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The trait anger and anger explanation styles of preschool teachers

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Abstract

The objective of the present study is to examine the trait anger and anger explanation styles of preschool teachers on age and gender variables. The sample of this study consisted of the 150 preschool teachers (120 females and 30 males) working in preschools and primary schools in Turkey. Trait Anger-Anger Style Scale for determining anger and anger explanation styles and Personal Information Form were used as data collection instruments. In order to analyze non-parametric kruskal wallis test and Mann Whitney *U* test were used. Findings were discussed in the light of the literature.

Keywords: Preschool Teachers, Trait Anger and Anger Explanation Styles, Age, Gender

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the teacher's personality may also influence the quality of the teacher-child relationship. The majority of work on adult personality characteristics and relationship quality has focused on mother-child dyads. Parallels, however, may be drawn between the mother-child and teacher-child relationship. Relationships high in closeness are marked by warm and open communication between the child and teacher. The child with a relationship high in closeness can use the support provided by the relationship to explore and master school learning tasks and peer relationships (Pianta, 1999).

Especially, teacher-child interactions are considered to be developmentally appropriate when the teacher (a) responds quickly, directly, and warmly to children; (b) provides a variety of opportunities to participate in a two-way communication; and (c) identifies and elaborates on the feelings, interests, and activities of children (Bredenkamp, 1987). Interactions between children and their teachers provide a powerful context for early learning and development. Actually, teachers who engage in sensitive and responsive interactions with children are tend to develop children's security (Elicker & Fortner-Wood, 1995). Children who have a more secure relationship with their teacher are, in turn, more likely to explore their environment and, therefore, have more opportunities to learn. Based on these studies, it would be expected that characteristics of the teacher's personality would be associated with relationship quality as well.

Personality is defined as "stable set of characteristics and tendencies that determine those commonalities and differences in the psychological behavior (such as thoughts, feelings and actions) of people that have continuity in time and that may not be easily understood as the sole result of social and biological pressures of the moment" (Berens, 1999).

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How we deal with stress, disappointments, and frustration determines the essence of our personality. Anger is an emotional reaction to our perceived needs not being met – and this is potentially a very positive aspect of anger. We need to remember that we call anger (and anxiety and depression) ‘negative’ emotions not because they are bad but simply because we do not enjoy experiencing them. They are a bit like pain, which is also ‘bad’ for the same reason – we don’t like it. But without pain, we would probably not survive, as it tells us there is something wrong with us physically and we need to change. Anger tells us that we are feeling threatened when our needs are not being met, and this motivates us to do something about it. Anger often drives us either to force someone to meet our needs or to punish them for having failed to meet them (Faupel, Herrick & Sharp, 2011)

Anger is a highly social emotion. Most people know what it is like to play the part of the angry actor or be a bystander to, or recipient of, somebody else’s wrath. It is commonplace to witness the exchange of angry expressions between other individuals in real life, on stage, or in the media. Anger provides drama; rage enlarges it. Anger can sharpen one’s critical perspective and creative edge. Its expression can stimulate the lifeless and detached. While there is little doubt that anger can be personally and socially destructive – if it is too intense, enduring, and misdirected – anger can motivate and mobilize efforts against the injustices of everyday life (Schieman, 2010)

It is nearly impossible to mention every possible anger-causing experience or circumstance, but stress at work or school :crowds, being irritated or annoyed, anxiety, mood disorders (including depression, bipolar disorder, and borderline personality disorder), being treated unfairly, loud noises, unpleasant weather, such as extreme heat or cold, hunger, lack of sleep, pain, being harassed, being threatened physically or emotionally, being forced to wait (for example, waiting in lines or waiting for someone who is late), loss of control over a situation, personality (Koellhoffer, 2009).

There are two types of anger: temporary anger and trait anger. Temporary anger appears based on a certain situation and the its severity varies according to the degree of assault, unfairness, or frustration that the individual perceives. Trait anger is a disposition to perceive a wide range of situations as annoying and frustrating, and the tendency to respond to such situations with more frequent and more intense elevations in state anger (Haines,2000)

The ability to notice nonverbal signs in others’ behaviors constitutes a focus of of social competence. Expressions of anger in certain present explicit signals that play a major role in the regulation of social interactions. Angry expressions indicate a potential physical and/or symbolic attack (Schupp et al.,2004).

It is expected that teacher’s negative emotions which include angry, fear, anxiety are under controlled and teacher’s positive features which include to be empathic, calm and interested in are showed. In the early childhood education settings teacher’s suitable and unsuitable behaviors could be showed. This can affects children’s developmental patterns negatively. Anger has predictable effects on the psychiatric, physical, and social well-being of preschool teachers, because of this the factors that influence anger must be studied in depth. In the light of this literature, we examined in what degrees trait anger and anger explanation styles in early childhood teachers

2.Methods

2.1 Participants

The general research model was adopted for this study. The sample set of the research was taken from the Faculty of Education of Mugla University (Turkey) by the random set sampling method. The participants were 500 students (260 females; 240 males) who took part in the study voluntarily. The mean age of the participants was 20.20 years, with a standard deviation of 1.80 years.

2.2 Instruments

Trait Anger And Anger Style Scale which is developed by Spielberger, Jacobs, Russell and Craine (1983) and used to determine anger levels expression by people and and Personal Information Form have been used as data collection instruments were used as data collection instruments. The scale was translated and adopted into Turkish by Özer (1994). Adolescents and adults are applied. The first 10 items of the scale measure trait anger, the other 24

items point out individuals' anger expression styles (i.e., anger-in, anger-out, and anger control). The scale is a 4-point likert-type scale. The internal consistency coefficients of the scale were found to be 0.79 for trait anger dimension, 0.84 for anger-in, 0.78 for anger-out and 0.62 for anger control

2.3 Procedure

Kruskal Wallis, and Mann-Whitney U test were employed to analyze the data obtained by the instruments used in the research. SPSS version 14.0 was used in the analysis.

3. Results

Table 1. Comparison trait anger and anger explanation styles of teacher with respect to gender

Factor	Variables	N	U	p
Trait Anger	Female	120	830.500	.970
	Male	30		
Anger inside	Female	120	690.000	.290
	Male	30		
Anger outside	Female	120	560.000	.048*
	Male	30		
Anger control	Female	120	712.000	.430
	Male	30		

* $p < .05$

As shown in Table 1, When Mann Whitney U test results were examined according to gender was found a significant difference. This difference is significant in favor of man in anger (anger-outside) sub-dimension in under control according to gender

Table 2. Comparison trait anger and anger explanation styles of teacher with respect to age

Factor	Variables	N	χ^2	p
Trait Anger	20-25 (1)	60	1.150	.740
	26-30 (2)	40		
	31-35 (3)	30		
	36-40 (4)	10		
Anger inside	20-25 (1)	60	1.240	.710
	26-30 (2)	40		
	31-35 (3)	30		
	36-40 (4)	10		
Anger outside	20-25 (1)	60	.180	.962
	26-30 (2)	40		
	31-35 (3)	30		
	36-40 (4)	10		
Anger control	20-25 (1)	60	8.604	.022* (4)
	26-30 (2)	40		
	31-35 (3)	30		
	36-40 (4)	10		

* $p < .05$

As shown in Table 2, 36-40 ages group of teachers were found to be higher than the others ages group with anger control, with a significance level of .05.

4. Discussion

Gender stereotypes hold men and women are different in their experience and expression of anger. Men are thought to be more angry and express their anger outwardly, in negative ways more often than women; on the contrary, women are thought to be suppress their anger and attempt to control its expression more often than men. The difference in trait anger between women and men also was statistically significant, with men exhibiting greater trait anger than women. This finding supported previous research that indicated higher levels of trait anger were found more in men than women (Defenbacher, 1992; Spielberger et al., 1995)

This study also shows that older preschool teachers had higher scores with anger control. Older preschool teachers use of inward-focused strategies to soothe or calm anger. The present results indicate that older adults utilize more effective anger regulation strategies. It has been suggested that age is associated with an improved ability to control emotions, resulting in negative emotions such as anger being experienced less frequently (Carstensen, Fung, & Charles, 2003).

There is a need for research to explore preschool teachers' experiences of anger within their specific teaching context such as preschool or childcare, as well as within the wider contexts of the school campus and the educational, organizational, and social system. Differentiation between the internal demands which teachers place upon themselves in their daily work and the external demands from organizational and social pressures must be understood in order to provide support for teachers to cope with and adapt to change.

Many preschool teachers find themselves unable to implement effective strategies when faced with a range of challenging behaviors in the day-to-day context of student teaching. The topic often dominates weekly student teaching seminars and professors often hear comments like "Our behavior management strategies don't seem to work," "We implement consequences, but the inappropriate behaviors continue," and "What can I do to help my children concentrate instead of just fooling around?"

Self-help methods for anger management must be tailored to preschool teachers' needs. Every preschool teachers must know that Anger is tough which a natural reaction, and one of the normal emotions in all people and embrace his/her anger as a healthy emotion, but learn to react in a way. Anger management training can decrease the aggressive behavior of at-risk students in the short-term. Students trained in anger management have been found to decrease their disruptive and aggressive behaviors both at home and in the classroom, and display greater self control (Feindler, Marriot, & Iwata, 1984).

Besides the teacher, children make great strides in the perception and understanding of anger and in regulating the anger they feel and express. These developmental changes are supported by advances in children's perceptual and cognitive development and by sensitive and responsive caregiving. Parenting practices that facilitate children's ability to recognize anger and learn effective strategies to manage anger allow children to manage their arousal and effectively engage with the environment, especially with peers. The developmental tasks of learning to perceive, understand, and express anger in culturally appropriate ways are complicated by variations in temperamentally based anger-proneness. For some children, frustration and anger are more easily provoked, more intense, more long-lasting, and harder to regulate. Supportive and sensitive caregiving helps all children to learn to cope with frustration and anger, but it is especially crucial for children who are anger-prone. The preschool years are a key time in the socialization of anger as perceptual, cognitive, and language development provide important tools for identifying, understanding, and regulating anger (Lemerise, & Harper, 2010)

At this point effective education supervisors and counselors could guide to preschool teachers whenever they need. For instance, their participation in the online or face to face psychological consultation provided student teachers and preschool teachers with a positive experience in seeking help. When they work with children with challenging behaviors in their own classrooms, they should be prepared with both an effective behavioral framework and with familiarity in asking for assistance.

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