

Attaching Parents as a Predictor of Academic Self-Efficacy Beliefs of University Students

Cahit NURİ¹ – Cemaliye DİREKTÖR*² – Nergüz BULUT SERİN³

¹ Near East University, Faculty of Education, Department of Special Need Education, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey

² European University of Lefke, Faculty of Arts & Sciences, Department of Psychology, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey

³ European University of Lefke, Dr. Fazıl Küçük Faculty of Education, Department of Guidance and Psychological Counselling, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey

Abstract

In the present study, it has been investigated whether parental attachment predicts academic self-efficacy and it's sub-dimensions which are 'cognitive application', 'social status', and 'technical skills. Parental alienation, communication with trust factors and gender variable has also been examined. Participants of this study has been randomly selected from a private university, 64 of them being female, and 85 male, a total of 149 university students. "Inventory Short Form of Attachment to Parents and Friends" and "Academic Self-Efficacy Skill" has been used in the study. In the data analysis, t-test, correlation, and multiple regressions were carried out. It has been found out that female participants have a higher academic self-efficacy than male participants. Results show that, alienation to mother and gender predicted academic self-efficacy; and also alienation to mother, communication with father and gender predicted cognitive application.

Keywords: Attachment, Academic Self-Efficacy, Cognitive Application, Social Status, Technical Skills, University Students.

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*Sorumlu Yazar /

Corresponding Author:

European University of

Lefke, Turkish Republic

of Northern Cyprus,

Mersin 10, Turkey

cdirektor@eul.edu.tr

Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Akademik Özyeterlik İnancının Yordayıcısı olarak Anne-Babaya Bağlanma

Öz

Bu araştırmanın amacı üniversite öğrencilerinin anne ve babalarından algıladıkları bağlanmanın akademik öz yeterliliğin alt boyutları olan bilişsel uygulama, sosyal statü ve teknik becerilerin

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yordayıcısı olup olmadığını incelemektir. Araştırmanın örneklemini üniversiteye devam eden 64'ü kız, 85'i erkek 149 üniversite öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada “Akademik Öz-Yeterlik Ölçeği” ile “Ebeveyn ve Arkadaşlara Bağlanma Envanteri Kısa Formu” kullanılmıştır. İstatistiksel veriler, t-testi, korelasyon ve çoklu regresyon analizi ile incelenmiştir. Kız öğrencilerin erkek öğrencilere göre daha yüksek akademik öz yeterliğe sahip olduğu bulunmuştur. Araştırma sonuçları, cinsiyet değişkeni ile anneden algılanan yabancılaşmanın akademik öz yeterliliği yordadığı; buna ek olarak anneden algılanan yabancılaşma, baba ile iletişim ve cinsiyet değişkeninin bilişsel uygulamayı yordadığı bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bağlanma, Akademik Öz Yeterlik, Bilişsel Uygulama, Sosyal Statü, Teknik Beceri.

1. Introduction

Although, in 1800, Sigmund Freud received negative comments regarding the Psychoanalytical approach, the importance of the childhood life has been emphasized by the Cognitive and Humanitarian approaches (Burger, 2006). Bowlby and Ainsworth, among the psychodynamic theorists, developed the Attachment Theory provides an approach in order to explain relationship between primary care giver and a child in the course of a child's development (Bowlby, 1988). It is stated that the desire of looking for a close relationship and establishing a close relationship is an evolutionary behaviour system (Bowlby, 1960). The behavioural system allows the protection of close relationship while serving for the adaptation of the child to the surrounding (Bowlby, 1980). It has been stated that the role of the father is significant in the individualization of the child while the intense emotional link established with the attachment figure or the mother contributes to the social development of the child (Güneş, 2015). It is also reported that the relationship established with the father is of great importance for the life of individual (Kuzucu, 2011). Williams and Kelly (2005) highlighted the effect of Attachment to the father for the development of the character. Nugent (1991) emphasized the role of the father in the child's development and reported that it highly contribute to the cognitive development of the child in particular. A positive relationship exist between the attachment to mother and father (Van Ijendoorn & Wolff, 1997). In this direction, the attachment to both mother and father affects the life of individual as well as playing an essential role in the development of the child, with the important role belonging to mother or the person providing the primary care.

An internalized organization of attachment behavioral system in relation with a primary care giver was a special attention to the representational dimension of attachment (Bowlby, 1973). These cognitive representations are named as an Internal Working Model of Attachment. This model contains positive or negative schema structures about self, the other and the nature of relationship. “Self, the other and the nature of relationship” schemas with the sensibility of the attachment figure to the needs of child, the reaction given to the child, to give a high quality reaction when the child needs, to approve and dignity, and to let child to discover his or her environment (Ainsworth, 1963). The attachment figure with the bonding for living belief, expectations and the behavioural strategies interiorise the relationship between new interpersonal qualifications identifications in the childhood (Kesebir, Kavzoğlu & Üstündağ, 2011; Bowlby, 1973). With the adolescence period has been come dependency to the parents become lower and the friendships and who is in a romantic relationship into prominence with the regards (Hazan & Zeifman, 1999) but the necessity to parents have been protected the healthy improvement (Allen & Miga, 2010). The attachment theory, the relation has been expounded that the founded relation is affected the child's social, emotional and cognitive improvement continued years (Bowlby, 2012).

Individuals with high attachment anxiety were likely to fear rejection, to hold negative working models of the self (Pietromonaco & Barrett, 2000). The relation between the child and parents has been characterized in a very critical place for development in the first social gain and the development of self-esteem (Wolfe & Betz, 2004). Self-esteem can be defined as the belief of the individual regarding what can be done under

different conditions by using the abilities (Aksoy, 2014). Individuals develop self-esteem belief for the coping skills based on their lifelong experience (Bandura, 1977). Academic self-esteem has been explained as the belief of completion the work successfully by the student (Schunk & Pajares, 2009; Chu & Choi, 2005). Chemers, Hu and Garcia (2001) stated that academic self-esteem has been defined as self-confidence of student's in the academic study subjects. Towards learning has been accepted academic self-esteem component in an effective use of cognitive strategy, managing the environment and time in a positive way and to have the organizational ability in nature self-performance (Chemers, Hu & Garcia, 2001). The other definition has been made by the self-belief on the success of individual in academic subjects (Durdukoca, 2010). It has been indicated that the academic self-esteem is the most important affective element affecting the academic success among many factors (Ekici, 2012). The one gender is known to be among the factors affecting the academic self-esteem. When the literature review is performed, it has been observed that the findings about the gender variable. Akbay and Gizir (2010) state that the male students participated in the study have a higher level of academic self-esteem than female students. Similarly, in another study, the academic self-esteem classroom teacher candidate university student has been compared in terms of gender and it has been found out male students have higher self-esteem than female students (Durdukoca, 2010). In a conducted meta-analysis research, it is stated that academic self-efficacy in terms of gender variable significant difference between 19-22 years old groups. In the same research, when all the researches are analyzed, boys have more academic self-efficacy than girls; the perception of girls' language self-efficacy from boys, boys' mathematics, computer, and social science perception is higher than girls (Huang, 2013). The other extent of related with self-efficacy is stated with family support (Peterson, 2014). In a study where the relation of self-efficacy belief with attachment is researched, it has been found that the communication as one of the sub-dimension of attachment that female students perceive from their mother predict self-efficacy belief in a positive way (Mao, 2012). Similarly, in a study conducted by Lin (2004), it has been mentioned that the relationship formed with the same gender parents predicts the professional self-efficacy. In another study, gender and attachment to father relation to social self-efficacy (Coleman, 2003). It has been reported that both academic and professional self-efficacy beliefs of the university students perceiving secure attachment is high (Wright, Perrone-McGovern, Boo & White, 2014).

When the literature is analysed, it has been observed that various variables related to attachment were studied but the number of the studies regarding the academic self-efficacy is limited. It is thought that the analysis of academic self-efficacy of university students will help the study fields of psychological supervisors providing services at the university. The main aim of the study is to explain the relationship between the attachment patterns of university students qualified as late adolescence to parents and the academic self-efficacy. Answers have been intended to given to the following questions in line with this aim:

1. Are there differences between parental attachment and academic self-efficacy?
2. Is there any relation among parental trust, communication and alienation with academic self-efficacy and cognitive implementation, social statue and technical skill sub-dimensions?
3. Is attachment to parent one of predicted of academic self-efficacy?
4. Are parental trust, communication and alienation with academic self-efficacy and cognitive implementation, social statue and technical skill one of predicted sub-dimension?

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

Research is a descriptive study to explain the relationship between parental attachment patterns and academic self-efficacy of university students.

2.2. Participants

The sample of this research is formed by a total 149 student studying at a private university in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). The research is joined by 64 female and 85 male, in total 149 university students. The average age of female is 21.48 and male average age is 22.39. Students were informed about the aim of study before collecting data and voluntary students were taken into the scope of the study.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

2.3.1. Short form of Inventory Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA)

Short Form of Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment was improved by Raja, McGee and Stanton (1992) and it was evaluated regarding attachment to mother and father. Sample conformity for Turkish was made by Kumru (2002) and later on in many study it was renewed. In the study survey is used the short form of PFAS psychometric features on university students reveal by Günaydın, Selçuk, Sümer and Uysal (2005). Each of them is formed of trust, communication and alienation sub-dimension. In a study conducted with university students Cronbach alpha reliability is valued 0.88 for mother form, 0.90 for father form, retest test is valued reliability 0.88 for mother form, 0.87 for father form (Günaydın, Selçuk, Sümer and Uysal, 2005).

2.3.2. Academic Self-efficacy Scale

The study to adapt the scale developed by Owen and Froman (1988). The scale was adapted into Turkish and reliability and validity studies were conduct by Ekinci (2012). Similar to the original form, Turkish form has 33 items. The scale has been reported to be formed of 3 sub-dimensions, which are social status, cognitive application and technical skills. Internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found as .86, according to item-total correlation and the 27% lower-upper group comparisons results, it has been stated that the item distinctiveness of the scale is was sufficient. In validity and reliability study results show that Cronbach alpha reliability is .82 for cognitive application dimension, .90 for technical skills dimension and .88 for social statuses on university students (Ekinci, 2012).

2.4. Process

Participants were given the Demographic Information Form, Adult and Friend Attachment Inventory Short Form and Academic Self-Efficacy Scale at the same time. In analysing the data, independent sample t-test, Pearson moment correlation and multiple regression analysis were used.

3. Results

With regards to the aim of the research, t-test has been conducted in order to evaluate whether the academic self-efficacy and the sub-dimensions of cognitive application, social status and technical skills differ in terms of gender. Secondly, the relationship among all variables has been analyzed and then multiple regression analysis has been implemented.

The difference between the gender variable and the academic self-efficacy as well as other dependent variables were given in Table 1.

Table 1. *T-test Results according to Gender*

Dependent Variables	Gender	N	Average	SH	T
Academic Self-efficacy	Female	64	113.17	17.16	2.662***
	Male	85	105.67	16.93	
Cognitive Application	Female	64	69.08	10.99	3.845***
	Male	85	62.33	10.30	
Social Status	Female	64	31.03	5.48	0,515
	Male	85	30.50	6.64	
Technical Skills	Female	64	13.06	3.07	0.478
	Male	85	12.83	2.71	

***p<.001

A significant difference was observed between the gender variable, the academic self-efficacy and the cognitive application sub-dimension (Table 1). It has been observed that the females who participated in the research had higher self-efficacy and cognitive application scores compared to the males (t=2.662; t=3.845, p<.001).

Table 2. *Relationship between Variables*

	Academic self- efficacy	Cognitive application	Social status	Technical skills
Gender	-.214**	-.302**	-.042	-.039
Attachment to mother	.198*	.216**	.082	.192*
Trust to mother	.089	.120	.009	.056
Communication with mother	.255**	.265**	.141*	.222**
Alienation to mother	.241**	.280**	.127	.220**
Attachment to father	.241**	.239**	.155	.205*
Trust to father	.187*	.180*	.133	.152
Communication with father	.160	.164*	.067	.193*
Alienation to father	.200*	.191*	.138	.175*

*p<.05, **p<.01

The relationship between the variables in the study are given in Table 2. It has been found out that gender, attachment to parents, communication with mother, parental alienation and trust to father are correlated to the academic self-efficacy and cognitive application sub-dimensions at a low level.

Table 3. *Predictors of Academic Self-Efficacy*

Variables	R	R ²	Adapted R ²	B	T	F
Variables together	.355	.126	.082			2.898***
Gender				-.173	-2.078*	
Attachment to mother						
Trust				-.063	-.535	
Communication				.015	.142	
Alienation				.220	2.115*	
Attachment to father						
Trust				-.032	-.238	
Communication				.202	1.656	
Alienation				-.034	-.272	

*p<.05, *** p<.001

Having the regression analysis results investigated (Table 3), it has been seen that gender is a predictor of the academic self-efficacy when analysed together with attachment to mother and attachment to father variables. It can be stated that the 13% of the variance of the academic self-efficacy has been explained together with the gender, parental attachment and the sub-dimensions. When variables are separately analysed, it has been found out that the academic self-efficacy is not a predictor of trust to mother, communication with mother and attachment to father but gender and alienation from mother are predictors of academic self-efficacy, $\beta = -.173$, $t = -2.078$; $\beta = .220$, $t = 2.115$, $p < .05$.

Table 4. *Predictors of Cognitive Application*

Variables	R	R ²	Adapted R ²	B	T	F
Variables together	.418	.174	.133			4.254***
Gender				-.282	-3.487**	
Attachment to mother						
Trust				.031	.276	
Communication				-.048	-.454	
Alienation				.218	2.159*	
Attachment to father						
Trust				-.096	-.726	
Communication				.244	2.060*	
Alienation				-.046	-.382	

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

Having analysed Table 4, it has been observed that the cognitive application sub-dimension is a predictor of the academic self-efficacy when analysed together with gender, attachment to mother and attachment to father variables, $R = .355$, $R^2 = .126$, $F(7,141) = 2.898$, $p < .001$. It can be stated that the 13% of the variance of the academic self-efficacy has been explained together with the gender, parental attachment and the sub-dimensions. When variables are separately analysed, it has been found out that the academic self-efficacy is not a predictor of trust to mother, communication with mother and attachment to father but gender and alienation from mother are predictors of academic self-efficacy, $\beta = -.173$, $t = -2.078$; $\beta = .220$, $t = 2.115$, $p < .05$.

It has been found that parental attachment and gender are the predictors of social status and technical skills, which are the sub-dimensions of academic self-efficacy.

4. Discussion

This study aims to investigate the prediction of academic self-efficacy with attachment to parents. Gender is accepted to be related to the academic self-efficacy. Having the Turkish literature scanned, it is seen that the male students have higher academic self-efficacy compared to the female students (Akbay & Gizir, 2010; Durdukoca, 2010). In the meta-analysis study conducted by Huang (2013), it is stated that the males have higher academic self-efficacy compared to the females, females have higher language self-efficacy compared to the males and males have higher mathematics, computing and social sciences self-efficacy compared to the females (Huang, 2013). As a result of the conducted t-test, it has been found out that the female participants have a significantly higher academic self-efficacy scores compared to the male participants. It is thought that these results which are not consistent with the literature may be related to the study group. The studies conducted in Turkey sustain that Turkey has a male dominated cultural structure (Durdukoca, 2010). As the participants who came to Cyprus from Turkey for study purposes, it is considered that they might have a more autonomous structure by becoming distant to their parents and thus female participants had a higher academic self-efficacy than male participants. The findings obtained as a result of the correlation analysis point out that gender and attachment to parents were related to the

academic self-efficacy. Mao (2012) states that the communication as a sub-dimension of the attachment perceived by female students from their mothers predicts the occupational self-efficacy belief positively. In one study, the communication established with parents has been implied to be the predictor of occupational self-efficacy (Lin, 2004); in another study, secure attachment has been stated to be the predictor of both academic and occupational self-efficacy beliefs (Wright et al., 2014). Gender and alienation from mother variables were found to be predictors of academic self-efficacy in the study. Predicting alienation from mother is interpreted as pointing out to the development of the university students to become self-efficient. With the puberty, it is known that the attachment to parents decrease, individuals become self-efficient (Hazan & Zeifman, 1999) but the support and need required from parents are life-long (Allen & Miga, 2010). The established attachment to parents affect the cognitive development of individuals for years (Bowlby, 2012).

The regression analysis of only the cognitive application sub-dimension of the academic self-efficacy has been found significant and it has been concluded that the social status and technical skills sub-dimensions cannot be predicted with attachment to parents. Alienation to mother and communication established with father were found to be the predictors of the cognitive application sub-dimension. The established relationship with father is declared to have a great importance in the life of individuals (Kuzucu, 2011). Güneş (2015) highlights the effect of father in the individualisation of individuals while Williams and Kelly (2005) highlight the effect of father in the development of character. Williams and Kelly (2005) highlight the effect of attachment to father on the development of the character. In the study conducted by Nugent (1991), the role of father in the child development has been highlighted and it has been stated that it highly contributes particularly to the cognitive development of the child. As a result of the obtained findings, it can be expressed that father has a significant place in the development of individual and in the quality of the established relationship as mentioned in the literature. On the other hand, alienation from mother is believed to allow gaining autonomy and to determine the place of academic self-efficacy in the cognitive application of individuals.

The sample of that study, were students of the same university. Attachment lasts through all life-span, but academic self-efficacy of students with different ages would be a valuable contribution to the field. In psychological counselling, professionals who works with academic self-efficacy, can easy their work by finding out information about university student's attachment quality and academic self-efficacy. Further research can be work with different variables such as peer attachment, perceived social support, class grade, motivation, expectation of the conclusion.

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