = Boys, 2 = Girls)

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for and Correlations Among Variables for Adolescents

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Gender	1						
2. Maternal Acceptance	-0.12	1					
3. Paternal Acceptance	-0.70	0.66**	1				
4. Peer Acceptance	-0.13	0.43**	0.33**	1			
5. Peer Rejection	0.07	-0.47**	-0.36**	-0.61**	1		
6. Externalizing	0.13	-0.31**	-0.30**	-0.06	0.15	1	
7. Internalizing	0.25**	-0.27**	-0.24**	-0.14	0.19*	0.47**	1
<i>M</i>		83.49	80.29	2.82	1.23	38.92	45.5
<i>SD</i>		9.82	12.23	.57	.41	5.56	7.69

Note. \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$

### **3.3. Hierarchical Regression Analyses**

The first hypothesis of the present study was that parental acceptance (maternal and paternal) would serve as a protective factor in the relationship between peer rejection and problem behaviors (externalizing and internalizing problems) among children. The second hypothesis was that peer acceptance would serve as a protective factor in the relationship between parental rejection and problem behaviors among adolescents.

In order to test these two hypotheses, two different sets of hierarchical regression analyses were conducted separately for externalizing and internalizing behaviors and for children and adolescents. In total, eight sets of hierarchical regression analyses were conducted. To eliminate the risk of multicollinearity, all of the continuous variables were centered prior to the regression analyses.

#### **3.3.1. Testing the Protective Role of Parental Acceptance Against Peer Rejection Among Children**

##### *Externalizing Problems*

In order to test the hypothesis that parental acceptance would serve a protective role in the relationship between peer rejection and externalizing behaviors among children, hierarchical regression analyses were conducted (see Table 5). The first step that included gender was not significant ( $F(1, 194) = 1.41, p = 0.24$ ). In the second step, which included maternal acceptance, paternal acceptance, and peer rejection, the model was significant, and it accounted for 10% of the variance in the externalizing behaviors ( $\Delta F(3, 191) = 8.01, p < .001, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .10, \Delta R^2 = .11$ ). In the third step, the interaction terms (maternal acceptance x paternal acceptance, maternal acceptance x peer rejection, paternal acceptance x peer rejection) were entered into the model. The model significantly explained 15% of variance ( $\Delta F(3, 188) = 5.12, p < .01, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .15, \Delta R^2 = .07$ ). It was shown that maternal acceptance x peer rejection ( $\beta = -.30, p < .05$ ) and maternal acceptance x paternal acceptance ( $\beta = -.27, p < .05$ ) significantly predicted externalizing behaviors. In order to interpret the interaction effects, simple



slope plots were drawn for the low and high levels of the predictors (i.e., one standard deviation below and above the mean of the predictors; Dawson, 2014).

Table 5. Hierarchical Regression Results for Externalizing Problems of Children

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Step 1				0	.01	1.41	1.41
Gender	-0.83	0.69	-.09				
Step 2				.10	.11	6.40***	8.01***
Gender	-0.30	0.68	-.03				
Maternal Acceptance	-0.11	0.05	-.19*				
Paternal Acceptance	-0.06	0.04	-.13				
Peer Rejection	0.81	0.80	.08				
Step 3				.15	.07	6.09***	5.12**
Gender	-0.22	0.66	-.02				
Maternal Acceptance	-0.07	0.05	-.13				
Paternal Acceptance	-0.08	0.04	-.16				
Peer Rejection	0.29	0.82	.03				
M. Acc. x P. Acc.	-0.01	0.00	-.27*				
M. Acc. x Peer Rej.	-0.27	0.11	-.30*				
P. Acc x Peer Rej.	-0.09	0.08	-.13				

*Note.* M. Acc. x P. Acc. is the interaction between maternal acceptance and paternal acceptance; M. Acc. x Peer Rej. is the interaction between maternal acceptance and peer rejection; P. Acc x Peer Rej. is the interaction between paternal acceptance and peer rejection.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .  $p < .001$ .

First, as Figure 1 illustrates, for children with high maternal acceptance, peer rejection was not associated with externalizing behaviors. However, for children that had low maternal acceptance, high peer rejection was associated with higher externalizing behaviors.

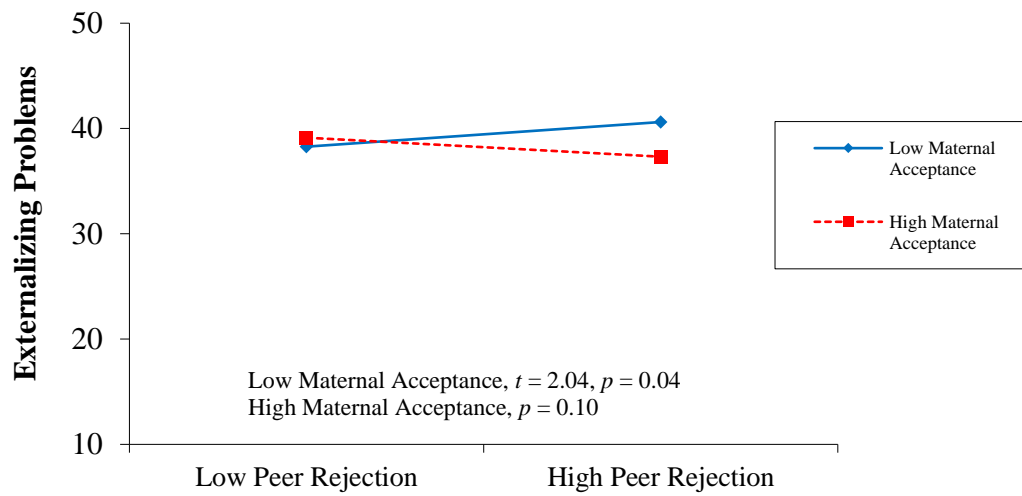


Figure 1. Interaction Between Maternal Acceptance and Peer Rejection on Children's Externalizing Problems

Second, as Figure 2 illustrates, maternal acceptance was not significantly associated with externalizing behaviors for children with low paternal acceptance. However, when children reported high paternal acceptance, maternal acceptance was significantly associated with lower levels of externalizing behaviors.

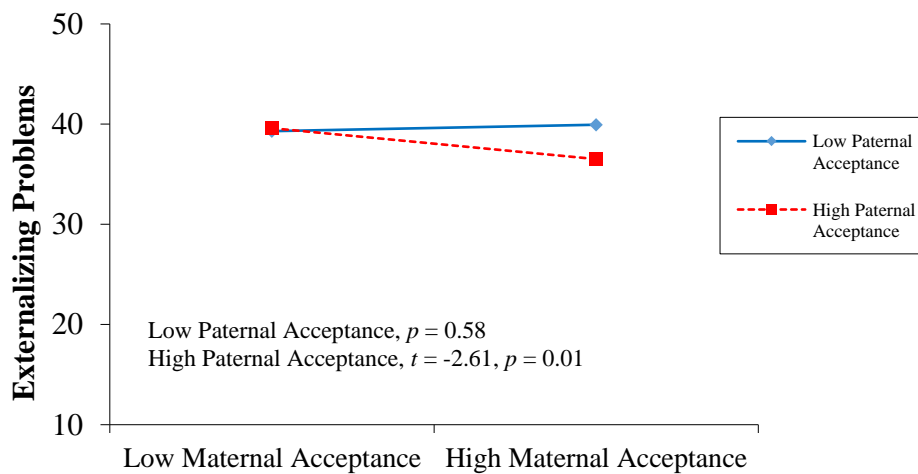


Figure 2. Interaction Between Maternal Acceptance and Paternal Acceptance on Children's Externalizing Problems

### *Internalizing Problems*

The protective role of parental acceptance was also investigated in predicting internalizing behaviors (see Table 6). The first step ( $p = 0.11$ ) and the second step ( $p = 0.19$ ) did not yield significant models. The third step that included interaction terms and unique effects were marginally significant (adjusted  $R^2 = .03$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .04$ ,  $F(7, 188) = 1.99$ ,  $p = .058$ ). In the model maternal acceptance x peer rejection was shown to significantly predict internalizing behaviors ( $\beta = -.28$ ,  $p < .05$ ). However, the simple slope analyses did not show any significant results.

Table 6. Hierarchical Regression Results for Internalizing Problems of Children

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Step 1				.01	.01	2.55	2.55
Gender	1.62	1.02	0.11				
Step 2				.01	.02	1.57	1.24
Gender	1.78	1.04	0.13				
Maternal Acceptance	-0.10	0.08	-0.12				
Paternal Acceptance	0.03	0.06	0.04				
Peer Rejection	1.06	1.23	0.07				
Step 3				.03	.04	1.99	2.51
Gender	1.93	1.03	0.14				
Maternal Acceptance	-0.05	0.08	-0.05				
Paternal Acceptance	0.02	0.07	0.04				
Peer Rejection	0.54	1.28	0.04				
M. Acc. x P. Acc.	-0.01	0.01	-0.11				
M. Acc. x Peer Rej.	-0.36	0.17	-0.28*				
P. Acc x Peer Rej.	-0.00	0.13	-0.00				

Note. M. Acc. x P. Acc. is the interaction between maternal acceptance and paternal acceptance; M. Acc. x Peer Rej. is the interaction between maternal acceptance and peer rejection; P. Acc x Peer Rej. is the interaction between paternal acceptance and peer rejection.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .  $p < .001$ .

### 3.3.2 Testing the Protective Role of Parental Acceptance Against Peer Rejection Among Adolescents

#### *Externalizing Problems*

Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to test whether parental acceptance would serve a protective role in the association between peer rejection and problem behaviors in adolescence (see Table 7).

The results showed that the first step that included gender did not predict externalizing behaviors among adolescents ( $p = .16$ ). The model that included maternal and paternal acceptance and peer rejection in the second step significantly accounted for 9% of variance ( $\Delta F(3, 114) = 4.40, p < .01, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .09, \Delta R^2 = .10$ ). 13% of variance was explained by the third model that included the interaction terms ( $\Delta F(3, 111) = 2.96, p < .05, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .13, \Delta R^2 = .07$ ). Only one interaction term, maternal acceptance x peer rejection was marginally significant ( $\beta = .38, p = .058$ ). In order to understand the interaction better, simple slope analysis was conducted. The slopes were not significant.

Table 7. Hierarchical Regression Results for Externalizing Problems of Adolescents

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Step 1				.01	.02	2.03	2.03
Gender	1.51	1.06	0.13				
Step 2				.09	.10	3.85**	4.39**
Gender	1.11	1.02	0.10				
Maternal Acceptance	-0.12	0.07	-0.21				
Paternal Acceptance	-0.07	0.05	-0.15				

Table 7 (cont'd)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Peer Rejection	-0.13	1.37	-0.01				
Step 3				.13	.07	3.58**	2.96*
Gender	1.03	1.00	0.09				
Maternal Acceptance	-0.06	0.08	-0.10				
Paternal Acceptance	-0.08	0.05	-0.17				
Peer Rejection	0.25	1.53	0.02				
M. Acc. x P. Acc.	0.01	0.00	0.21				
M. Acc. x Peer Rej.	0.34	0.18	0.38				
P. Acc x Peer Rej.	-0.24	0.16	-0.32				

*Note.* M. Acc. x P. Acc. is the interaction between maternal acceptance and paternal acceptance; M. Acc. x Peer Rej. is the interaction between maternal acceptance and peer rejection; P. Acc x Peer Rej. is the interaction between paternal acceptance and peer rejection.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .  $p < .001$ .

### ***Internalizing Problems***

The same steps were repeated again for predicting internalizing behaviors (see Table 8). The gender significantly explained 6% of the variance in internalizing behaviors ( $F(1, 117) = 8.08, p < .01, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .06, \Delta R^2 = .07$ ). When maternal and paternal acceptance and peer rejection were entered in the second step, the model explained 10% of the variance ( $\Delta F(3, 114) = 3.03, p < .05, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .10, \Delta R^2 = .07$ ). Although F Change was not significant ( $\Delta F(3, 111) = 2.44, p = 0.07$ ), the model that included interaction terms on the third step was significant ( $F(7, 111) = 3.65, p = 0.001, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .14, \Delta R^2 = .05$ ). The interaction term of maternal acceptance x paternal acceptance ( $\beta = -.33, p < .05$ ) significantly predicted internalizing behaviors (see Figure 3). Whereas paternal acceptance \* peer rejection was only marginally significant ( $\beta = -.43, p = .053$ ). Simple slope analysis showed that the slopes were not significant.

Table 8. Hierarchical Regression Results for Internalizing Problems of Adolescents

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Step 1				.06	.07	8.08**	8.08**
Gender	4.05	1.43	0.25**				
Step 2				.10	.07	4.39**	3.03*
Gender	3.59	1.40	0.23*				
Maternal Acceptance	-0.11	0.10	-0.14				
Paternal Acceptance	-0.07	0.07	-0.11				
Peer Rejection	1.17	1.88	0.06				
Step 3				.14	.05	3.65**	2.44
Gender	3.52	1.39	0.22*				
Maternal Acceptance	-0.19	0.10	-0.24				
Paternal Acceptance	-0.08	0.07	-0.13				
Peer Rejection	-0.85	2.12	-0.05				
M. Acc. x P. Acc.	-0.01	0.01	-0.33*				
M. Acc. x Peer Rej.	0.10	0.24	0.08				
P. Acc x Peer Rej.	-0.43	0.22	-0.43				

Note. M. Acc. x P. Acc. is the interaction between maternal acceptance and paternal acceptance; M. Acc. x Peer Rej. is the interaction between maternal acceptance and peer rejection; P. Acc x Peer Rej. is the interaction between paternal acceptance and peer rejection.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .  $p < .001$ .

Figure 3 illustrated that for adolescents with low paternal acceptance, maternal acceptance was not associated with internalizing behaviors. However, for adolescents with high paternal acceptance, high maternal acceptance was associated with low internalizing behaviors.

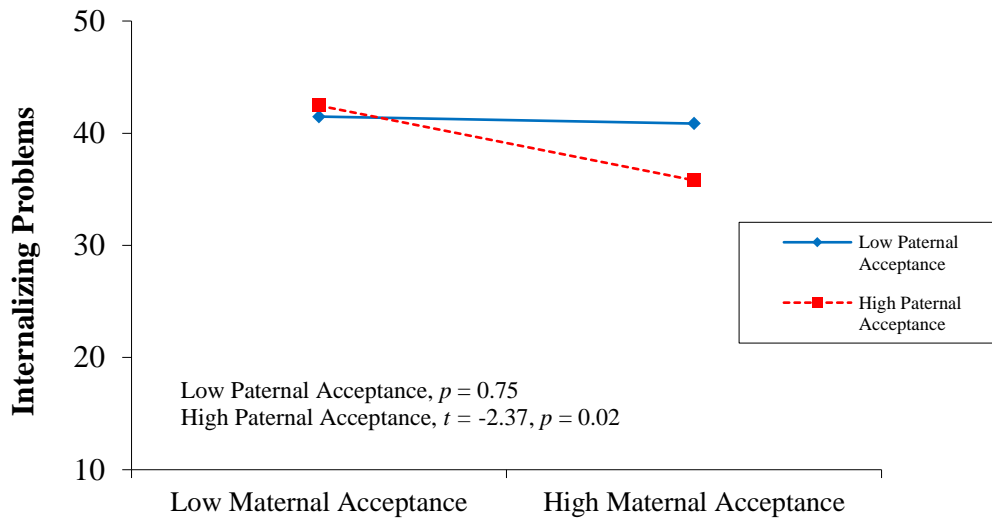


Figure 3. Interaction Between Paternal Acceptance and Maternal Acceptance on Adolescents' Internalizing Problems

Since gender was shown to predict adolescents' internalizing behaviors, the models were tested separately for girls and boys. For boys, none of the models significantly predicted internalizing behaviors.

For girls, as Table 9 illustrates, the third model that included the interaction terms was significant ( $\Delta F(3, 69) = 2.99, p < .05$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .14, \Delta R^2 = .10$ ). The interactions of maternal acceptance and paternal acceptance ( $\beta = -.47, p < .05$ ) and paternal acceptance and peer rejection ( $\beta = -.89, p < .05$ ) were significant. Simple slope analyses were conducted to interpret this interaction. The slope analysis for the interaction between maternal acceptance and paternal acceptance was not significant.

Table 9. Hierarchical Regression Results for Internalizing Problems of Adolescent Girls

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Step 1				.07	.11	2.96*	2.96*
Maternal Acceptance	-0.08	0.12	-0.11				
Paternal Acceptance	-0.13	0.09	-0.21				

Table 9 (cont'd)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Peer Rejection	1.19	2.56	0.06				
Step 2				.14	.10	3.10*	2.99*
Maternal Acceptance	-0.17	0.14	-0.22				
Paternal Acceptance	-0.21	0.10	-0.34*				
Peer Rejection	-1.35	2.96	-0.07				
M. Acc. x P. Acc.	-0.02	0.01	-0.47*				
M. Acc. x Peer Rej.	0.61	0.38	0.51				
P. Acc x Peer Rej.	-0.83	0.31	-0.89*				

*Note.* M. Acc. x P. Acc. is the interaction between maternal acceptance and paternal acceptance; M. Acc. x Peer Rej. is the interaction between maternal acceptance and peer rejection; P. Acc x Peer Rej. is the interaction between paternal acceptance and peer rejection.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .  $p < .001$ .

As Figure 4 demonstrates, for girls with high paternal acceptance, high peer rejection was associated with low internalizing behaviors. On the other hand, for girls with low paternal acceptance, high peer rejection was associated with high internalizing behaviors.



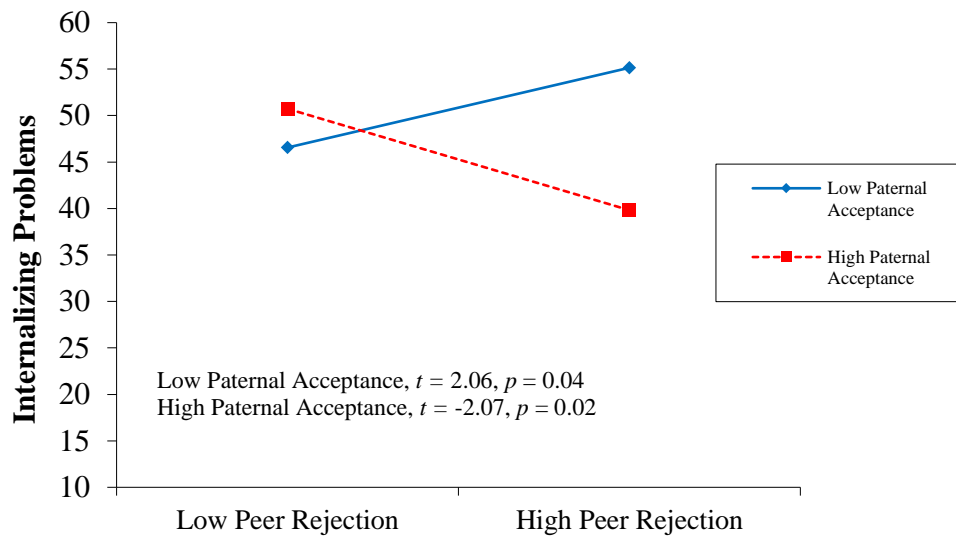


Figure 4. Interaction Between Paternal Acceptance and Peer Rejection on Adolescent Girls' Internalizing Problems

### 3.3.3 Testing The Protective Role of Peer Acceptance Against Parental Rejection Among Adolescents

Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted in testing the hypothesis that peer acceptance would serve as a protective factor in the relationship between parental rejection and problem behaviors in adolescence.

#### *Externalizing Problems*

In predicting externalizing behavior, the first step that included gender that was not significant ( $p = 0.16$ ). As Table 10 displays, when maternal rejection, paternal rejection and peer acceptance were entered into the second step, the model explained 10% of the variance ( $\Delta F(3, 114) = 4.85, p < .001, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .10, \Delta R^2 = .11$ ). In the final step, the interaction terms of maternal rejection x paternal rejection, maternal rejection x peer acceptance, and paternal rejection x peer acceptance were added. A significant increment was observed, and the model explained 16% of the variance ( $\Delta F(3, 111) = 3.56, p < .001, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .16, \Delta R^2 = .08$ ). In the last model, it was shown that both maternal rejection x peer acceptance ( $\beta = .34, p < .05$ ) and paternal rejection x peer

acceptance ( $\beta = -.33, p < .05$ ) were significant. In order to interpret the interaction, simple slope plots were drawn.

Table 10. Hierarchical Regression Results for Externalizing Problems of Adolescents

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Step 1				.01	.02	2.03	2.03
Gender	1.51	1.06	0.13				
Step 2				.01	.11	4.20**	4.85*
Gender	1.21	1.02	0.11				
Maternal Rejection	0.14	0.07	0.24				
Paternal Rejection	0.07	0.05	0.16				
Peer Acceptance	1.06	0.95	0.11				
Step 3				.16	.08	4.09***	3.56*
Gender	0.91	0.99	0.08				
Maternal Rejection	0.06	0.07	0.10				
Paternal Rejection	0.10	0.06	0.22				
Peer Acceptance	0.89	0.96	0.09				
M. Rej. x P. Rej.	0.01	0.00	0.22				
M. Rej. x Peer Acc.	0.29	0.14	0.34*				
P. Rej x Peer Acc.	-0.23	0.11	-0.33*				

Note. M. Rej. x P. Rej. is the interaction between maternal rejection and paternal rejection; M. Rej. x Peer Acc. is the interaction between maternal rejection and peer acceptance; P. Rej x Peer Acc. is the interaction between paternal rejection and peer acceptance.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .  $p < .001$ .

As Figure 5 demonstrates, paternal rejection was not significantly associated with externalizing behaviors for adolescents with high peer acceptance. For adolescents with low peer acceptance, however, high paternal rejection was associated with high externalizing behaviors.

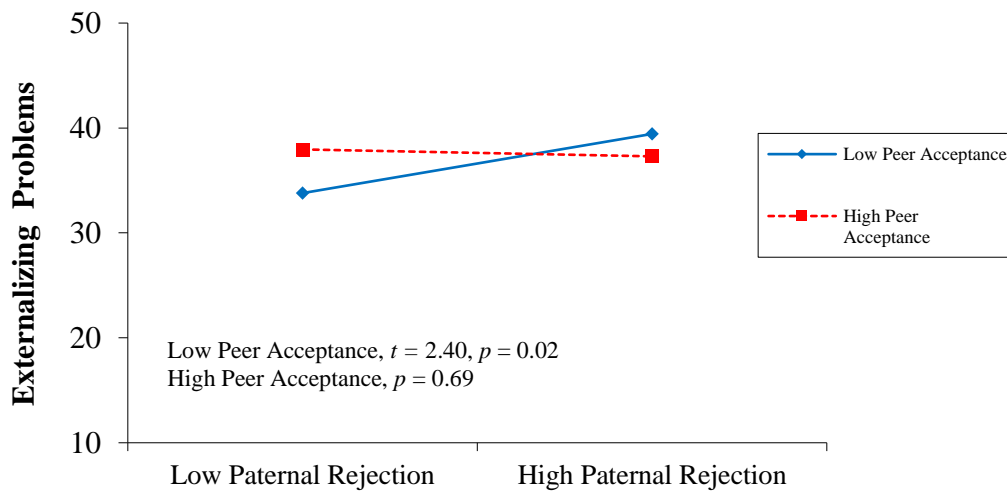


Figure 5. Interaction Between Peer Acceptance and Paternal Rejection on Adolescents' Externalizing Problems

Additionally, as Figure 6 demonstrates, it was found that for adolescents with low peer acceptance maternal rejection was not associated with externalizing problems. On the other hand, for adolescents with high peer acceptance, high maternal rejection was associated with high levels of externalizing problems.

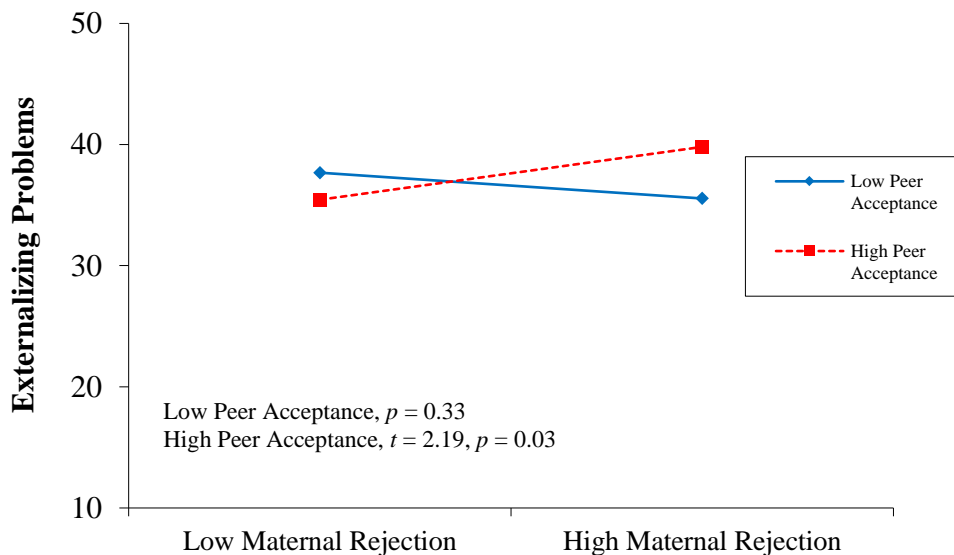


Figure 6. Interaction Between Peer Acceptance and Maternal Rejection on Adolescents' Externalizing Problems

### ***Internalizing Problems***

The steps were repeated for internalizing behaviors (see Table 11). Gender significantly predicted internalizing behaviors ( $F(1, 117) = 8.08, p < .01$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .06, \Delta R^2 = .07$ ). Adding maternal and paternal rejection and peer acceptance to the model, the model was found to explain 10% of the variance ( $\Delta F(3, 114) = 2.89, p < .05$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .10, \Delta R^2 = .07$ ). In the third step, although F Change was not significant ( $\Delta F(3, 111) = 1.18, p = 0.32$ ), the model that included interaction terms on the third step was significant ( $F(7, 111) = 2.97, p < 0.01$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .10, \Delta R^2 = .03$ ). However, none of the interaction terms were found to be significant in predicting internalizing behaviors.

Table 11. Hierarchical Regression Results for Internalizing Problems of Adolescents

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Step 1				.06	.07	8.08	8.08
Gender	4.05	1.43	0.25*				
Step 2				.10	.07	4.28**	2.89*
Gender	3.60	1.41	0.23*				
Maternal Rejection	0.13	0.01	0.17				
Paternal Rejection	0.07	0.01	0.11				
Peer Acceptance	-0.04	1.32	-0.00				
Step 3				.10	.03	2.97**	1.18
Gender	3.60	1.41	0.23*				
Maternal Rejection	0.15	0.11	0.19				
Paternal Rejection	0.12	0.01	0.19				
Peer Acceptance	0.41	1.36	0.03				
M. Rej. x P. Rej.	-0.01	0.01	-0.22				
M. Rej. x Peer Acc.	0.06	0.19	0.05				

Table 11. (cont'd)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
P. Rej x Peer Acc.	-0.25	0.16	-0.26				

*Note.* M. Rej. x P. Rej. is the interaction between maternal rejection and paternal rejection; M. Rej. x Peer Acc. is the interaction between maternal rejection and peer acceptance; P. Rej x Peer Acc. is the interaction between paternal rejection and peer acceptance.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Since gender was shown to predict adolescents' internalizing behaviors, the models were tested separately for girls and boys. For boys, none of the models significantly predicted internalizing behaviors.

For adolescent girls, Table 12 shows that the model that included the unique effects and two-way interactions of maternal and paternal rejection and peer acceptance was significant in predicting internalizing behaviors ( $\Delta F(6, 69) = 2.59, p < .05$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .11, \Delta R^2 = .07$ ). Among interaction terms, only paternal rejection x peer acceptance was significant ( $\beta = -.45, p < 0.05$ ). The plot of this interaction demonstrated that for adolescent girls with high peer acceptance, the paternal rejection was not significantly associated with internalizing behaviors (see Figure 7). Nevertheless, for girls with low peer acceptance, paternal rejection was positively associated with internalizing behaviors.

Table 12. Hierarchical Regression Results for Internalizing Problems of Adolescent Girls

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Step 1				.08	.12	3.24*	3.24*
Maternal Rejection	0.13	0.12	0.18				
Paternal Rejection	0.14	0.01	0.24				
Peer Acceptance	1.61	1.64	0.12				
Step 2				.11	.07	2.59*	1.83
Maternal Rejection	0.12	0.13	0.16				

Table 12 (cont'd)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Paternal Rejection	0.25	0.10	0.42				
Peer Acceptance	2.13	1.64	0.16*				
M. Rej. x P. Rej.	-0.01	0.01	-0.21				
M. Rej. x Peer Acc.	0.40	0.19	0.33				
P. Rej x Peer Acc.	-0.41	0.16	-0.45*				

Note. M. Rej. x P. Rej. is the interaction between maternal rejection and paternal rejection; M. Rej. x Peer Acc. is the interaction between maternal rejection and peer acceptance; P. Rej x Peer Acc. is the interaction between paternal rejection and peer acceptance.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

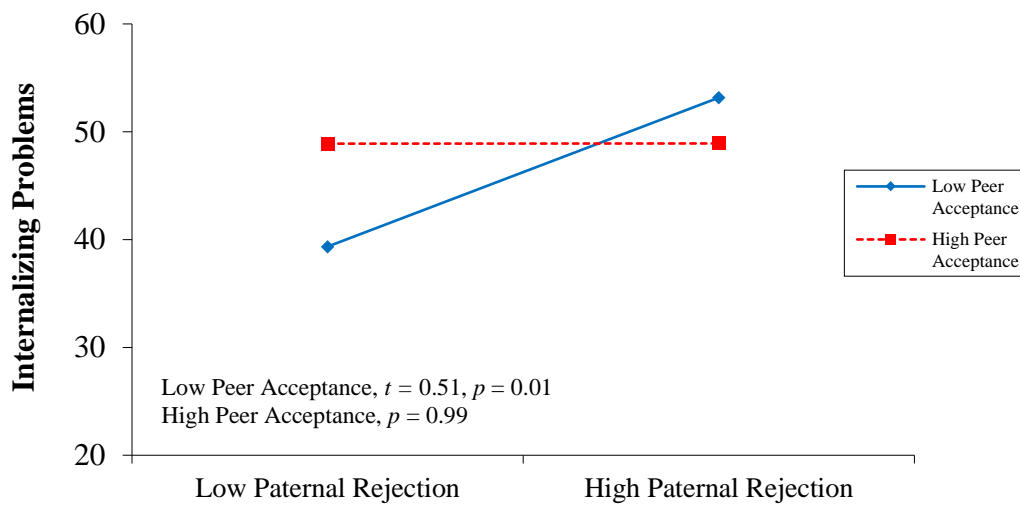


Figure 7. Interaction Between Peer Acceptance and Paternal Rejection on Adolescent Girls' Internalizing Problems

### 3.3.4 Testing The Protective Role of Peer Acceptance Against Parental Rejection Among Children

#### *Externalizing Problems*

Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to test whether peer acceptance would act as a protective factor in the association between parental rejection and problem behaviors in childhood.

In predicting externalizing behaviors, gender was not significant ( $p = .24$ ). Table 13 illustrates that when maternal and paternal rejection and peer acceptance were added to the model, it was found that they explained 15% of the variance ( $\Delta F(3, 191) = 11.83, p < .001, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .15, \Delta R^2 = .16$ ). After entering the interaction terms, a significant increment was observed ( $\Delta F(3, 188) = 3.33, p < .05, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .18, \Delta R^2 = .04$ ). The only significant interaction term was paternal rejection x peer acceptance ( $\beta = .25, p < 0.01$ ). The simple slope plot of the interaction showed that high paternal rejection was significantly associated with high externalizing behaviors for children with high peer acceptance but not for children with low peer acceptance (see Figure 8).

Table 13. Hierarchical Regression Results for Externalizing Problems of Children

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Step 1				0.00	0.10	1.41	1.41
Gender	-0.83	0.69	-0.09				
Step 2				0.15	0.16	9.28***	11.83***
Gender	-0.23	0.66	-0.02				
Maternal Rejection	0.12	0.05	0.29**				
Paternal Rejection	0.08	0.04	0.17				
Peer Acceptance	1.76	0.52	0.24**				
Step 3				0.18	0.04	6.92***	3.33*

Table 13 (cont'd)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Gender	-0.23	0.65	-0.02				
Maternal Rejection	0.16	0.06	0.27**				
Paternal Rejection	0.07	0.04	0.14				
Peer Acceptance	1.60	0.52	0.22**				
M. Rej. x P. Rej.	0.00	0.00	0.06				
M. Rej. x Peer Acc.	-0.09	0.07	-0.12				
P. Rej x Peer Acc.	0.18	0.06	0.25**				

Note. M. Rej. x P. Rej. is the interaction between maternal rejection and paternal rejection; M. Rej. x Peer Acc. is the interaction between maternal rejection and peer acceptance; P. Rej x Peer Acc. is the interaction between paternal rejection and peer acceptance.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .  $p < .001$ .

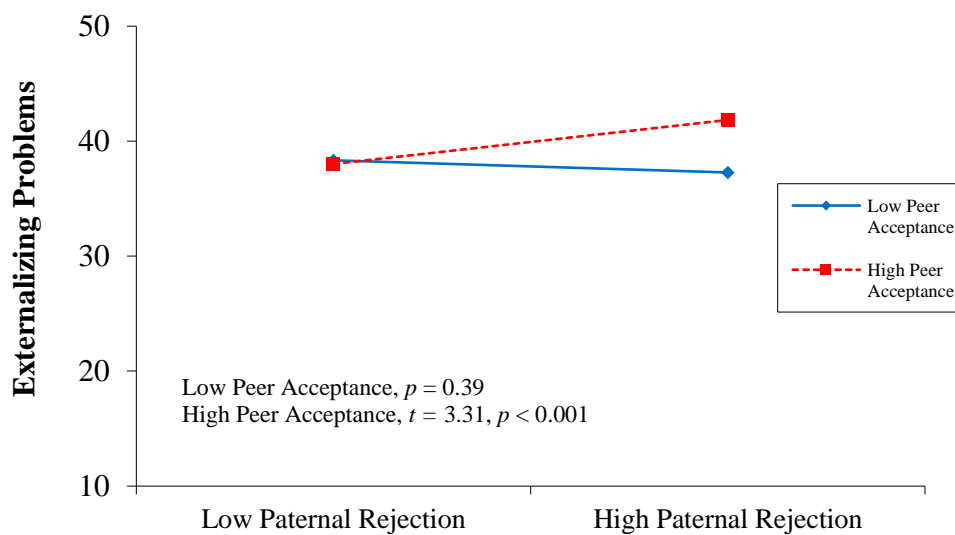


Figure 8. Interaction Between Peer Acceptance and Paternal Rejection on Children's' Externalizing Problems



### *Internalizing Problems*

The same steps were repeated in predicting internalizing problems. However, none of the models were significant (see Table 14).

Table 14. Hierarchical Regression Results for Internalizing Problems of Children

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	$R^2_{adj}$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F</i>	$\Delta F$
Step 1				0.01	0.01	2.55	2.55
Gender	1.62	1.02	0.11				
Step 2				0.02	0.03	1.88	1.64
Gender	1.80	1.04	0.13				
Maternal Rejection	0.15	0.08	0.17				
Paternal Rejection	-0.01	0.06	-0.02				
Peer Acceptance	1.15	0.82	0.11				
Step 3				0.02	0.02	1.49	0.97
Gender	1.86	1.04	0.13				
Step 3				0.02	0.02	1.49	0.97
Gender	1.86	1.04	0.13				
Maternal Rejection	0.12	0.09	0.14				
Paternal Rejection	-0.04	0.07	-0.06				
Peer Acceptance	0.96	0.83	0.09				
M. Rej. x P. Rej.	0.01	0.01	0.10				
M. Rej. x Peer Acc.	-0.09	0.10	-0.08				
P. Rej x Peer Acc.	0.13	0.09	0.12				

*Note.* M. Rej. x P. Rej. is the interaction between maternal rejection and paternal rejection; M. Rej. x Peer Acc. is the interaction between maternal rejection and peer acceptance; P. Rej x Peer Acc. is the interaction between paternal rejection and peer acceptance.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .  $p < .001$ .

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to examine parental (maternal and paternal) and peer acceptance and rejection and their cross-context interactions for children and adolescents. First, it was hypothesized that parental acceptance would play a protective role in the relationship between peer rejection and problem behaviors (externalizing and internalizing problems) for children, but not for adolescents. Second, it was hypothesized that peer acceptance would play a protective role in the relationship between parental rejection and problem behaviors for adolescents, but not for children. The results provided partial support for the hypotheses, suggesting that maternal acceptance plays a protective role against peer rejection in childhood and peer acceptance plays a protective role against paternal rejection in adolescence. Interestingly, the results also showed that peer acceptance, when coupled with paternal rejection in childhood and maternal rejection in adolescence, might deteriorate problem behaviors. Moreover, the results showed important interactions of maternal and paternal acceptance both in childhood and adolescence. To the best of our knowledge, this study was the first to investigate the interaction of acceptance and rejection from different social contexts among different age groups.

#### **4.1 The Protective Role of Parental Acceptance Against Peer Rejection Among Children**

##### *Externalizing Problems*

It was hypothesized that peer rejection and problem behaviors would not be associated for children with high parental acceptance. The findings supported this hypothesis for maternal acceptance, showing that for children with low maternal acceptance, higher peer rejection was linked to higher externalizing problems. However, for children with higher maternal acceptance, peer rejection was not related to externalizing problems.

This finding was in line with previous research that yielded similar findings suggesting that mothers' positive parenting practices protect children against negative peer experiences. For instance, one study showed that 10- and 12-year-old children who experienced peer victimization tended to show fewer externalizing behaviors when they had high maternal warmth (Bowes et al., 2010). Similarly, another study showed that girls who experienced peer victimization showed less antisocial behaviors if maternal warmth was high (Yang & McLoyd, 2015).

According to Buhrmester and Furman (1987), in terms of intimacy and companionship, parents have greater significance in young children's lives, compared to peers. Out of different social agents in their lives, preadolescent children tend to rely on their parents the most (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992) and report their parents as their main confidants through early adolescence (Nomaguchi, 2008). Furthermore, attachment theory asserts that children turn to their primary caregivers when they are distressed (Ainsworth, 1989). Thus, children perceiving rejection by their peers might depend on their primary caregivers, mothers, for support and comfort. Children who are able to receive support then would be less likely to demonstrate behavioral problems (Lee & Chyung, 2014; Carrasco et al., 2019).

Moreover, past literature indicated that when parents perceive that their children are experiencing peer victimization, they tend to either demonstrate direct efforts to decrease victimization, such as providing social advice, or indirect efforts such as enhancing their children's self-esteem (Erath et al., 2020). Thus, we can speculate that mothers of children with high peer rejection might step up their parenting behaviors and demonstrate more acceptance and warmth to reduce the negative impact of peer difficulties. As a result, peer rejection is not associated with an increase in aggressive or rule-breaking behaviors. However, one point that warrants consideration is that because the present study used data from only one time-point, we cannot conclude on the validity of this interpretation. Future research should incorporate data from multiple time-points and conduct cross-lagged path analyses in order to show evidence for directionality.

Unlike maternal acceptance, paternal acceptance was not found to be protective against peer rejection for children. This finding is in line with past research showing that maternal acceptance was directly linked to children's problem behaviors, whereas paternal acceptance was only indirectly linked to problem behaviors through maternal acceptance (Lila et al., 2007). One explanation of the presence of protective effects of maternal acceptance and lack of significant protective effects of paternal acceptance might be that mothers are more involved in children's lives than fathers in childhood, and children form closer relationships with their mothers, especially in earlier stages of life (Lewis & Lamb, 2003). Therefore, the links between maternal acceptance, peer rejection, and better child outcomes might be more heightened compared to the links between paternal acceptance and child outcomes.

In investigating the links between maternal and paternal acceptance, peer rejection, and externalizing problems among children, the interaction between maternal and paternal acceptance was controlled in order to have a clearer understanding of the cross-context interactions between parental and peer contexts. The interaction between maternal and paternal acceptance was found to be significant in predicting externalizing problems among children. This finding illustrates that externalizing problems were only lower for children with consistently high maternal and paternal acceptance. This indicated that when children perceived low acceptance from one parent, perceiving high acceptance from the other parent was not associated with a decrease in externalizing problems.

There are mixed findings in the literature regarding the effects of perceiving positive parental behaviors from only one parent. Some studies demonstrated that it might lead to favorable outcomes as one parent's positive behaviors might buffer the other parent's negative behaviors. For instance, it was shown that having one authoritative parent (i.e., high in warmth and control) protected late-adolescents against negative effects of other parent's harmful parenting style (McKinney & Renk, 2008). Another study found that high maternal support buffered the negative impacts of low paternal support on the development of sympathy (Laiable & Carlo, 2004).

On the other hand, some studies showed support for the present finding and illustrated that perceiving positive parenting from both parents is necessary for better outcomes. For instance, Miranda et al. (2016) showed that among youth between the ages 10 and 16 perceiving even one parent as rejecting was positively associated with anxiety and depression symptoms and aggressive behaviors. The study also showed that the link between the dissimilarity in parenting and child outcomes was present even after controlling for the unique effects of maternal and paternal rejection. Similarly, another study of youth between the ages 6 and 18 displayed that dissimilarity in perceptions between maternal and paternal emotional warmth was associated with higher internalizing problems (Berkien et al., 2012). One interpretation of these results might be that because parental acceptance is related to self-esteem and self-adequacy (Ramírez-Uclés et al., 2017), dissimilarity in perceptions of parental acceptance might create conflicts in children's and adolescents' self-views. Future research is needed to identify other possible underlying mechanisms of this finding.

This finding of the present study did not only demonstrate the importance of taking maternal and paternal behaviors into consideration together, but it also demonstrated the importance of controlling for the interaction between maternal acceptance and paternal acceptance in the models in order to understand cross-context interactions between parents and peers better. However, one limitation of the study was that the correlation between maternal and paternal acceptance was high ( $r = .64$  for children,  $r = .66$  for adolescents). Interpretation of dissimilarities in parenting would be more meaningful in samples where the correlation between maternal and paternal acceptance is low.

### ***Internalizing Problems***

Neither maternal acceptance nor paternal acceptance was found to be protective in the association between peer rejection and internalizing problems of children. In addition, the findings showed that peer rejection was not associated with internalizing problems in childhood. One explanation of the lack of significant findings in children's internalizing problems might be that from childhood through adolescence internalizing problems increasingly become more prevalent (Zahn-Waxler et al., 2000; Cichetti &

Toth, 1998; McGee et al., 1992). There might be various psychological, social, and biological factors accounting for the increase in internalizing problems in adolescence (Cicchetti & Toth, 1998). For instance, becoming more behaviorally inhibited (i.e., being withdrawn or avoidant, having negative emotionality) was previously shown to lead to increased depressive symptoms in adolescence (Buck & Dix, 2012). Other underlying mechanisms were shown to explain increased internalizing problems include pubertal changes (DeRose et al., 2011) and increase in perceived stress in adolescence (Felton et al., 2017). Thus, in the present study there might be not enough variance in children's internalizing problems.

#### **4.2 The Protective Role of Parental Acceptance Against Peer Rejection Among Adolescents**

##### ***Externalizing Problems***

One of the main hypotheses of the current study was that parental acceptance would play a protective role in the association between peer rejection and externalizing and internalizing problems. In order to provide further support for this hypothesis, the protective role of parental acceptance among adolescents was also examined. Based on their developmental needs, it was expected that parental acceptance would be less likely to buffer the negative effects of peer rejection in adolescence compared to childhood. Consistent with this expectation, neither maternal nor paternal acceptance served as a protective factor in the association between peer rejection and externalizing problems.

Previous literature has shown that peer rejection might lead to increases in aggression and antisocial behaviors (Dodge et al., 2003; King et al., 2017). The detrimental effects of peer rejection might not be buffered by other sources of social support, such as parents, because of the adolescents' primary needs in their developmental stage such as companionship or autonomy that are satisfied by their peers (Sullivan, 1968; Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). In adolescence, the significance of peers increases as well as adolescents' sensitivity towards peer rejection (Fuligni & Eccles, 1993; Westenberg et al., 2004) whereas the significance of parents as a source of social

support decreases (Furman, 1992; Nomaguchi, 2008). Thus, although parental acceptance is associated with better outcomes throughout the adolescence (Di Maggio & Zappulla, 2013), because of adolescents' developmental needs, it might not be adequate to ameliorate the negative impacts of peer rejection on externalizing problems.

### ***Internalizing Problems***

The protective role of maternal and paternal acceptance was not present in terms of adolescents' externalizing problems. However, the findings showed that paternal acceptance altered the nature of the association between peer rejection and internalizing symptoms for adolescent girls. For girls who perceived low father acceptance, high levels of peer rejection were positively associated with high levels of internalizing symptoms. On the other hand, for girls who perceived high father acceptance, high levels of peer rejection were associated with low levels of internalizing symptoms. This finding is in line with the past research showing that parental support buffered the adverse effects of peer victimization on internalizing symptoms, especially for adolescent girls (Stadler et al., 2010).

Although the present study did not aim to investigate gender differences in externalizing and internalizing problems, the findings showed that gender predicted internalizing problems among adolescents, whereas it did not predict externalizing problems among adolescents, or it did not predict any problem behaviors among children. Therefore, cross-context interactions of parental and peer acceptance and rejection were tested for internalizing problems of boys and girls, separately. For boys, none of the interactions were significant, yet two interaction terms (i.e., paternal acceptance and peer rejection; peer acceptance and paternal rejection) were significant in predicting adolescent girls' internalizing problems.

This observed gender difference is in line with previous studies suggesting that adolescent girls are at heightened risk for internalizing problems (Botticello, 2009; Oliva et al., 2014). There might be several biological and individual mechanisms underlying gender differences in adolescents' internalizing problems. For instance,

increased stress sensitivity and early pubertal maturation might explain girls' increased depression and anxiety symptoms in adolescence (Natsuaki et al., 2009). Furthermore, girls are raised to be shyer and more dependent compared to boys (Zahn-Waxler et al., 2000), which might promote the development of internalizing problems.

Consistent with the present study, previous literature also indicated that paternal parenting might be more salient for girls. For example, one study of Mexican American adolescents showed that the negative association between paternal acceptance and adolescents' depression symptoms was stronger for girls (Ramírez García et al., 2014). They argued that girls, compared to boys, tend to be more influenced by their relationships with their parents, and fathers tend to show fewer accepting behaviors than mothers when daughters demonstrate internalizing problems. Another study of Caucasian 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students displayed that perceived paternal support was directly linked to adolescent girls' depressed mood, but not boys (Plunkett et al., 2007). The researchers speculated that paternal support was particularly important for girls as it influences their views on males. Nevertheless, future research is needed to understand the links between paternal parenting and adolescent girls' internalizing problems.

The interaction between maternal and paternal acceptance was found to be significant in predicting adolescents' internalizing problems. Similar to the findings in children's externalizing problems, in adolescence, perceived high acceptance from one parent was negatively associated with internalizing problems only for adolescents who also perceived high acceptance from the other parent. As it was also mentioned earlier, this finding supports the line of research suggesting that perceiving parental acceptance from both parents is an important factor in terms of youth's problem behaviors (Miranda et al., 2016; Berkien et al., 2012). More research regarding the underlying mechanisms of this finding is needed.



### **4.3 The Protective Role of Peer Acceptance Against Parental Rejection Among Adolescents**

#### *Externalizing Problems*

It was hypothesized that parental rejection and problem behaviors (externalizing and internalizing) would not be associated for adolescents with high peer acceptance. The findings supported this hypothesis for paternal rejection showing that for adolescents with high peer acceptance, paternal rejection was not associated with externalizing problems, whereas, for adolescents with low peer acceptance, higher paternal rejection was associated with higher externalizing problems.

Past literature showed that paternal rejection is associated with negative adolescent outcomes (Mak et al., 2018). However, peer acceptance might provide compensatory support for adolescents that perceive rejection by their fathers. According to the stress-buffering model (Cohen & Wills, 1985), social support buffers the negative impact of stressful events. Social support might take different forms, such as emotional support or social companionship. Adolescents who perceive high levels of rejection from their fathers might share their problems with peers and peers, in turn, enhance adolescents' emotional well-being or help them de-stress by engaging in different activities together. Adolescents who are more accepted by their peers would have better opportunities to receive peer support; therefore, would not have high levels of externalizing problems (Bierman & Wargo, 1995). Another interpretation of this finding might be that adolescents who perceived paternal rejection yet had fewer externalizing problems would be more likely to be accepted by their peers than those with more behavioral problems (Parker & Asher, 1987). Future research could be conducted to investigate the links between peer acceptance, paternal rejection, and behavioral problems by a design that would allow testing the directionality of the links.

Although the protective role of peer acceptance was supported against paternal rejection, one surprising finding had occurred in investigating the protective role of peer acceptance against maternal rejection. Maternal rejection was not associated with externalizing behaviors for adolescents with low peer acceptance, whereas it was

positively associated with externalizing problems for adolescents with high peer acceptance. This finding suggested that perceiving acceptance by peers might be associated with adverse behavioral outcomes for youth with high maternal rejection. This result was unexpected as peer acceptance was previously shown to be associated with better adolescent outcomes (Klima & Repetti, 2008). However, in order to understand the links between peer acceptance and behavioral problems more clearly, the characteristics of the peers should also be factored in.

Starting in early adolescence, youths become increasingly more vulnerable to peer influence (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007). When one's peers are academically successful or demonstrate prosocial behaviors, one's own adjustment is enhanced; however, when peers engage in deviant behaviors, one's adjustment might be harmed (Veronneau et al., 2014). Deviant peers may promote antisocial behaviors of children and adolescents by demonstrating and valuing those behaviors (Chen et al., 2015). Past research showed that affiliation with deviant peers is positively associated with externalizing behaviors for both children and adolescents (Mrug & Windle, 2009; de Vries et al., 2016).

Adolescents who do not have a close relationship with their parents tend to reject parental norms (Brody & Forehand, 1993) and arguably be even more vulnerable to being influenced by peer norms. It was indeed shown that low maternal warmth was associated with greater susceptibility to peer pressure (Chan & Chan, 2011). Past literature demonstrated that unfavorable parent-child interactions predict externalizing behaviors through peer deviancy (e.g., Cano-Lozano et al., 2020; Deutsch et al., 2012). For instance, one recent study displayed that perceived parental rejection and criticism were positively associated with externalizing problems through affiliation with deviant peers for adolescents (Cano-Lozano et al., 2020). Another study found that lower maternal support was linked to higher delinquency through higher affiliation with deviant peers (Deutsch et al., 2012). Considering those findings, we can speculate that adolescents who perceive parental rejection might demonstrate more externalizing problems if they are accepted by peers who engage in deviant acts. However, it should be noted that, similar to the other findings of the present study, this finding should be

interpreted with caution, as the data were collected at a single time-point. Youths who demonstrate externalizing behaviors might as well be rejected by their parents, or the ones who demonstrate externalizing behaviors might choose to be friends with deviant peers (Burt et al., 2009). Thus, future longitudinal research could test the bidirectional links among those constructs.

### ***Internalizing Problems***

The hypothesis regarding the protective role of peer acceptance against paternal rejection was supported for adolescents' internalizing problems as well as externalizing problems. The findings demonstrated that adolescent girls with high peer acceptance, paternal rejection was not associated with internalizing problems, whereas, for girls with low peer acceptance, higher paternal rejection was associated with higher internalizing problems. For boys, the protective role of peer acceptance was not present against paternal rejection.

Although peer acceptance was found to protect adolescents against paternal rejection, the findings did not show a protective role of peer acceptance against maternal rejection. One explanation might be that the effects of maternal rejection, compared to paternal rejection, are so detrimental for adolescents that peer acceptance could not ameliorate the negative effects.

There are mixed results in the literature regarding the differential effects of maternal and paternal rejection and their relative importance on each other. For example, one line of research suggested that the association between paternal rejection and youth outcomes was stronger than the association between maternal rejection and youth outcomes (Dominy et al., 2000; Lloyd et al., 2014). On the other hand, consistent with the present study's findings, another line of research indicated that the negative maternal parenting such as rejection (Niditch & Varela, 2012) and hostility (Carrasco et al., 2009) is more harmful than negative paternal parenting. Moreover, it might be the case that since mothers are perceived as less rejecting and more accepting compared to fathers (Dwairy, 2010; Miranda et al., 2016), rejection by mothers is more unexpected and consequently more deleterious to be buffered against.

#### **4.4 The Protective Role of Peer Acceptance Against Parental Rejection Among Children**

##### ***Externalizing Problems***

The second main hypothesis of the present study was that peer acceptance would serve a protective role in the association between parental rejection and externalizing and internalizing problems for adolescents. In order to provide further confirmation for this hypothesis, the protective role of peer acceptance among children was also investigated. It was expected that peer acceptance would not ameliorate the negative effects of parental rejection in childhood because of children's developmental needs. The findings supported the expectation as peer acceptance did not have a protective role in the association between maternal or paternal rejection and externalizing problems.

Maternal and paternal rejection were previously shown to be one of the most critical predictors of externalizing problems in childhood (Rothbaum & Weisz, 1994). Especially younger children are more vulnerable to the negative impact of parental rejection because in early ages parents are the most important sources of social support (Ramírez-Ucles et al., 2017; Furman & Buhrmester, 1992). Hence, being accepted by peers might not be able to compensate for being rejected by parents in childhood.

One unexpected finding displayed that for children with low peer acceptance, paternal rejection was not associated with higher externalizing problems, whereas, for children with high peer acceptance, high paternal rejection was associated with more externalizing problems. This finding was quite similar to the finding showing that high peer acceptance was associated with more externalizing problems for adolescents with high maternal rejection. Affiliation with deviant peers might also explain this finding in childhood.

Additionally, another explanation of this finding could be the tendency of aggressive children to inflate their self-competency and acceptance (Hughes et al., 1997). Several studies showed that children who demonstrate aggressive behaviors, tend to report

higher peer-acceptance (Boivin & Hymel, 1997; Lynch et al., 2016; Morrow et al., 2016) For instance, one study examined peer and self-reports of peer acceptance and teacher-reports of aggression among fourth and fifth graders (Morrow et al., 2016). It was found that acceptance bias (i.e., wrongly assuming that oneself is being accepted by their peers) was positively associated with aggressive behaviors. One underlying mechanism of that association might be aggressive children's limited capacity to accurately interpret social information (Crick & Dodge, 1994). Crick and Dodge (1994) argued that aggressive children's mental structures might make them more vulnerable to make errors in perceiving and processing social cues.

Furthermore, Hughes et al. (1997) suggested that aggressive children might engage in defensive exclusion to rule out any threatening social information. According to Bowlby (1980), defensive exclusion and attachment security are inversely related. Therefore, one interpretation of the present study's finding regarding the links between parental rejection, peer acceptance and externalizing behaviors is that negative parent-child interactions might have led to defensive exclusion in aggressive children and inflated perceptions of peer acceptance. However, this interpretation is merely a speculation as in the current study, peer acceptance and rejection was not assessed by objective ratings such as peer nominations. Thus, it is not possible to conclude on the accuracy of perceived peer acceptance and rejection.

Finally, premature reorganization of attachment hierarchies might be another explanation for the positive association between peer acceptance and higher externalizing problems in children with high paternal rejection. Reorganization of attachment hierarchies occurs when parents are replaced in the attachment hierarchy by one's peers (Kobak et al., 2007). Although this is a normative process, if it occurs in young ages it could lead to externalizing problems such as delinquency or substance abuse (Nomaguchi, 2008).

### ***Internalizing Problems***

In line with the findings above on externalizing problems, peer acceptance did not have a protective role in the association between parental rejection and internalizing

problems for children. This could be explained by the relative importance of parents over peers as sources of social support in childhood (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992).

#### **4.5 Strengths, Limitations, and Future Directions**

To the best of our knowledge, the present study is the first to examine the protective role of parental acceptance against peer rejection in childhood and the protective role of peer acceptance against parental rejection in adolescence. The study provided important information regarding the protective role of maternal acceptance against peer rejection in childhood and peer acceptance against paternal rejection in adolescence. These findings suggest some practical implications. For instance, intervention programs could focus on enhancing mother-child interactions in childhood, especially for children at higher risk who had negative peer relations. Programs can also be aimed at fostering the peer relations of adolescents that perceive high paternal rejection. Therefore, children and adolescents who experience rejection in one social context might be helped by promoting their relationships in the other social context.

The present study also indicated that children and adolescents are more likely to have a better psychological adjustment when they perceive acceptance by both their mothers and their fathers. Thus, programs aiming at promoting parental behaviors could adopt a holistic approach and consider father-child interactions as well as mother-child interactions.

Despite its valuable findings, there are limitations of the study that need to be noted. First, in the study, child and adolescent reports of parental and peer acceptance and rejection and mother-reports of problem behaviors were used. This might be problematic in cases where maternal rejection is high. Maternal rejection refers to hostility and the lack of maternal warmth (Rohner, 2016), which might lead to a less close mother-child relationships. Mothers who have distant relationships with their children might be less reliable sources of information regarding children's psychological adjustment. This kind of informant-specific effect might result in reporting bias. For instance, past literature argued that mothers' psychological

adjustment is a unique predictor of mother-reports of children's problem behaviors (Mowbray et al., 2005). As a second limitation, since parental and peer acceptance and rejection were assessed by child and adolescent reports there might be shared informant variance. Therefore, in order to eliminate these limitations, future studies could incorporate multiple informants in assessing both child-related and mother-related variables.

Additionally, the present study used data from one time-point. This has limited the interpretation of the findings. In order to test the directionality of observed effects, future studies could use data from multiple time-points and conduct cross-lagged path analyses. Using cross-lagged analyses, the temporal order between variables could be examined, and the association between them could be better understood.

Although the present study is a part of a project that aimed to include a representative sample, due to COVID-19 restrictions, data collection could not be completed. Thus, the study's sample was not representative. In order to generalize the study's findings to other populations, future research could involve a larger, more representative sample.

However, despite the limitations, this study provided important insight into cross-context interactions between parental and peer acceptance and rejection among children and adolescents. Future research could focus on examining the underlying mechanisms of those interactions. Furthermore, one interesting line for future research could be investigating interactions between other social contexts of children and adolescents. For example, where do children and adolescents who were rejected by their parents and peers turn to for help? Could acceptance from other adults in their lives, for instance, their teachers, ameliorate the negative impact of parental or peer rejection? Or could there be other characteristics of children and adolescents that make them less vulnerable to social rejection? Studying other potentially protective factors in children's and adolescents' lives can help us come one step closer to finding ways to overcome the adverse effects of social rejection.

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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  
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

DUMLUPINAR BULVARI 06800  
ÇANKAYA ANKARA TÜRKİYE  
Sayı: 28620816 / 16  
T: +90 312 210 22 91  
F: +90 312 210 79 59  
ueam@metu.edu.tr  
www.ueam.metu.edu.tr

02 OCAK 2018

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu


Sayın Prof.Dr. Sibel KAZAK BERUMENT ve Yrd.Doç.Dr. Başak ŞAHİN ACAR;

“Ebeveynlik Tutumlarının ve Ebeveyn-Çocuk İletişim Özelliklerinin Çocuk ve Ergen Gelişimine Etkisi” başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay 2017-SOS-213 protokol numarası ile 01.09.2018-01.10.2021 tarihleri arasında geçerli olmak üzere verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

  
Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL  
Üye

  
Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil TURAN  
Başkan V

  
Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR  
Üye

  
Doç. Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI  
Üye

  
Doç. Dr. Zana ÇITAK  
Üye

  
Yrd. Doç. Dr. Pınar KAYGAN  
Üye

  
Yrd. Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK  
Üye

## B. INFORMED CONSENT

Sevgili Anne-Babalar,

Boğaziçi, Ege, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversiteleri'nin Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı iş birliğiyle "Türkiye Aile, Çocuk ve Ergen Projesi'ni (TAÇEP)" yürütmekteyiz. Hedefimiz Türkiye'nin her bölgesinden 62 il ve 180 okulda toplam 6600 çocuk ve ailesine ulaşmaktır. Bu proje aynı zamanda TÜBİTAK tarafından desteklenmektedir.

**Bu çalışmanın amacı nedir?** Araştırmamızın amacı Türkiye'de aile yapısını ve anne-baba tutum ve davranışlarını derinlemesine incelemek ve bu faktörlerin çocukların gelişimi üzerindeki etkilerini değerlendirmektir. Projenin sonuçları esas alınarak aileleri ve çocuklarını desteklemeye yönelik programlar geliştirilecektir.

Biz araştırmacıların gerçekten ihtiyaç duyulan noktaları tespit etmemiz ve doğru destek programlarını geliştirebilmemiz için, çocuk ve gençlerin gelişiminde en önemli role sahip olan siz anne ve babaların, çocuk yetiştirme konusundaki görüşleriniz ve çocuklarınızın gelişimini nasıl değerlendirdiğiniz çok önemlidir.

**Sizin ve çocuğunuzun katılımcı olarak ne yapmasını istiyoruz?** Projeye katılmayı kabul eden anneler, katılım listesine eklenecek ve bu listeden rastgele seçilen belirli sayıda anne çalışmaya dâhil edilecektir. Bu çalışmada sizden, çocuğunuzdan ve mümkünse çocuğunuzun babasından, bazı anketleri doldurmanız istenecektir. Anneler anketleri okula gelerek tablet üzerinden dolduracaktır. Okula gelmesi mümkün olmayan anneler de anketleri verilen link ile internet üzerinden doldurabilecektir.

Çalışmaya katılan çocuğunuz anketleri okul müdürü ve öğretmenlerinin izin verdiği uygun bir saat ve sınıfta çalışmaya katılan diğer sınıf arkadaşlarıyla beraber dolduracaktır. Çocuğunuzdan da sözlü olarak katılımıyla ilgili rızası mutlaka alınacaktır.

Babaların da bu çalışmaya katılımları bizim için çok kıymetlidir. Bu nedenle, çalışmaya katılmak isteyen babalara anketler evlerine gönderilecektir. Ayrıca tercih eden babalar anketleri verilen link ile internet üzerinden de doldurabilecektir.

Gelecek sene aynı dönemde kısa bir anketi daha doldurmanız istenecektir.

**Anketler ne amaçla ve nasıl kullanılacak?** Cevaplarınız kesinlikle gizli tutulacak ve sadece bilimsel araştırma amacıyla kullanılacaktır. Çocuğunuz ve size ait bilgiler, hiçbir şekilde kimseyle paylaşılmayacaktır.

**Çocuğunuz ya da siz çalışmayı yarıda kesmek isterseniz ne yapmalısınız?** Anket sorularının, herhangi bir şekilde olumsuz etkisi yoktur. Ancak, çalışmaya katılmayı kabul ettikten sonra istediğiniz zaman yarıda bırakabilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz: Araştırmayla ilgili sorularınızı tacepodtu@gmail.com e-posta adresine gönderebilir veya 0312 210 73 79 numaralı telefondan bize ulaşabilirsiniz.

Saygılarımla,

**Proje Yürütücüsü** Prof. Dr. Sibel Kazak Berument, Psikoloji Bölümü, ODTÜ, Ankara

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve bu araştırmaya gönüllü olarak kendim (Adı-Soyadı) ..... ve çocuğum (Adı-Soyadı) .....'nın da katılımcı olmasına

izin veriyorum.

Çocuğa yakınlık derecesi (örn. annesi):

izin vermiyorum.

## C. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKE ÖZET

### BİRİNCİ BÖLÜM

#### Giriş

Sevilme, kabul görme ve ait olma hissi, insanın temel ihtiyaçlarından biridir. Hiç kimse yalnızlık içinde yaşayamayacağı için, insanlar sosyal ilişkiler kurmaya ve sosyal çevreleri tarafından kabul görmeye çalışırlar. Sosyal kabulün daha önce psikolojik iyi oluşu, uyumu ve fiziksel sağlığı yordadığı gösterilmişken, reddedilme anksiyete, depresyon ve fiziksel iyi oluştaki problemlerle ilişkilendirilmiştir (Baumeister ve Leary, 1995; DeWall ve Bushman, 2011; Leary, 2010). Çocukların yaşamlarında, ebeveynleri ve akranları, sosyal ve duygusal gelişimleri için çok önemlidir (Buckholdt, 2016). Ebeveyn ve akranlar çocukların sosyal ortamının çoğunu oluşturduğundan, ebeveyn ve akran kabulü ve reddi, çocuklar ve ergenler için çeşitli duygusal ve davranışsal sonuçlara sahiptir.

#### Ebeveyn Kabulü ve Reddi

IPAR Teorisi, ebeveyn kabulünü ve reddini ebeveyn sıcaklığı spektrumuna yerleştirir (Rohner, 2016). Yelpazenin bir ucunda, ebeveyn davranışları ve tutumları şefkatli, sevecen ve destekleyicidir ve çocuk ebeveyni tarafından kabul edildiğini algılar. Diğer ucunda ise ebeveyn olumlu ebeveyn davranışı ve tutumları göstermez, düşmanca ve saldırgan davranışlar sergiler. Yelpazenin bu ucunda, çocuk ebeveyni tarafından reddedildiğini algılar. Ebeveyn kabul ve reddinin dört ana davranış sınıfı vardır: sıcaklık ve şefkat, düşmanlık ve saldırganlık, kayıtsızlık ve ihmal ve farklılaşmamış reddedilme (Rohner, 2004).

Literatürde hem anne hem de baba kabulünün farklı yaş gruplarından çocukların davranışsal ve duygusal gelişimini olumlu yönde etkilediği gösterilmiştir. Örneğin, bazı araştırmalar, yüksek ebeveyn kabulünün, 11 ile 13 (Lee ve Chyung, 2014) ve 9 ile 16 (Carrasco ve diğerleri, 2019) arasındaki çocukların psikolojik uyumuyla pozitif bir şekilde ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Di Maggio ve Zappulla (2013), ebeveyn

kabulünün 14-16 yaş arası ergenlerin yaşam doyumu üzerindeki etkilerini incelemiş ve anne kabulünün yaşam doyumunu yordadığını, babanın kabulünün ise içselleştirme ve dışsallaştırma davranışlarında azalma öngördüğünü göstermiştir.

Araştırmalar, ebeveyn kabulünün çocukların gelişimi üzerinde olumlu bir etkisi olduğunu gösterirken, ebeveyn reddinin olumsuz etkileri olduğu gösterilmiştir. Bir meta-analiz, ebeveyn reddinin çocukların dışsallaştırma davranışlarının en önemli yordayıcılarından biri olduğunu ileri sürmüştür (Rothbaum ve Weisz, 1994). Ebeveyn reddi, dokuz ile 16 yaş arası çocukların (Carrasco vd., 2018) ve 10. ve 11. sınıftaki ergenlerin (Direktör ve Çakıcı, 2012) dışsallaştırma ve içselleştirme sorunları ile olumlu yönde ilişkilidir.

Literatürdeki bazı araştırmalar, anne ve babanın ebeveynlik davranışlarının etkileşimini inceleyerek, ebeveynlerin tutumları arasındaki farklılığın çocuklar için koruyucu mu yoksa zararlı mı olduğunu test etmiştir. Alanyazındaki bazı bulgular, tutarsız ebeveynliğin çocuklar ve ergenler için faydalı olabileceğini, çünkü bir ebeveynin olumlu ebeveynlik davranışları ve tutumlarının, diğer ebeveynlerin olumsuz ebeveynlik davranışlarının ve tutumlarının etkilerini azaltabileceğini göstermiştir (McKinney ve Renk, 2008; Laiable ve Carlo, 2004). Öte yandan, başka bir araştırma, olumlu ebeveynliğin etkili olabilmesi için her iki ebeveynin de algılanması gerektiğini öne sürmektedir (Berkien ve ark., 2012). Bu nedenle, anne ve baba ebeveynlik davranışları arasındaki etkileşimin farklı etkileri olabileceğinden, bu çalışmada anne ve baba kabulü etkileşimi ile anne ve baba reddi etkileşimi kontrol edilmiştir. Analizlerde anne ve baba kabulü ve reddi arasındaki etkileşim kontrol edilerek, ebeveyn ile akran kabulü ve reddi arasındaki bağlamlar arası etkileşimlerin daha net gözlemlenmesi beklenmiştir.

### **Akran Kabul ve Reddi**

Çocukların akranlarıyla olan ilişkileri, akranlar yardım, destek, anlayış ve çocukların kimliğine katkı sağladığından onlar için oldukça önemlidir (Giardano, 1995). Akran kabulü, çocukların gruplara dahil edildiğini ve arkadaşları tarafından sevilip saygı duyulduğunu ifade eder. Zhang ve meslektaşları (2018) akran kabulünün yedi

yaşındaki çocukların akademik başarısı ile pozitif yönde ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Ek olarak, akran kabulü, yedi ile 11 yaş arasındaki çocukların öz değerlerini (Maunder ve Monks, 2018) ve 12-21 yaş arasındaki çocukların ve yetişkinlerin özsaygısını arttırdığını göstermiştir (Daniels ve Leaper, 2006).

Algılanan akran reddi, çocukların kendi yaş grubundaki diğer çocuklar tarafından sevilme algısı olarak tanımlanabilir. Boylamsal bir çalışmada, 10 ve 11 yaşlarındaki akran reddi, depresyonla ve 12 ve 13 yaşlarındaki yalnızlık duygularıyla ilişkili bulunmuştur (Pedersen ve ark., 2007). Akran reddi, özellikle ilkökul çocukları arasında, çocukların olumlu benlik görüşleri ve beklentileriyle negatif yönde ilişkilidir (García-Bacete ve ark., 2019). Başka bir çalışmada, yüksek düzeyde akran reddi yaşayan üçüncü sınıf erkek çocuklarının altı ay sonra fiziksel olarak daha agresif oldukları bulunmuştur (Guerra ve diğerleri, 2004).

### **Bağlamlar Arası Etkileşimler**

Sosyal reddedilme ve olumsuz gelişimsel sonuçlar arasındaki güçlü ilişki düşünüldüğünde, ebeveyn ve akran reddinin olumsuz etkilerini azaltacak koruyucu faktörleri tespit etmek büyük önem taşımaktadır. Bu durumda, bir sosyal bağlamdaki kabulün diğer sosyal bağlamdaki reddedilmeye karşı koruyucu bir rol oynayacağı düşünülebilir. IPAR Teorisi, en az bir sosyal destek kaynağını algılamanın, insanların algılanan reddedilme ile etkili bir şekilde başa çıkmalarına yardımcı olduğunu öne sürdü (Rohner, 2016).

Olumlu ebeveyn-çocuk ilişkilerinin, olumsuz akran deneyimlerinin etkilerini iyileştirdiği tekrar tekrar gösterilmiştir. Araştırmalar, sıcak ve destekleyici ebeveynliğin 6-12 yaş arası çocukları ve 11-18 yaş arası ergenleri akran zorbalığının depresyon gibi olumsuz sonuçlarından koruduğunu göstermiştir (Healy ve Sanders, 2018; Stadler ve ark., 2010). Olumlu ebeveynliğin koruyucu rolünün aksine, olumlu akran deneyimlerinin olumsuz ebeveyn-çocuk etkileşimlerine karşı koruyucu etkisine dair şaşırtıcı derecede az örnek vardır. Örneğin Birkeland ve arkadaşları (2013), yüksek akran kabulünün 13-23 yaş arasındaki ergenleri düşük ebeveyn yakınlığına karşı koruduğunu ve etkinin daha yaşlı ergenler için daha belirgin olduğunu öne



sürmüşlerdir. Araştırmacılar, düşük ebeveyn yakınlığının ergenlerin benlik saygısını olumsuz etkilemesine rağmen, ergenler akran kabulünü algıladıklarında bu etkinin azaldığını bulmuşlardır.

Bir sosyal bağlamın diğerine karşı koruyucu rolünü incelerken çocuklar büyüdükçe gelişimsel ihtiyaçlarının da değişmesi göz önüne alınmalıdır. Çocukluktan ergenliğe geçişte, bir bağlamın diğer bağlam üzerindeki göreceli öneminin değişmesi beklenmektedir.

### **Gelişimsel İhtiyaçlar**

Orta çocukluk döneminde, çocuklar ve ebeveynler ilişkilerinde daha az olumsuz etkileşim ve daha çok olumlu etkileşim yaşarlar (Bornstein, 2002). Bu nedenle, çocuklar bu dönemde olumsuz ebeveyn deneyimlerine daha duyarlı olabilir. Dokuz ile 18 yaş arasındaki çocukları ve ergenleri inceleyen bir araştırma, anne reddinin öz-saygı üzerindeki olumsuz etkisinin daha büyük çocuklara kıyasla dokuz ile 12 yaşları arasındaki çocuklarda daha belirgin olduğunu göstermiştir (Ramírez-Uclés ve ark., 2017). Bu bulgu, küçük çocukların ergenlere göre ebeveyn reddine karşı daha hassas olduğunu göstermektedir.

Ergenliğin başlangıcından sonra akran gruplarının önemi büyük ölçüde artar ve ergenler akranlarıyla daha fazla zaman geçirmeye başlar, akranlarından daha fazla destek isteyebilir ve akran kabulünü daha çok önemseyebilir (Fuligni ve Eccles, 1993). Akran deneyimleri önem kazanmaya başladıkça, akran kabulü ve reddine yönelik duyarlılık da artmaktadır (Blakemore, 2008).

Çocukları 4., 7. ve 10. sınıflara kadar izleyen uzunlamasına bir çalışma, ergenlik öncesi dönemde en çok bildirilen destek kaynaklarının anne ve babalar olduğunu, orta ergenlik döneminde ebeveynler ve akranların eşit şekilde rapor edildiğini ve ergenliğin sonlarında akranların ebeveynlerin yerini aldığını göstermiştir (Furman ve Buhrmester, 1992). 12 ve 16 yaşlarındaki ergenleri inceleyen başka bir boylamsal çalışma, ergenlerin hem erken hem de orta ergenlik döneminde ana sırdaşları olarak ebeveynlerini bildirdiklerini, ancak ergenlik boyunca akranlarının önemini arttırdığını

bulmuştur (Nomaguchi, 2008). Benzer şekilde Buhrmester ve Furman (1987), ebeveynlerin küçük çocuklarda arkadaşlık ve yakınlık konusunda akranlarından daha önemli olduğunu göstermiştir. Öte yandan ergenler akranlarıyla daha yakın olma ve arkadaşlarını arkadaş olarak seçme eğilimindedirler.

Ergenlerin sosyal bağlamındaki bu değişim, ebeveynlerle yakın ilişkilere sahip olmak, beslenme ve destek ihtiyacını karşılarken, akranlarla yakın ilişkilere sahip olmak ergenlerin özerklik, güç duygusu veya eşitler arasında sosyalleşme gibi yeni ortaya çıkan ihtiyaçlarını karşıladığı için gözlemleniyor olabilir (Collins & Laursen, 2000; Furman & Buhrmester, 1985).

Bu nedenle, çocukların ve ergenlerin sahip olduğu farklı gelişimsel ihtiyaçlara dayanarak, çocuklukta ebeveyn kabulünün akran reddine karşı koruyucu rol oynayabileceği ve ergenlik dönemindeyse akran kabulünün ebeveyn reddine karşı koruyucu rol oynayabileceği beklenebilir.

### **Mevcut Çalışma**

İlk olarak, ebeveyn kabulü yüksek olan çocuklar için akran reddinin problem davranışlarla ilişkili olmayacağı, düşük ebeveyn kabulüne sahip çocuklar için ise akran reddinin problem davranışlarla pozitif ilişkili olacağı beklenmiştir. Gelişimsel ihtiyaçları göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, ebeveyn kabulünün ergenleri akran reddine karşı çocuklardan daha az koruyacağı beklenmektedir. Bu sebeple, ilk hipoteze daha fazla onay sağlamak için, ebeveyn kabulünün koruyucu rolü ergenler arasında da test edilmiştir.

İkinci olarak, akran kabulü yüksek ergenler için ebeveyn reddinin problem davranışlarla ilişkili olmayacağı beklenmiştir. Akran kabulü düşük olan ergenler içinse ebeveyn reddinin problem davranışlarıyla olumlu bir şekilde ilişkili olacağı beklenmiştir. Gelişimsel aşamalarına göre, akran kabulünün çocukları ebeveyn reddine karşı korumaması beklenmektedir. Bu nedenle akran kabulünün koruyucu rolü, bu hipoteze ek destek sağlamak için çocuklar arasında da test edilmiştir.

Bildiğimiz kadarıyla, farklı yaş gruplarında ebeveyn ve akran kabulü ve reddi arasındaki bağlamlar arası etkileşimleri araştıran başka hiçbir çalışma yoktur. Ayrıca, akran ilişkileri ile ilgili Türkçe çalışmaların çoğu zorbalığa odaklanmış ve akran kabulüne ve reddine odaklananlar, okul öncesi çocuklarda bu boyutları incelemiştir (ör. Ummanel, 2007; Ogelman ve Erten, 2013). Bu nedenle bu çalışma, çocuk ve ergenlerde bağlamlar arası etkileşimleri inceleyerek alanyazındaki boşluğu, Türk örnekleminde akran kabulü ve reddi çalışarak da özellikle Türk alanyazınındaki boşluğu doldurmayı amaçlamıştır.

## İKİNCİ BÖLÜM

### Yöntem

#### Örneklem

Bu çalışmanın verileri, Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu (TÜBİTAK) tarafından desteklenen ülke çapında bir proje kapsamında toplanmıştır (Proje kodu: 118K033). Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) tarafından Türkiye temsili bir örneklem belirlenmiş ve 181 ilk ve ortaokul ve lise seçilmiştir. Okullarda 1. ve 11. sınıflar arasında her sınıf için rastgele sınıflar seçilmiştir. Veri temizlendikten sonra, son örneklem 196 3., 4. ve 5. sınıf çocuğu ( $M_{yaş} = 9.06$ ,  $SD = 0.81$ ), 119 9., 10. ve 11. sınıf ergenleri ( $M_{yaş} = 15.08$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ) ve 315 farklı ilden anneler ( $M_{yaş} = 37.40$ ,  $SS = 5.55$ ).

#### Prosedür

TAÇEP (Türkiye Aile Çocuk Ergen Projesi), TÜBİTAK tarafından desteklenen çapraz sıralı bir projedir. Proje, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Ege Üniversitesi ve Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı işbirliği ile gerçekleştirilmektedir. Veri toplama öncesinde, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı ve Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi İnsan Etiği Kurulu'ndan etik onaylar alınmıştır. TÜİK, çalışmaya katılacak okulları seçtikten sonra, proje ekibi okulları ve rastgele seçilen sınıfları ziyaret etmiştir. Türkçe bilmeyen, göçmen olan veya araştırmaya katılmalarını engelleyecek gelişimsel veya psikolojik bozukluğu olan çocuklar, ergenler ve anneler çalışmaya dahil edilmemiştir. Araştırmaya katılmayı

kabul eden anneler okula davet edilmiştir. Annelerin bilgilendirilmiş onamları ile çocuk ve ergenlerin sözlü onamları alındı. Anneler, çocuklar ve ergenler anketleri okullarda tabletler aracılığıyla tamamlamışlardır. Anketler tamamlandıktan sonra anne ve çocuklara katılımları için küçük hediyeler verilmiştir.

## **Ölçekler**

Anneler, demografik bilgi formunu ve İçselleştirme ve Dışsallaştırma Problemleri ölçeklerini doldurmuştur. Çocuk ve ergenler, Ebeveyn Kabul ve Reddi ve Akran Kabul ve Reddi ölçeklerini doldurmuştur.

## **ÜÇÜNCÜ BÖLÜM**

### **Sonuçlar**

#### **Veri Taraması**

Veri analizlerinden önce, veriler, Sosyal Bilimler için İstatistiksel Paket (SPSS) 26 kullanılarak eksik değerler, aykırı değerler, çoklu bağlantı ve normallik açısından taranmıştır. Veri toplamada kullanılan sistem herhangi bir eksik değere izin vermemiştir. Çocuk grubunda 3.29'u aşan sekiz, ergen grubunda ise on bir aykırı değer bir sonraki kabul edilebilir puanın bir biriminin üzerinde olan puanlara dönüştürülmüştür (Tabachnick ve Fidell, 2007). Çok değişkenli aykırı değerler olarak tespit 5 değer veri setinden silinmiştir. 630 gözlem ile diğer analizler yapılmıştır.

#### **Hipotez Testi Sonuçları**

#### **Çocuklarda Ebeveyn Kabulünün Akran Reddine Karşı Koruyucu Rolü**

Hiyerarşik regresyon analizleri anne kabulü x akran reddi ve anne kabulü x baba kabulü etkileşimlerinin çocuklarda dışsallaştırma problemlerini yordadığını göstermiştir. Basit eğim grafikleri, anne kabulü yüksek olan çocuklar için akran reddi ve dışsallaştırma problemlerinin ilişkili olmadığını, anne kabulü düşük olan çocuklar içinse yüksek akran reddi ile yüksek dışsallaştırma problemlerinin ilişkili olduğunu

göstermiştir. Ayrıca basit eğim grafikleri anne kabulünün, sadece baba kabulü yüksek olduğunda dışsallaştırma problemleriyle negatif ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir.

### **Ergenlerde Ebeveyn Kabulünün Akran Reddine Karşı Koruyucu Rolü**

Hiyerarşik regresyon analizleri anne kabulü x baba kabulü etkileşiminin ergenlerin içselleştirme problemini yordadığını göstermiştir. Basit eğim grafiğine göre, anne kabulü, sadece baba kabulü yüksek olduğunda içselleştirme problemleriyle negatif ilişkilidir.

Cinsiyet hiyerarşik regresyon analizlerinde yordayıcı bir faktör olarak çıktığı için, modeller ergen kızlar ve erkekler için ayrı test edilmiştir. Yapılan testlerde, düşük baba kabulü algılayan ergen kızlar için yüksek akran reddi, yüksek içselleştirme problemleri ile ilişkilidir. Yüksek baba kabulü algılayan ergen kızlar içinse yüksek akran reddi, düşük içselleştirme problemleriyle ilişkilidir.

### **Ergenlerde Akran Kabulünün Ebeveyn Reddine Karşı Koruyucu Rolü**

Hiyerarşik regresyon analizleri anne reddi x akran kabulü ve baba reddi x akran kabulü etkileşimlerinin ergenlerde dışsallaştırma problemlerini yordadığını göstermiştir. Basit eğim grafikleri, akran kabulü yüksek olan ergenler için, baba reddi ve dışsallaştırma problemlerinin ilişkili olmadığını, yalnızca akran kabulü düşük olan ergenler için yüksek baba reddinin yüksek dışsallaştırma problemleriyle ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca, akran kabulü düşük olan ergenler için anne reddi ve dışsallaştırma problemleri ilişkili değilken, akran kabulü yüksek olan ergenler için, yüksek anne reddi yüksek dışsallaştırma problemleriyle ilişkilidir.

Ergen kızların içselleştirme problemlerini yordamada baba reddi x akran kabulü bir faktör olarak gösterilmiştir. Basit eğim grafiklerine göre akran kabulü yüksek olan ergenler için, baba reddi ve içselleştirme problemleri ilişkili değildir. Yalnızca akran kabulü düşük olan ergenler için yüksek baba reddi yüksek içselleştirme problemleriyle ilişkilidir.

## **Çocuklarda Akran Kabulünün Ebeveyn Reddine Karşı Koruyucu Rolü**

Hiyerarşik regresyon analizleri akran reddi x baba kabulü etkileşiminin çocukların dışsallaştırma sorunlarını yordadığını göstermiştir. Basit eğim grafiklerine göre, akran kabulü düşük olan çocuklar için baba reddi ve dışsallaştırma problemleri ilişkili değilken, akran kabulü yüksek olan çocuklar için, yüksek baba reddi yüksek dışsallaştırma problemleriyle ilişkilidir.

## **DÖRDÜNCÜ BÖLÜM**

### **Tartışma**

#### **Çocuklarda Ebeveyn Kabulünün Akran Reddine Karşı Koruyucu Rolü**

Ebeveyn kabulü yüksek olan çocuklar için akran reddi ve problem davranışlarının ilişkilendirilmeyeceği hipotezi öne sürüldü. Bulgular, anne kabulü için bu hipotezi destekleyerek, anne kabulü düşük olan çocuklar için daha yüksek akran reddinin daha yüksek dışsallaştırma sorunlarıyla bağlantılı olduğunu gösterdi. Ancak, anne kabulü daha yüksek olan çocuklar için, akran reddi dışsallaştırma sorunlarıyla ilgili değildi. Buhrmester ve Furman'a (1987) göre, yakınlık ve arkadaşlık açısından ebeveynler, akranlarına göre küçük çocukların hayatlarında daha büyük öneme sahiptir. Ayrıca bağlanma kuramı, çocukların sıkıntılı olduklarında birincil bakıcılarına döndüklerini ileri sürer (Ainsworth, 1989). Bu nedenle, akranları tarafından reddedildiğini algılayan çocuklar, destek ve rahatlık için birincil bakıcılarına, annelerine güvenebilirler. Bu durumda destek alabilen çocukların davranış problemleri sergileme olasılığı daha düşük olacaktır (Lee ve Chyung, 2014; Carrasco ve diğerleri, 2019). Anne kabulünden farklı olarak, babanın kabulünün çocuklar için akran reddine karşı koruyucu olmadığı görülmüştür. Bunun bir açıklaması, annelerin çocuklukta babalardan çok çocukların hayatına dahil olmaları ve çocukların özellikle yaşamın erken dönemlerinde anneleriyle daha yakın ilişkiler kurması olabilir (Lewis ve Lamb, 2003).

Bu bulgu, dışsallaştırma sorunlarının yalnızca tutarlı bir şekilde yüksek anne ve baba tarafından kabul gören çocuklar için daha düşük olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu, çocuklar bir ebeveyninden düşük kabul algıladığında, diğer ebeveyninden yüksek kabul

görmenin dışsallaştırma problemlerinde bir azalma ile ilişkili olmadığını gösterdi. Bu sonuçların yorumlarından biri, ebeveyn kabulünün benlik saygısı ve öz yeterlilik ile ilişkili olması nedeniyle (Ramírez-Uclés ve diğerleri, 2017), ebeveyn kabulü algısındaki farklılığın çocukların ve ergenlerin öz görüşlerinde çatışmalar yaratabileceği olabilir. Bu bulgunun altında yatan diğer olası mekanizmaları belirlemek için gelecekteki araştırmalara ihtiyaç vardır.

### **Ergenlerde Ebeveyn Kabulünün Akran Reddine Karşı Koruyucu Rolü**

Ancak bulgular, babanın kabulünün ergen kızlarda akran reddi ile içselleştirme semptomları arasındaki ilişkinin doğasını değiştirdiğini göstermiştir. Düşük baba kabulü algılayan kızlar için, yüksek düzeyde akran reddi, yüksek düzeyde içselleştirme semptomları ile pozitif olarak ilişkiliydi. Öte yandan, yüksek baba kabulü algılayan kızlarda, yüksek düzeyde akran reddi, düşük düzeyde içselleştirme semptomları ile ilişkilendirilmiştir. Bu bulgu, ebeveyn desteğinin, özellikle ergen kızlar için, akran zorbalığının içselleştirme semptomları üzerindeki olumsuz etkilerini tamponladığını gösteren geçmiş araştırmalarla uyumludur (Stadler ve ark., 2010). Bu çalışmayla tutarlı olarak, önceki literatür, babanın ebeveynliğinin kızlar için daha dikkat çekici olabileceğini de göstermiştir. Örneğin, Meksikalı Amerikalı ergenlerle yapılan bir çalışma, babanın kabulü ile ergenlerin depresyon belirtileri arasındaki negatif ilişkinin kızlar için daha güçlü olduğunu göstermiştir (Ramírez García ve diğerleri, 2014). Kızların erkeklere kıyasla ebeveynleriyle olan ilişkilerinden daha fazla etkilenme eğiliminde olduklarını ve kızları içselleştirme sorunları gösterdiğinde babaların annelere göre daha az kabul etme davranışları gösterme eğiliminde olduklarını iddia ettiler.

### **Ergenlerde Akran Kabulünün Ebeveyn Reddine Karşı Koruyucu Rolü**

Akran kabulü yüksek ergenler için ebeveyn reddi ve problem davranışlarının (dışsallaştırma ve içselleştirme) ilişkilendirilmeyeceği varsayılmıştır. Bulgular, akran kabulü yüksek ergenlerde baba reddinin dışsallaştırma sorunlarıyla ilişkili olmadığını, ancak akran kabulü düşük ergenlerde daha yüksek baba reddinin daha yüksek dışsallaştırma sorunlarıyla ilişkili olduğunu gösteren bu baba reddi hipotezini

destekledi. Bulgular, akran kabulü yüksek, baba reddi olan ergen kızların içselleştirme problemleriyle ilişkili olmadığını, akran kabulü düşük kızlarda ise daha yüksek baba reddinin daha yüksek içselleştirme problemleriyle ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir.

Geçmiş literatür, baba reddinin olumsuz ergen sonuçlarıyla ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir (Mak ve diğerleri, 2018). Bununla birlikte, akran kabulü, babaları tarafından reddedildiğini algılayan ergenler için telafi edici destek sağlayabilir. Stres tamponlama modeline göre (Cohen ve Wills, 1985), sosyal destek stresli olayların olumsuz etkisini tamponlamaktadır. Sosyal destek, duygusal destek veya sosyal arkadaşlık gibi farklı biçimler alabilir. Babalarından yüksek düzeyde reddedilme algılayan ergenler, sorunlarını akranları ve akranları ile paylaşabilir, ergenlerin duygusal refahını artırabilir veya birlikte farklı etkinliklere katılarak streslerini azaltmalarına yardımcı olabilir. Akranları tarafından daha fazla kabul gören ergenler, akran desteği almak için daha iyi fırsatlara sahip olacaklardır; bu nedenle, yüksek düzeyde dışsallaştırma problemleri olmayacaktır (Bierman ve Wargo, 1995). Bu bulgunun bir başka yorumu da, baba tarafından reddedildiğini algılayan ancak dışsallaştırma sorunu daha az olan ergenlerin, daha fazla davranış sorunu olanlara göre akranları tarafından kabul edilme olasılığının daha yüksek olacağı olabilir (Parker ve Asher, 1987). Akran kabulü, baba reddi ve davranış problemleri arasındaki bağlantıları, bağlantıların yönlülüğünü test etmeye izin verecek bir tasarımla araştırmak için gelecekteki araştırmalar yapılabilir.

Akran kabulü düşük ergenlerde anne reddi dışsallaştırma davranışları ile ilişkilendirilmezken, akran kabulü yüksek ergenlerde dışsallaştırma problemleri ile pozitif olarak ilişkilendirilmiştir. Bu bulgu, akranlar tarafından kabul görmenin, yüksek anne reddi olan gençler için olumsuz davranışsal sonuçlarla ilişkili olabileceğini düşündürmektedir. Daha önce akran kabulünün daha iyi ergen sonuçlarıyla ilişkili olduğu gösterildiğinden bu sonuç beklenmedi (Klima ve Repetti, 2008). Bu bulgunun bir açıklaması, ebeveynleri ile yakın bir ilişkisi olmayan ergenler, ebeveyn normlarını reddetme eğiliminde olan (Brody ve Forehand, 1993) ve muhtemelen akran normlarından etkilenmeye karşı daha savunmasız olmaları olabilir. Gerçekten de düşük anne sıcaklığının akran baskısına daha fazla yatkınlıkla ilişkili



olduğu gösterilmiştir (Chan & Chan, 2011). Geçmiş literatür, olumsuz ebeveyn-çocuk etkileşimlerinin akran sapması yoluyla dışsallaştırma davranışlarını öngördüğünü göstermiştir (örneğin, Cano-Lozano ve diğerleri, 2020; Deutsch ve diğerleri, 2012). Ebeveyn reddini algılayan ergenlerin, sapkın eylemlerde bulunan akranlar tarafından kabul edilirse daha fazla dışsallaştırma problemleri sergileyebileceklerini tahmin edebiliriz. Ancak, mevcut çalışmanın diğer bulgularına benzer şekilde, veriler tek bir zaman noktasında toplandığı için bu bulgunun dikkatle yorumlanması gerektiği unutulmamalıdır.

Akran kabulünün ergenleri baba reddine karşı koruduğu bulunsa da, bulgular anne reddine karşı akran kabulünün koruyucu bir rolünü göstermedi. Bir açıklama, anne reddinin etkilerinin, baba reddine kıyasla ergenler için o kadar zararlı olduğu ve akran kabulünün olumsuz etkileri iyileştiremeyeceği olabilir. Araştırmaların bir kısmı, reddedilme (Niditch ve Varela, 2012) ve düşmanlık (Carrasco vd., 2009) gibi olumsuz anne ebeveynliğinin, olumsuz baba ebeveynlikten daha zararlı olduğunu göstermiştir. Dahası, anneler babalara göre daha az reddedici ve daha kabul edici olarak algılandığından (Dwairy, 2010; Miranda vd., 2016), annelerin reddetmesi daha beklenmedik ve sürekli olarak tamponlanması daha zararlı olabilir.

### **Çocuklarda Akran Kabulünün Ebeveyn Reddine Karşı Koruyucu Rolü**

Anne veya baba reddi ile dışsallaştırma sorunları arasındaki ilişkide akran kabulünün koruyucu bir rolü olmadığı için bulgular beklentiye destekledi.

Anne ve babanın reddi, daha önce çocukluktaki sorunların dışsallaştırılmasının en kritik yordayıcılarından biri olarak gösterilmişti (Rothbaum ve Weisz, 1994). Özellikle küçük çocuklar, ebeveyn reddinin olumsuz etkisine karşı daha savunmasızdır çünkü erken yaşlarda ebeveynler en önemli sosyal destek kaynaklarıdır (Ramírez-Ucles vd., 2017; Furman ve Buhrmester, 1992). Bu nedenle, akranlar tarafından kabul edilmek, çocuklukta ebeveynler tarafından reddedilmeyi telafi edemeyebilir.

Beklenmedik bir bulgu, akran kabulü düşük olan çocuklar için baba reddinin daha yüksek dışsallaştırma problemleri ile ilişkili olmadığını, yüksek akran kabulüne sahip

çocuklar için ise yüksek baba reddinin daha fazla dışsallaştırma problemi ile ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu bulgu, yüksek anne reddi olan ergenler için yüksek akran kabulünün daha fazla dışsallaştırma problemi ile ilişkili olduğunu gösteren bulguyla oldukça benzerdir. Sapkın akranlarla ilişki, bu bulguyu çocuklukta da açıklayabilir.

Ek olarak, bu bulgunun bir başka açıklaması, saldırgan çocukların kendi kendine yeterliliklerini ve kabullerini artırma eğilimi olabilir (Hughes ve diğerleri, 1997). Birkaç çalışma, saldırgan davranışlar sergileyen çocukların daha yüksek akran kabulü bildirme eğiliminde olduğunu göstermiştir (Boivin ve Hymel, 1997; Lynch ve diğerleri, 2016; Morrow ve diğerleri, 2016). Bununla birlikte, bu yorum sadece bir spekülasyondur, çünkü mevcut çalışmada, akran kabulü ve reddi, akran adaylıkları gibi objektif derecelendirmelerle değerlendirilmemiştir. Bu nedenle, algılanan akran kabul ve reddinin doğruluğu hakkında bir sonuca varmak mümkün değildir.

### **Çalışmanın Güçlü Yönleri, Sınırlılıkları ve Gelecek Çalışmalar İçin Öneriler**

Bildiğimiz kadarıyla bu çalışma, çocuklukta akran reddine karşı ebeveyn kabulünün koruyucu rolünü ve ergenlikte ebeveyn reddine karşı akran kabulünün koruyucu rolünü inceleyen ilk çalışmadır. Çalışma, anne kabulünün çocuklukta akran reddine karşı koruyucu rolü ve ergenlik döneminde baba reddine karşı akran kabulünün koruyucu rolü hakkında önemli bilgiler sağlamıştır. Bu bulgular, bazı pratik uygulamalar önermektedir. Örneğin, müdahale programları, özellikle olumsuz akran ilişkileri olan yüksek risk altındaki çocuklar için, anne-çocuk etkileşimlerini geliştirmeye odaklanabilir. Programlar aynı zamanda yüksek baba reddini algılayan ergenlerin akran ilişkilerini geliştirmeyi de hedefleyebilir. Bir sosyal bağlamda reddedilme yaşayan çocuklara ve ergenlere, diğer sosyal bağlamdaki ilişkilerini geliştirerek yardımcı olunabilir.

Bu çalışma aynı zamanda çocukların ve ergenlerin hem anneleri hem de babaları tarafından kabul gördüklerinde daha iyi bir psikolojik uyum gösterme olasılıklarının daha yüksek olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu nedenle, ebeveyn davranışlarını teşvik etmeyi amaçlayan programlar bütüncül bir yaklaşım benimseyebilir ve anne-çocuk etkileşimlerinin yanı sıra baba-çocuk etkileşimlerini de dikkate alabilir.

Değerli bulgularına rağmen, mevcut çalışmanın sınırlılıkları vardır. Araştırmada ilk olarak ebeveyn ve akran kabul ve reddi ile ilgili çocuk ve ergen raporları ile problem davranışlara ilişkin anne raporları kullanılmıştır. Bu, anne reddinin yüksek olduğu durumlarda sorunlu olabilir. Anne reddi, daha az yakın bir anne-çocuk ilişkisine yol açabilir. Çocuklarıyla uzak ilişkileri olan anneler, çocukların psikolojik uyumları konusunda daha az güvenilir bilgi kaynakları olabilir. Bilgi verene özgü bu tür bir etki, raporlama önyargısına neden olabilir. İkinci bir sınırlılık olarak, ebeveyn ve akran kabulü ve reddi çocuk ve ergen raporları ile değerlendirildiğinden, paylaşılan bilgi verici varyansı (shared informant variance) bulunabilir. Bu nedenle, bu sınırlılıkları ortadan kaldırmak için, gelecekteki çalışmalar hem çocukla hem de anneye ilgili değişkenlerin değerlendirilmesinde birden fazla bilgi kaynağını dahil etmelidir.

Ek olarak, bu çalışmada bir zaman noktasından alınan veriler kullanılmıştır. Bu, bulguların yorumlanmasını sınırlamıştır. Gözlemlenen etkilerin yönlülüğünü test etmek için, gelecekteki çalışmalar birden çok zaman noktasından gelen verileri kullanabilir ve farklı analizler kullanılarak değişkenler arasındaki zamansal sıra incelenebilir ve aralarındaki ilişki daha iyi anlaşılabilir.

Mevcut çalışma, temsili bir örneklemin dahil edilmesini amaçlayan bir projenin parçası olmasına rağmen, COVID-19 kısıtlamaları nedeniyle veri toplama tamamlanamamıştır. Bu nedenle, çalışmanın örneklemini Türkiye temsili değildir. Çalışma bulgularını diğer popülasyonlara genellemek için, gelecekteki araştırmalar daha büyük ve Türkiye temsili bir örneklem içerebilir.

Bununla birlikte, kısıtlılıklara rağmen, bu çalışma çocuklar ve ergenler arasında ebeveyn ve akran kabulü ve reddi arasındaki bağlamlar arası etkileşimlere önemli bir bakış açısı sağlamıştır. Gelecekteki araştırmalar, bu etkileşimlerin altında yatan mekanizmaları incelemeye odaklanabilir. Dahası, gelecekteki araştırmalar için ilginç bir yön, çocukların ve ergenlerin diğer sosyal bağamları arasındaki etkileşimleri araştırmak olabilir. Örneğin, ebeveynleri ve akranları tarafından reddedilen çocuklar ve ergenler yardım için nereye başvuruyordur? Hayatlarındaki diğer yetişkinlerin, örneğin öğretmenlerinin kabulü, ebeveyn veya akran reddinin olumsuz etkisini iyileştirebilir mi? Ya da çocukları ve ergenleri sosyal reddedilmeye karşı daha güçlü

kılan başka özellikler olabilir mi? Çocukların ve ergenlerin yaşamlarındaki diğer potansiyel olarak koruyucu faktörleri incelemek, sosyal reddinin olumsuz etkilerinin üstesinden gelmenin yollarını bulmaya bir adım daha yaklaşmamıza yardımcı olabilir.

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### YAZARIN / AUTHOR

**Soyadı / Surname** : Altınöz  
**Adı / Name** : Zeynep Su  
**Bölümü / Department** : Psikoloji / Psychology

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