

RESEARCH ARTICLE

OPEN ACCESS

The mediating role of forgiveness in the relationship between emotion regulation difficulty and relational aggression in high school students^{*3}

Mehmet Şahan^{1c} , and Esra Ceyhan² 

¹ Eskişehir Atatürk Fine Arts High School, Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education, Türkiye.

² Anadolu University, Department of Educational Sciences, Program of Guidance and Psychological Counseling, Türkiye

³ The research consists of a part of the first author's PhD thesis under the second author's supervision.

* Ethics committee approval (Annex-12-14/09/2021 dated and decision no. 142235) has been obtained from the Anadolu University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee for Social and Human Sciences.

^c Correspondence Author: Mehmet Şahan, Eskişehir Atatürk Fine Arts High School. Ministry of National Education, Türkiye. mehmetsahan.10@gmail.com

Article Info

DOI: 10.34056/aujef.1487559

Article History:

Received: 21/05/2024

Revised: 15/12/2024

Accepted: 13/03/2025

Keywords

Relational aggression,
Emotion regulation difficulty,
Forgiveness,
High school students.

Highlights:

- Emotion regulation difficulties in adolescents directly and negatively predict forgiveness.
- Relational aggression is directly and negatively predicted by forgiveness.
- The indirect effect of forgiveness on adolescents' emotion dysregulation and relational aggression was statistically significant.

Abstract

The increase in aggressive behavior during adolescence has led to both research on aggression and the identification of various types of aggression by considering aggression as a multidimensional structure. One of these is relational aggression. In this context, this study aims to examine the mediating role of forgiveness in the relationship between high school students' emotion regulation difficulties and relational aggression. The relational screening method and basic mediation model were used in the study. The study group of the research consists of 1012 students attending public high schools in the center of Eskişehir in the 2021-2022 academic year. The study used the Relational Aggression in Friendship Relationships Scale Adolescent Form, the Difficulty in Emotion Regulation Scale, and the Forgiveness Scale for Adolescents. According to the study's findings, adolescents' forgiveness is directly and negatively predicted by difficulties in emotion regulation. Relational aggression is directly and negatively predicted by forgiveness. The total effect of difficulties in emotion regulation on relational aggression was .19. When the mediator variable, forgiveness, is included in the model, the total effect decreases to .17, which is significant. The indirect effect of forgiveness on adolescents' difficulty in emotion regulation and relational aggression was found to be significant. The partial mediating role of forgiveness was found to be significant, but its effect level was low. In conclusion, all these findings indicate that high school students' difficulty in emotion regulation is a risk factor for relational aggression, while forgiveness is a protective factor.

Citation: Şahan, M., & Ceyhan, E. (2025). The mediating role of forgiveness in the relationship between emotion regulation difficulty and relational aggression in high school students. *Anadolu University Journal of Education Faculty*, 9(2), 101-115. <https://doi.org/10.34056/aujef.1487559>

1. Introduction

In the process that starts from birth and continues until death, it can be said that each developmental period has its own characteristics and dominant figures. In the case of adolescence, peers and relationships with peers come to the fore. By establishing relationships with their peers, adolescents desire to get closer to them and make multidimensional comparisons to reveal themselves. Adolescence is when peer relationships gain intensity, and emotional ups and downs are frequently experienced. In the face of emotional problems in peer relationships, adolescents may sometimes resort to unwanted ways. These unwanted ways may sometimes include aggressive elements (Kim et al., 2022; Kokkinos et al., 2020). Because in the first years of adolescence, emotions or situations such as anger, guilt, loneliness, and aggression are experienced intensely with psychological, physical, and hormonal changes (Vernon, 1993). Adolescents exhibit more intense aggressive behaviors than in previous years. (Verlinden et al., 2000). In the studies conducted in the domestic literature, it is seen that aggressive behaviors during adolescence have increased compared to previous periods (Kılıç, 2022; Tuzgöl, 1998). This increase in aggressive behaviors during adolescence has led to many studies on aggression and the definition of different types of aggression by considering it a multidimensional structure (Connor, 2004).

Relational aggression, a special type of aggression, is observed as a destructive type of aggression exhibited intensely and popularly among adolescents (Flack, 2017; Jiang & Dong, 2022; Kurnaz & Kapçı, 2013; Kim et al., 2022; Lu et al., 2018; Tackett et al., 2014). Relational aggression is implicitly or explicitly ignoring, or maliciously talking behind one's back, rejecting or excluding one's close friends (Grotzinger & Crick, 1996). Relational aggression includes behaviors aimed at damaging an individual's social status by damaging interpersonal relationships. While relational aggression is observed in early childhood in the form of threatening to end a friendship and covering one's ears to avoid listening to what the other person says; in later years, it can be seen in a wide range of forms such as making rumors about the person, gossiping about the person, shaming the person, and excluding the person from the group (Archer & Coyne, 2005). Behaviors such as dominating a peer group, gaining status, seeking popularity, or undermining the dignity of others can be identified as causes of relational aggression. (Mayeux, 2014; Turner, 2007). It can be asserted that relational aggression aims to harm peer relationships and hurt others. In this context, all behaviors of adolescents against their peers, such as implicit or hidden ignoring, gossiping, threatening, excluding, and rejecting, are evaluated within the framework of relational aggression (Grotzinger & Crick, 1996). In summary, relational aggression seeks to damage an individual's social relationships (Crick & Grotzinger, 1995; Steinberg, 2007). However, behaviors involving relational aggression are often not recognized as aggression, despite their prevalence, because they are accepted as a regular part of interpersonal relationships. Consequently, they are frequently used in such interactions (Linder et al., 2002). For this reason, behaviors linked to relational aggression are challenging to recognize, and even victims of these behaviors may not view themselves as victims (Kurtyılmaz, 2011; Young et al., 2006). Although this situation leads to relational aggression being viewed as a normal aspect of relationships, this assumption ignores the fact that relational aggression encompasses destructive behaviors that can cause as much harm as other types of aggression (Gomes, 2007; Griffin & Gross, 2004). In this context, the factors associated with relational aggression become significant. When considering adolescent developmental characteristics, it is believed that difficulties in emotion regulation may be related to relational aggression.

It is seen that emotions are experienced intensely during adolescence (Kulaksızoğlu, 2001). This period is also a time when skills in regulating emotions are acquired. The fact that adolescents have complex and fluctuating emotional states causes them to use dysfunctional methods by experiencing inadequacy in emotion regulation skills (Casey et al., 2008). Due to the difficulties in coping with emotions, they tend towards more aggressive behaviors (Sullivan et al., 2010). In other words, it is stated that the trigger of aggressive behaviors is the emotion regulation difficulties experienced during adolescence (McLaughlin et al., 2011). Individuals must have some skills to realize the emotion regulation process. Gratz and Roemer (2004) listed the skills necessary for emotion regulation as (a) recognizing and understanding the felt emotion, (b) accepting the felt emotion and using the appropriate strategy for the

emotion, (c) controlling impulsive behaviors, and (d) creating behaviors according to the desired goal. The lack of one or some of these skills necessary for realizing the emotion regulation process is defined as emotion regulation difficulties (Gratz & Roemer, 2004). Gross (2013), on the other hand, defines dysfunctional ways that occur against the emotional state that the individual experiences and reacts to as emotion dysregulation.

During adolescence, relational aggression is sometimes observed due to difficulties regulating emotion in peer relationships (Kokkinos et al., 2019). In addition, adolescents may sometimes exhibit behaviors involving relational aggression to take revenge on their peers. Emotion dysregulation is a critical predictor of relational aggression for female adolescents (Bowie, 2010). Under conditions where an adolescent's negative experience is not revealed healthily; it can be thought that they exhibit a more aggressive attitude when they have difficulties in regulating emotions such as anger and anger, when they maintain these emotions and when they cannot replace these emotions with emotions such as compassion, empathy, tolerance, understanding, generosity. In this context, forgiveness emerges as a critical concept for the regulation of emotions when damaging behaviors such as aggression, which occur with the lack of regulation of emotions in close relationships and have the possibility of destroying social relationships (Allemand et al., 2007).

Through forgiveness, which is defined as the individual's giving up anger, resentment and revenge-like feelings towards the person who has hurt him/her, and accepting the person unconditionally (Enright et al., 1992), adolescents can cope with actions that may damage their social relationships. In other words, relational aggression can be thought to be related to forgiveness (McCullough, 2000), which is defined as the adolescent giving up negative attitudes and feelings such as anger and resentment towards a peer whom he/she thinks has harmed him/her and developing positive reactions such as compassion, tolerance, love, and empathy towards his/her peer. Moreover, forgiveness seems to contribute positively to interpersonal relationships, as it is an important way of coping with negative life experiences. (Yamhure Thompson et al., 2005). According to research, forgiveness acts as an important restorative when interpersonal relationships are disrupted (Hargrave & Sells, 1997; Miller & Worthington, 2010; Orathinkal & Vansteenwegen, 2006). Emotions such as anger, resentment, and revenge felt in the case of unforgiveness can be regulated with empathy and tolerance through the forgiveness process (McCullough et al., 1998). In this way, it is possible to change the negative emotions experienced with more positive ones and realize emotional healing (Hargrave & Sells, 1997). It is important to regulate emotions in the process of forgiveness, which is accepted as the conscious renunciation of emotions such as anger, resentment, or revenge against the peer whom the adolescent thinks is wrong, and building more positive emotions instead (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000; Küçüker, 2016). In this direction, it can be said that adolescents who tend to forgive by regulating emotions such as resentment, anger, and revenge that may occur after problems experienced among peers will not exhibit behaviors towards relational aggression.

When the literature is examined, studies are revealing the relationships between difficulties in emotion regulation and forgiveness, which are thought to be related to relational aggression (Derincegöz, 2019; Gülüm, 2022; Hodgson & Wertheim, 2007; Karataş, 2020; Küçüker, 2016). Considering these studies, it is stated that those who can regulate emotions or those who do not have difficulty regulating emotions tend to forgive. Mitrofan and Ciuluvica (2012) state that the inability to forgive is related to aggression, and emotion regulation is important in reducing aggressive behaviors. Freedman (2018) emphasizes that forgiveness helps adolescents express their emotions and move away from the adverse effects of anger. In parallel to this, Eaton and Struthers (2006) state that it can reduce aggression because the adverse effects of anger-like emotions are eliminated through forgiveness. In this context, it can be said that it is important to regulate emotions such as anger and revenge in forgiveness. Accordingly, it is important to examine the relationships between these variables in detail to prevent aggressive behaviors that adolescents tend to exhibit by regulating their emotions in the problems they experience in peer relationships. Relational aggression negatively affects not only the victims but also the individuals who exhibit relational aggression behaviors in terms of psychological health. For individuals to create socially

healthy relationships by removing structures that will damage a relationship, such as interpersonal insecurity and jealousy, there is a need to reveal behavioral patterns involving relational aggression, understand them better, and make intervention plans. Therefore, it is necessary to reveal the factors that may cause relational aggression (Kurtyılmaz, 2011).

When the literature in Turkey is examined, it is seen that studies on relational aggression are primarily conducted with preschool children (Erdoğan, 2009; Ersan, 2017; İkiz, 2015). In addition, studies conducted by Kurtyılmaz (2011) and Karaaslan (2019) with university students are among the limited studies in the literature. Apart from Ekşi's (2021) study on emotion regulation difficulties, aggressive behaviors, and parents' psychological and behavioral control, no study on relational aggression in adolescence was found. In this context, it is important to understand the structure of relational aggression in adolescence, a critical developmental period in terms of psychological health. It is thought that the findings to be obtained at the end of the research will be helpful for psychological counselors working with adolescents in their efforts to reduce behaviors involving relational aggression, because knowing adolescents' behaviors involving relational aggression and related factors will benefit the provision of guidance and counseling services for adolescents more systematically.

It is important to conduct protective and preventive guidance studies for adolescents and determine the relationships between emotion dysregulation and forgiveness variables to minimize adolescents' behaviors involving relational aggression. It is thought that fewer relational aggressive behaviors during adolescence may be a protective factor for adolescents' mental health. When the studies in the literature are examined, the fact that the studies on relational aggression are minimal and that there is no research examining the variables of relational aggression, emotion dysregulation, and forgiveness in adolescents together reveals the necessity of conducting this research. In this context, it is expected that addressing the variables of relational aggression, emotion dysregulation, and forgiveness in the research will contribute to the protective and preventive studies to be carried out in the future and the research to be carried out in the following years. In this framework, the research aims to determine the relationships between adolescents' relational aggression, emotion dysregulation, and forgiveness levels. In this direction, an answer to the question "Does forgiveness have a mediating role in the relationship between difficulties in emotion regulation and relational aggression in high school students?" was sought.

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

In this study, the relational survey model, one of the quantitative research methods, was used. The relational survey model aims to examine the existing relationship between two or more variables without any intervention and to reveal the cause-and-effect relationships between variables (Büyüköztürk et al., 2013). Accordingly, the study aimed to describe the relationships between adolescents' relational aggression, difficulties in emotion regulation, and forgiveness levels.

2.2. Research Group

The study used a cluster sampling method. In this method, each element in the sub-universe is equally likely to be selected (Karasar, 2015). The study group consists of 1012 students studying in 45 different public high schools in Eskişehir province in the 2021-2022 academic year, and it was determined by the cluster sampling method. Approximately 3.5% of the 41000 high school students in public schools in Eskişehir constitute the study group. The descriptive characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 2.1 below.

2.3. Measures

To collect the research data, ethics committee permission (Annex-12-14/09/2021 dated 14/09/2021 and decision no. 142235) was obtained from the Anadolu University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Board before the applications started. Afterwards,

permission to apply for the research was obtained from the Ministry of National Education. Parental permission and informed consent were obtained before the scale application. The researcher collected the data in October, November and December of the 2021-2022 academic year. Students who volunteered to participate in the study were informed about the purpose and importance of the study and how to fill in the measurement tools by the researcher, and the data were collected.

Table 2.1. Distribution of students according to schools, grades, and gender

School	Gender	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
Fine Arts High School	Male	12	15	16	17	60
	Female	34	35	26	23	118
Anatolian High School with central placement points	Male	26	26	26	17	95
	Female	30	30	20	30	110
Anatolian High School with local placement points	Male	40	53	53	46	202
	Female	59	61	49	26	195
Vocational high school with central placement points	Male	16	13	15	16	60
	Female	14	16	17	17	64
Vocational high school with local placement points	Male	9	23	22	8	62
	Female	10	16	19	11	56
Total	Male	103	130	132	104	1012
	Female	147	158	131	107	

To collect the data for the study, Relational Aggression in Friendship Relationships Scale Adolescent Form (Kurtyılmaz et al., 2022) was used to determine relational aggression, Difficulty in Emotion Regulation Scale (Saritaş & Gençöz, 2011) was used to determine emotion regulation difficulties, and "Forgiveness Scale for Adolescents (Asıcı & Karaca, 2018) was used to reveal forgiveness levels. In addition, the "Personal Information Form" was used to determine the demographic characteristics of adolescents.

2.3.1. Relational Aggression in Dating Relationships Scale Adolescent Form

The validity and reliability of the Relational Aggression in Friendship Relationships Scale (ARILSÖ), which Kurtyılmaz developed, Can, and Ceyhan (2011) to determine the relational aggression of university students, was carried out by Kurtyılmaz, Şahan, and Ceyhan (2022). The 16-item scale is based on a 5-point Likert-type rating (1 = always, 5 = never). The scale consists of three sub-dimensions explaining 53.7% of the total variance. These sub-dimensions are named as exclusion, manipulation, and gossip. The lowest score obtained from the scale, which has no reverse-scored items, is 16, while the highest score is 80. The higher the score obtained from the scale, the higher the level of relational aggression. The internal consistency coefficient for the whole scale was found to be .91. The correlation coefficient between the two applications conducted with the test-retest method, 15 days apart, and with 96 participants was found to be .85 (Kurtyılmaz et al., 2022). In the present study, only the total score obtained from the scale was used, and the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the whole scale was found to be .91.

2.3.2. Difficulty in Emotion Regulation Scale

The scale developed by Gratz and Roemer (2004) to determine the emotion regulation difficulties of individuals was adapted to Turkish culture by Rugancı and Gençöz (2008) with university students. The adaptation study of the scale for adolescents was conducted by Saritaş and Gençöz (2011). The 36-item scale is scored between 1 and 5 points (1 = almost never, 5 = almost always). Consisting of 6 sub-dimensions, an increase in the score obtained from the scale indicates that emotion regulation is difficult. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be .93, and the correlation coefficient between the applications made with the test-retest method was found to be .83. In the present study,

the total score obtained from the scale was used and the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the whole scale was calculated as .96.

2.3.3. Forgiveness Scale for Adolescents

The "Forgiveness Scale for Adolescents" was developed by Asıcı and Karaca (2018) to determine adolescents' tendency to forgive in interpersonal relationships. The scale, which is based on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1=does not define me at all, 5=defines me completely), contains 21 items and consists of four sub-dimensions. The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale is 21, while the highest score is 105. An increase in the total score obtained from the scale means the adolescent's tendency to forgive increases. While the internal consistency coefficients of the subscales of the measurement tool ranged between .70 and .90, the correlation coefficients between the two applications performed with the test-retest method ranged between .65 and .80. The construct validity coefficients of the subscales of the scale ranged between .71 and .76. In the present study, only the total score obtained from the scale was used. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the whole scale was calculated as .79.

2.3.4. Personal Information Form

A personal information form was developed to collect information about the demographic characteristics of the participants. In the personal information form, there are items related to the gender, school and class of the participants.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis phase started with transferring the data collected with the measurement tools to the electronic environment. At this stage, the data of 172 participants who were thought to be filled in incorrectly, left blank or who could damage the reliability of the research results were removed from the research set. Before starting the analyses, whether the data set met the conditions required for multivariate statistical analysis was examined. Accordingly, outlier analysis was performed by looking at the Z scores for the univariate normality assumption. Data whose Z scores were not between -4 and +4 were removed. Then, Mahalanobis values were calculated for multivariate outlier analysis and the data above the chi-square value were removed. Skewness and kurtosis values were calculated and the condition between -2 and +2 was checked (George & Mallery, 2016). For the autocorrelation value, it was observed that the Durbin-Watson value should be between 1-3 and this condition (1.86) was realized in the current data set (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). After these procedures, the analysis continued with 1012 data sets.

The data were analyzed with the SPSS 22 package program. The PROCESS Macro plug-in downloaded from <http://afhayes.com/spss-sas-and-mplus-macros-andcode.html> was used to test the mediation model. In the study, Hayes' Model 4 was used to determine the effect of the mediating variable. The Bootstrap method was used to assess the significance level of the indirect effects of the mediation role. In the significance analysis of indirect effects, 5000 sample options were used with the bootstrap technique for bias-free results. As a result of the bootstrap analysis, whether the indirect effect is significant is decided by examining the 95% confidence interval values. Accordingly, indirect effects are significant if the confidence interval does not include "0", but not significant if the confidence interval includes "0". When interpreting the effect size, if the effect size is close to .25, it is interpreted as high effect, if it is close to .09, it is interpreted as medium effect, and if it is close to .01, it is interpreted as low effect (Gürbüz, 2021; Preacher & Kelly, 2011).

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive statistics

Before analyzing the research question, descriptive statistics of the research variables were determined. In this direction, the findings regarding the descriptive statistics of the research variables are given in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Descriptive statistics of adolescents' relational aggression, emotion dysregulation and forgiveness scores

	Variables	\bar{x}	SS	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	relational aggression	35.41	12.83	16	80	1.01	.51
2	emotion dysregulation	89.28	32.68	39	174	.51	-.74
3	forgiveness	58.74	13.41	21	105	.03	-.13

N: 1012 **p < .01

When Table 3.1 is examined, it is seen that relational aggression scores vary between 16 and 80. While the arithmetic mean (\bar{x}) of relational aggression scores was 35.41, the standard deviation (SD) was 12.83. Difficulty in emotion regulation scores ranged between 39 and 174. While the arithmetic mean (\bar{x}) of the difficulty in emotion regulation scores was 89.28, the standard deviation (SD) was 32.68. Forgiveness scores ranged between 21 and 105. While the arithmetic mean (\bar{x}) of forgiveness scores was 58.74, the standard deviation (SD) was 13.41.

3.2. Relationships between variables

Descriptive statistics were made before analyzing the research problem, and the relationships between the study's variables were determined. Accordingly, the findings regarding Pearson correlation coefficients are given in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. Pearson correlation coefficient statistics between adolescents' relational aggression, emotion dysregulation and forgiveness scores

	Variables	1	2	3
1	relational aggression	-	.48**	-.24**
2	emotion dysregulation		-	-.29**
3	forgiveness			-

N: 1012 **p < .01

As seen in Table 3.2, there is a moderate and positive significant relationship between adolescents' levels of relational aggression and difficulties in emotion regulation ($r = .48$, $p < .01$). On the other hand, there are negative and moderately significant relationships between adolescents' forgiveness levels and relational aggression levels ($r = -.24$, $p < .01$), and negative and moderately significant relationships between forgiveness levels and emotion dysregulation ($r = -.29$, $p < .01$).

3.3. Findings on the mediating role of forgiveness in the relationship between difficulties in emotion regulation and relational aggression

We analyzed forgiveness's mediating role in the relationship between difficulties in emotion regulation and relational aggression in adolescents. Figure 3.1 shows the regression coefficients of the model's direct and indirect effects.

As seen in Figure 3.1, adolescent forgiveness is directly and negatively predicted by difficulties in emotion regulation ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .001$). On the other hand, forgiveness directly and negatively predicts relational aggression ($\beta = -.11$, $p < .001$). The total effect of emotion dysregulation on relational aggression was .19. When forgiveness was included in the model as a mediator variable, the total effect decreased to .17. This value was statistically significant.

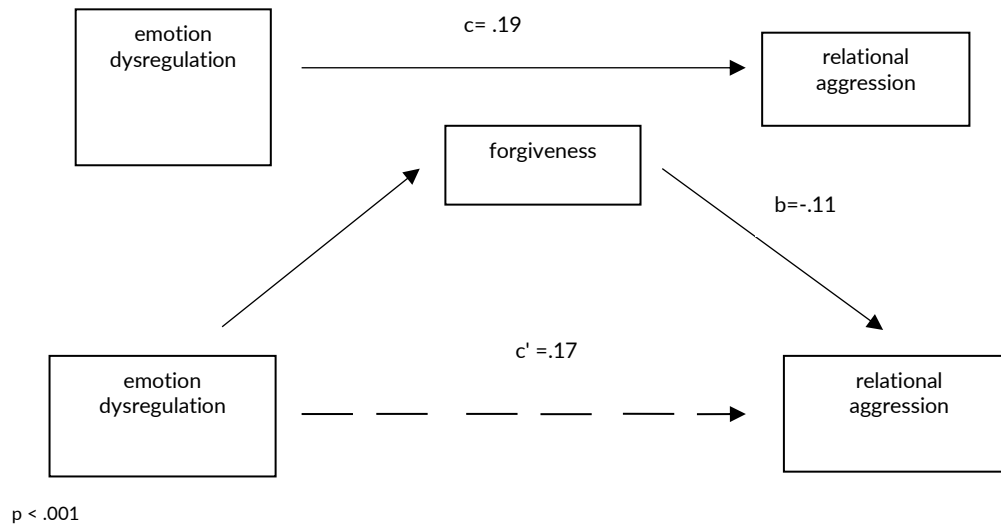


Figure 3.1. Model for the mediating role of forgiveness between difficulties in emotion regulation and relational aggression

As stated in the literature, if the relationship between the independent variable (difficulties in emotion regulation) and the dependent variable (relational aggression) decreases when the mediating variable (forgiveness) is included in the model, provided that it is different from zero (0), the mediation role is significant (Baron & Kenny, 1986). In this respect, forgiveness is a partial mediating variable in the relationship between adolescents' difficulty in emotion regulation and relational aggression levels.

To determine whether the indirect effect of the partial mediation role of forgiveness in the relationship between adolescents' emotion dysregulation and relational aggression levels is significant, an analysis was conducted with the Bootstrap 5000 sample option, and the values in the 95% confidence interval are presented in Table 3.3

Table 3.3. Bootstrapping results for the partial mediating role of forgiveness between high school students' emotion dysregulation and relational aggression levels

		95% confidence range			
		B	SH	Bott LLCI	Boot ULCI
Direct effect					
E. dysregulation	→ Forgiveness	-.29	.012	-.145	-.097
Forgiveness	→ Relational aggression	-.11	.028	-.163	-.055
E. dysregulation	→ Relational aggression	.44	.011	.152	.200
Total effect					
E. dysregulation	→ Forgiveness → Relational aggression	.47	.011	.166	.208
Indirect effect					
E. dysregulation	→ Forgiveness → Relational aggression	.03	.009	.016	.053

$p < .001$, based on a bootstrap sample of 5,000.

Table 3.3 shows that the indirect effect of forgiveness on adolescents' difficulties in emotion regulation and relational aggression levels is statistically significant (Bootstrap = .03, 95% CI = .016; .053). Since the upper and lower confidence intervals of the indirect effect of forgiveness did not include the zero value, the partial mediation role was statistically significant. In addition, the fully standardized effect size is .03. When interpreting the effect size, if it is close to .01, it is interpreted as low effect, if it is close to .09, it is interpreted as medium effect, and if it is close to .25, it is interpreted as high effect (Gürbüz, 2021; Preacher & Kelly, 2011). Therefore, the partial mediation effect of forgiveness was found to be low.

4. Discussion

The finding that there is a positive correlation between emotion dysregulation and relational aggression in adolescents shows that when adolescents experience problems in their friendships, they experience difficulties in regulating these emotions, leading to anger, and this causes relational aggression towards their friends. The finding that aggression increases when emotion regulation difficulties increase is consistent with other research findings in the literature (Akdemir, 2019; Caffarel, 2019; Christodoulou, et al., 2024; Dane & Marini, 2014; Ekşi, 2021; Hicks, 2018; Kayhan, 2017; Kyranides et al., 2024; Özdoğan, 2017; Robertson et al., 2012; Röhl et al., 2012; Skripkauskaitė et al., 2015). Similarly, Kawabata et al. (2011) argue that when emotion regulation skills cannot be used effectively, they cause aggression. In this context, considering that the lack of emotion regulation difficulties creates control over behaviors, it is also suggested that emotion regulation is a factor that reduces aggression (Cole et al., 1994). Chen et al. (2012) suggest that the inability to control impulse control, which may cause emotion regulation difficulties, may be related to aggression. It is seen that adolescents who have difficulties in coping with emotions such as anger or sadness that may occur in conflicts in peer relationships exhibit behaviors involving relational aggression more. It is seen that these adolescents have difficulties in creating positive alternative behaviors, as well as in getting rid of the effect of the emotion felt. It can be said that experiencing difficulties in changing the focus of thought with the felt emotion makes impulse control difficult and leads to the display of behaviors involving relational aggression.

Another result of the study is that relational aggression is negatively predicted by forgiveness. In other words, relational aggression decreases when forgiveness increases. When the literature is examined, it can be said that the research findings are in parallel with the previous studies (Camadan, 2014; Eaton & Struthers, 2006; Fincham & Beach, 2002; Jon et al., 2012; Naami et al., 2014). It is also shown that adolescents with lower relational aggression tend to regulate their emotions and forgive the anger they feel towards their friends in conflicts in peer relationships by spreading their emotions over time or changing the focus. Similarly, Eaton and Struthers (2006) state that forgiveness can prevent aggressive behaviors by regulating anger-like emotions and suggest that forgiveness can reduce aggression. Moreover, Camadan (2014) emphasizes that a low tendency to forgive leads to a preference for negative strategies in coping with stress and aggression. In this context, it is emphasized that forgiveness is critical when aggressive behaviors that may cause negative emotions are exhibited in friendships (Allemand et al., 2007). Therefore, it can be said that forgiveness plays an important role in repairing the hurt felt in conflicts experienced in close friendships.

One of the results of this study is the finding that emotion dysregulation negatively predicts forgiveness. In other words, forgiveness increases when difficulties in emotion regulation decrease. In the literature, there are research findings indicating that forgiveness is negatively predicted by emotion dysregulation (Derincegöz, 2019; Extremera & Rey, 2015; Hodgson & Wertheim, 2007; Küçük, 2016). In other words, individuals with difficulties in emotion regulation have lower levels of forgiveness. In cases where individuals have difficulty in emotion regulation, they may show more behaviors involving relational aggression instead of trying to forgive, because it can be said that having difficulties in regulating emotions, which is necessary for forgiveness to occur, is effective in the occurrence of relational aggression. Hodgson and Wertheim (2007) state that individuals with clearer emotions and self-regulating emotions tend to forgive. Dursun (2015) emphasizes that forgiveness decreases adolescents' negative emotions and increases their positive emotions. Mitrofan and Ciuluvica (2012) point out that unforgiveness and aggression are related and that emotion regulation is critical in preventing aggressive behaviors. In this context, it can be said that experiencing difficulties in regulating emotions that occur as a result of resentment and hurt experiences may lead to behaviors involving relational aggression.

5.1. Implications for theory and practice

In this study, it was found that forgiveness has a partial mediating role in the relationship between adolescents' emotion regulation difficulties and relational aggression behaviors. It was found that forgiveness constructs partially helped adolescents in case of difficulty regulating emotions due to the problems they experienced in their friendships. In other words, it was found that when adolescents had difficulty regulating emotion, they showed behaviors involving relational aggression instead of exhibiting forgiving behaviors. According to the findings of the study, it is seen that the regulation of emotions such as anger, resentment, and revenge is critical for adolescents to exhibit relational aggression. Accordingly, it can be said that when adolescents want to hurt or harm their close friends, they have difficulties in regulating (have difficulties regulating) their feelings of anger and revenge. They exhibit relational aggression because they cannot use their tendency to forgive as a protective factor. It was found that adolescents who exhibit behaviors involving relational aggression have limited access to emotion regulation strategies and have difficulties in creating alternative behaviors in case of negative emotions.

5.2. Limitations and directions for future research

Although the findings obtained from this study are valuable, the research also has some limitations. First, the data of this study were collected from students attending high schools in Eskişehir during the 2021-2022 academic year. Since it is thought that the variables addressed in the study may also be affected by cultural factors, it is thought that it may be useful to expand and renew the scope of the research with participants from different cultural regions in the future. Since the research was conducted using the cross-sectional method, the study variables could be measured once and instantaneously. Therefore, the data do not show changes that may occur over time. Since the data obtained could be collected once, it was limited to the current situation.

It was found that adolescents want to hurt or harm their friends as a result of the conflicts they experience in peer relationships and have difficulty in forgiving their peers. Accordingly, it is thought that it is important for guidance and counseling services in schools to identify students who show relational aggression behaviors and to conduct psycho-educational activities or individual interviews for these students. While preparing the content of psycho-educational activities, it is thought that it is important to emphasize the forgiveness process and the development of emotion regulation skills in addition to relational aggression. In the study, it was observed that adolescents had difficulties in forgiveness, especially in regulating anger. It is thought that the preparation of psycho-education or group counseling programs that aim to regulate the emotion of anger by differentiating its focus, providing impulse control, or spreading the emotion over time will contribute to the literature.

This study examined the relationship between relational aggression and emotion dysregulation. Since relational aggression is a new concept in the domestic literature, conducting further studies is recommended to uncover the relationships between relational aggression and various variables that may be risk factors. In this study, we explored the relationship between relational aggression and forgiveness. It is also recommended that the connections between relational aggression and other variables aside from forgiveness be studied, which is thought to be a protective factor in reducing relational aggression. According to the current study's findings, forgiveness was found to partially mediate between difficulties in emotion regulation and relational aggression. At this point, it is advisable to consider different variables that might play a partial or full mediating role in future research.

It was found that emotion regulation difficulties and forgiveness predicted adolescents' relational aggression. For this reason, it is thought to be important to prioritize preventive activities in school and classroom guidance activities in general and relational aggression in particular, while considering activities related to emotion regulation difficulties and forgiveness. In order to reduce the destructive effects of relational aggression, it is thought that it is critical to include parents and teachers, as well as students, in efforts to recognize, prevent, and reduce relational aggression. It is thought that it is important to overcome the limitation of the study due to the use of the cross-sectional method by using the longitudinal method. It is thought that repeating the study with the same data group in the future

with the longitudinal method and obtaining comparable data will contribute to the literature. Thus, it is thought that the change over time and the cause-and-effect relationship can be determined.

5. Conclusion

Within the scope of the study, the mediating role of forgiveness in the relationship between adolescents' emotion dysregulation and relational aggression was tested. It was found that there was a positive and significant relationship between relational aggression and emotion dysregulation. There was a negative and significant relationship between relational aggression and forgiveness. There was also a negative and significant relationship between forgiveness and difficulties in emotion regulation. Accordingly, in the model tested in the study, it was determined that adolescents' relational aggression was predicted by emotion dysregulation through forgiveness. In other words, forgiveness has a partial mediating role in the relationship between adolescents' emotion dysregulation and relational aggression. This finding indicates that when the adolescents included in the study experience emotion dysregulation, their forgiveness behaviors decrease and therefore their relational aggression increases.

Statement of Researchers

Researchers' contribution rate statement: Mehmet Şahan: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Investigation, Validation, Writing- original draft, Writing - review & editing, Data curation, Resources, Validation, Visualization, Formal analysis. Esra Ceyhan: Writing - review & editing, Validation, Software, Formal analysis, Project administration, Supervision.

Conflict statement: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Data Availability Statement: The data supporting this study's findings are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Acknowledgements: -

Funding: This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Ethical Considerations: Ethics committee approval (Annex-12-14/09/2021 dated and decision no. 142235) has been obtained from the Anadolu University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee for Social and Human Sciences.

Authors Biographies

Mehmet Şahan graduated from Gazi University, Faculty of Education, Department of Psychological Counseling and Guidance in 2004. In 2007, he completed his Master's Degree Program in Psychological Counseling and Guidance at Gazi University, Institute of Educational Sciences with his thesis titled "Investigation of some variables predicting aggression in high school students". In 2023, he completed his PhD thesis at Anadolu University, Institute of Educational Sciences, Department of Psychological Counseling and Guidance with the thesis titled "The mediating role of forgiveness in the relationship between emotion regulation difficulties and relational aggression in high school students: A mixed design study". He has been working as a guidance counselor at the Ministry of National Education since 2004. He is a member of Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Association.

Esra Ceyhan completed her bachelor's degree in psychology at Hacettepe University in 1988. In 1991, she started her career as a guidance counselor at the Ministry of National Education. In 1992, she completed her master's degree in guidance and psychological counseling program at Hacettepe University and her doctorate in 1999. Since 1994, she worked at the Ministry of National Education in the General Directorate of Special Education and Guidance Services, and in 1997, she started to work as a lecturer at Anadolu University. In 1999, she was appointed as an assistant professor in guidance and psychological counseling. She was promoted to associate professor in 2007 and professor in 2012 in guidance and psychological counseling. Currently, she continues her academic studies at Anadolu University, Faculty of Education, Department of Guidance and Psychological Counseling, and she is also the director of the university's psychological counseling and guidance center. In recent years, her studies have focused on psychological problems of university students, problematic internet use and personality.

6. References

- Adrian, M., Zeman, J., Erdley, C., Lisa, L., & Sim, L. (2011). Emotional dysregulation and interpersonal difficulties as risk factors for nonsuicidal self-injury in adolescent girls. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 39(3), 389-400. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10802-010-9465-3>
- Akdemir, H. (2019). *Duygu düzenleme becerileri psikoeğitim programının ergenlerin duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve reaktif-proaktif saldırganlıklarına etkisi* [The effect of emotional regulation skills psychoeducation program on the

- emotional regulation strength and reactive-proactive aggression of adolescents] (Publication No. 554298) [Master's thesis, Mersin University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Allemand, M., Amberg, I., Zimprich, D., & Fincham, F. D. (2007). The role of trait forgiveness and relationship satisfaction in episodic forgiveness. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 26*(2), 199-217. <https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2007.26.2.199>
- Archer, J., & Coyne, S. M. (2005). An integrated review of indirect, relational, and social aggression. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 9*(3), 212-230. <https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr090>
- Asıcı, E., & Karaca, R. (2018). Ergenler için Affetme Ölçeği (EAÖ): Bir ölçek geliştirme çalışması [Forgiveness Scale for Adolescents (FSA): A study of scale development]. *Electronic Turkish Studies, 13*(11). <http://dx.doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.13144>
- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51*, 1173-1182. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.51.6.1173>
- Bowie, B. H. (2010). Understanding the gender differences in pathways to social deviancy: Relational aggression and emotion regulation. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing, 24*(1), 27-37. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apnu.2009.04.007>
- Büyüköztürk, Ş., Kılıç Çakmak, E., Akgün, Ö. E., Karadeniz, Ş., & Demirel, F. (2013). *Bilimsel araştırma yöntemleri* (14. baskı) [Scientific research methods (14th ed.)]. Pegem.
- Caffarel, S. E. (2019). Vulnerable narcissism, difficulties in emotion regulation, and relational aggression in college students (Honors thesis, University of Southern Mississippi). The University of Southern Mississippi. https://aquila.usm.edu/honors_theses/673
- Camadan, F. (2014). *Üniversite öğrencilerinde gözlenen saldırganlık eğilimlerinin açıklanmasına dönük bir model* [A model for explanation of observed tendency of aggression in university students]. (Publication No. 381091) [Doctoral dissertation, Karadeniz Technical University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Casey, B. J., Jones, R. M. & Hare, T. A. (2008). The adolescent brain. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, 1124*(1), 111-126. <https://doi.org/10.1196/annals.1440.010>
- Chen, P., Coccaro, E. F., & Jacobson, K. C. (2012). Hostile attributional bias, negative emotional responding, and aggression in adults: Moderating effects of gender and impulsivity. *Aggressive Behavior, 38*(1), 47-63. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.21407>
- Christodoulou, V., Iliu, C., & Hadjigeorgiou, S. (2024). Can mindfulness and self-compassion protect from relational aggression and victimization in college? *Journal of College Student Mental Health, 39*(1), 24-48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/28367138.2024.2310222>
- Cole, P. M., Michel, M. K., & Teti, L. O. D. (1994). The development of emotion regulation and dysregulation: A clinical perspective. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 59*(2-3), 73-100. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1166139>
- Connor, D. F. (2004). *Aggression and antisocial behavior in children and adolescents: Research and treatment*. Guilford.
- Crick, N. R. & Grotpeter, J. K. (1995). Relational aggression, gender, and social psychological adjustment. *Child Development, 66*(3), 710-722. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1131945>
- Dane, A. V., & Marini, Z. A. (2014). Overt and relational forms of reactive aggression in adolescents: Relations with temperamental reactivity and self-regulation. *Personality and Individual Differences, 60*, 60-66. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2013.12.021>
- Derincegöz, N. (2019). *Üniversite öğrencilerinin ebeveyn kabul red algısı, benlik saygısı ve duygu düzenleme güçlüklerinin affetme düzeylerini yordamadaki rolü* [The role of perceived parental acceptance-rejection, self-esteem, and emotion regulation difficulties in predicting forgiveness levels of university students]. (Publication No. 564226) [Master's thesis, Ege University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Dursun, A. (2015). *Anne babası boşanmış ergenlerin öznel iyi oluşunu artırma programının etkililiğinin incelenmesi* [The effectiveness of a program that increases subjective well-being of adolescents whose parents are divorced]. (Publication No. 414496) [Master's thesis, Eskişehir Osmangazi University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Eaton, J. & Struthers, C. W. (2006). The reduction of psychological aggression across varied interpersonal contexts through repentance and forgiveness. *Aggressive Behavior, 32*(3), 195-206. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.20119>
- Ekşi, H. (2021). *Lise öğrencilerinde ebeveyn ilişkileri, duygu düzenleme güçlüğü, psikolojik kontrol ve saldırganlık arasındaki ilişkilerin incelenmesi* [Investigation of the relations between parental relationships, emotional dysregulation, psychological control and aggression in high school students]. (Publication No. 665529) [Master's thesis, Maltepe University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Enright, R. D., Gassin, E.A. & Wu, C. (1992). Forgiveness: A developmental view. *Journal of Moral Education, 21*(2), 99-114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305724920210202>

- Enright, R. D., & Fitzgibbons, R. P. (2000). *Helping clients forgive: An empirical guide for resolving anger and restoring hope*. American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10381-000>
- Erdoğan, S. (2009). *Okul öncesi dönem çocuklarında fiziksel ve ilişkisel saldırganlığın çeşitli değişkenler açısından incelenmesi* [An examination of physical and relational aggression of preschool children in terms of various variables]. (Publication No.426254) [Master's thesis, Ankara University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Ersan, C. (2017). *Okul öncesi dönem çocuklarının saldırganlık düzeylerinin duygu ifade etme ve duygu düzenleme açısından incelenmesi* [An investigation into preschool children's level of aggression in terms of emotion expression and emotion regulation]. (Publication No.481788) [Doctoral dissertation, Pamukkale University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Extremera, N., & Rey, L. (2015). The moderator role of emotion regulation ability in the link between stress and well-being. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6, 1632. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01632>
- Flack, T. (2017). Relational aggressive behaviour: The contributions of status stress and status goals. *Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties*, 22(2), 127–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2016.1255428>
- Fincham, F. D. & Beach, S. R. H. (2002). Forgiveness in marriage: Implications for psychological aggression and constructive communication. *Personal Relationships*, 9(3), 239-251. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6811.00016>
- Freedman, S. (2018) Forgiveness as an educational goal with at-risk adolescents. *Journal of Moral Education*, 47(4), 415–431. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2017.1399869>
- George, D., & Mallery, P. (2016). Frequencies. In *IBM SPSS statistics 23 step by step* (pp. 115-125). Routledge.
- Gomes, M.M. A. (2007). Concept analysis of relational aggression. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 14(5), 510-515. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2850.2007.01120.x>
- Gratz, K. L., & Roemer, L. (2004). Multidimensional assessment of emotion dysregulation: Development, factor structure, and initial validation of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*, 26(1), 41- 54. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:JOBA.0000007455.08539.94>
- Gratz, K. L., Rosenthal, M. Z., Tull, M. T., Lejuez, C. W., & Gunderson, J. G. (2006). An experimental investigation of emotion dysregulation in borderline personality disorder. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 115(4), 850-855. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-843X.115.4.850>
- Griffin, R. S., & Gross, A.M. (2004). Childhood bullying: Current empirical findings and future directions for research. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 9(4), 379-400. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1359-1789\(03\)00033-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1359-1789(03)00033-8)
- Gross, J. J. (2013). Emotion regulation: Taking stock and moving forward. *Emotion*, 13(3), 359–365. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032135>
- Grotzinger, J. K. & Crick, N. R. (1996). Relational aggression, overt aggression, and friendship. *Child Development*, 67(5), 2328-2338. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1131626>
- Gülüm, B. (2022). *Üniversite öğrencilerinde duygu düzenleme, affetme ve kişilerarası problem çözme arasındaki ilişkilerin incelenmesi* [Investigation the relationship between emotion regulation, forgiveness and interpersonal problem solving in university students]. (Publication No.766240) [Master's thesis, Çukurova University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Gürbüz, S. (2021). *Sosyal bilimlerde aracı, düzenleyici ve durumsal etki analizleri* (2. baskı) [Mediating, moderating, and conditional effect analyses in social sciences (2nd ed.)]. Seçkin Yayıncılık.
- Hargrave, T. D., & Sells, J. N. (1997). The development of a forgiveness scale. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 23(1), 41-62. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0606.1997.tb00230.x>
- Hicks, S. (2018). *The role of emotion regulation in the relationship between trait anger and relational aggression* [Master's thesis, University of Southern Mississippi]. The Aquila Digital Community. https://aquila.usm.edu/masters_theses/369/
- Hodgson, L. K., & Wertheim, E. H. (2007). Does good emotion management aid forgiving? Multiple dimensions of empathy, emotion management, and forgiveness of self and others. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 24(6), 931–949. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407507084191>
- İkiz, S. (2015). *Okul öncesi dönem çocuklarında fiziksel ve ilişkisel saldırganlığın ebeveyn tutumları açısından incelenmesi* [Examination of physical and relational aggression of preschool children in terms of parental attitudes]. (Publication No. 394906) [Master's thesis, Adnan Menderes University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Jiang, S., & Dong, L. (2022). Social control and self-control: A serial mediation model from economic hardship to juvenile aggression. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(5-6), NP3175-NP3200. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520948152>
- Jon, R.W., Chris S. D., & Ken B. (2012). Forgiveness and aggression among college students. *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*, 14(1), 38-58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19349637.2012.642669>

- Karaaslan, N. (2019). *Üniversite öğrencilerinde ilişkisel saldırganlık: Karanlık üçlü kişilik özelliklerinin rolü* [Relational aggression among university students: The role of dark triad traits]. (Publication No. 591598) [Master's thesis, Mersin University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Karasar, N. (2015). *Bilimsel araştırma yöntemi* (28. baskı) [Scientific research method (28th ed.)]. Nobel Yayınları.
- Karataş, U. Y. (2020). *Affetmemenin yordayıcıları olarak çocukluk çağı travmaları ve bilişsel duygu düzenlemenin incelenmesi* [Investigation of childhood traumas and cognitive emotion regulation as the predictors of unforgiveness]. (Publication No. 630360) [Master's thesis, Pamukkale University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Kawabata, Y., Alink, L.R.A., Tseng, W., Van IJendoorn, M.H. & Crick, N.R., (2011). Maternal and paternal parenting styles associated with relational aggression in children and adolescents: A conceptual analysis and meta-analytic review. *Developmental Review*, 31(4), 240-78. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2011.08.001>
- Kayhan, H. (2017). *Ergenlikte saldırganlık ve duygu düzenleme güçlükleri arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi* [Investigating the relationship between difficulties in emotion regulation and aggression in adolescence]. (Publication No. 495593) [Master's thesis, Maltepe University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Kılıç, C. (2022). *Ergenlerde antisosyal davranışlar: Koruyucu faktörler ve risk faktörleri* [Adolescents' antisocial behaviors: Protective and risk factors]. (Publication No. 721728) [Doctoral dissertation, Hacettepe University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Kim, A. Y., Rose, C. A., Hopkins, S., Mc Cree, N., & Romero, M. (2022). Survey of secondary youth on relational aggression: Impact of bullying, social status, and attitudes. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth*, 66(3), 285-295. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1045988X.2022.2070589>
- Kokkinos, C. M., Algiovannoglou, I. & Voulgaridou, I. (2019). Emotion regulation and relational aggression in adolescents: Parental attachment as moderator. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 28, 3146-3160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-019-01491-9>
- Kulaksızoğlu, A. (2001). *Ergenlik psikolojisi* (4. baskı) [Adolescent psychology (4th ed.)]. Remzi Kitabevi.
- Kurnaz, A., & Kapçı E. G. (2013). Akran saldırganlığı ve mağduriyetinin psiko-sosyal değişkenler açısından incelenmesi [An examination of peer aggression and victimization in relation to psycho-social variables]. *Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Dergisi*, 46(1), 317-342. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/auebfd/issue/38381/445049>
- Kurtyılmaz, Y. (2011). *Üniversite öğrencilerinin ilişkisel saldırganlık ile benlik saygısı, sosyal bağlılık ve sosyal kaygı düzeyleri arasındaki ilişkiler* [Relationships among relational aggression and self-esteem, social connectedness and social anxiety levels of university students]. (Publication No. 286823) [Doctoral dissertation, Anadolu University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Kurtyılmaz, Y., Şahan, M. & Ceyhan, E. (2022). Arkadaşlık ilişkilerinde ilişkisel saldırganlık ölçeğinin ergenlerde geçerlik ve güvenirlik çalışması [Validity and reliability study of relational aggression scale for adolescents]. *Turkish Journal of Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 29(2), 116-124. <https://doi.org/10.4274/tjcamh.galenos.2022.77699>
- Küçüker, D. (2016). *Affetme, affetmeme, bilişsel esneklik, duygu düzenleme ve yaşam doyumu arasındaki ilişkilerin incelenmesi* [The investigation of the relationships among forgiveness, unforgiveness, cognitive flexibility, emotion regulation and satisfaction with life]. (Publication No. 445687) [Master's thesis, Pamukkale University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Kyranides, M. N., Mirman, J. H., & Sawrikar, V. (2024). Verbal, physical and relational aggression: Individual differences in emotion and cognitive regulation strategies. *Current Psychology*, 43, 17673-17683. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-024-05724-z>
- Linder, J. R., Crick, N. R. & Collins, W. A. (2002). Relational aggression and victimization in young adults' romantic relationships: Associations with perceptions of parent, peer, and romantic relationship quality. *Social Development*, 11(1), 69-86. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9507.00187>
- Lu, T., Jin, S., Li, L., Niu, L., Chen, X., & French, D. C. (2018). Longitudinal associations between popularity and aggression in Chinese middle and high school adolescents. *Developmental Psychology*, 54(12), 2291-2301. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000591>
- Mayeux, L. (2014). Understanding popularity and relational aggression in adolescence: The role of social dominance orientation. *Social Development*, 23(3), 502-517. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sode.12054>
- McCullough, M. E., Exline, J. J., & Baumeister, R. F. (1998). An annotated bibliography of research on forgiveness and related concepts. *Dimensions of Forgiveness: Psychological Research and Theological Perspectives*, 1, 193-317.
- McCullough, M. E. (2000). Forgiveness as human strength: Theory, measurement, and links to well-being. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 19(1), 43-55. <https://doi.org/10.1521/jsoc.2000.19.1.43>
- McLaughlin, K. A., Hatzenbuehler, M. L., Mennin, D. S., & Nolen-Hoeksema, S. (2011). Emotion dysregulation and adolescent psychopathology: A prospective study. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 49(9), 544-554. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brat.2011.06.003>.

- Miller, A. J., & Worthington Jr, E. L. (2010). Sex differences in forgiveness and mental health in recently married couples. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 5(1), 12-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760903271140>
- Mitrofan, N., & Ciuluvică, C. (2012). Anger and hostility as indicators of emotion regulation and of the life satisfaction at the beginning and the ending period of the adolescence. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 33, 65-69. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.01.084>
- Naami, A., Asgari, P. & Roshani, K. (2014). Predicting collegiate students' aggression based on the amount of forgiveness and their belief in a just/unjust world. *Journal of Life Science and Biomedicine*, 4(1), 4-8. <https://jlsb.science-line.com/vol-4-no-1-jan-2014.html>
- Orathinkal, J., & Vansteenwegen, A. (2006). The effect of forgiveness on marital satisfaction in relation to marital stability. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 28, 251-260. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10591-006-9006-y>
- Özdoğan, A. Ç. (2017). *Ergenlerde reaktif-proaktif saldırganlık ile ebeveyn duygusal erişilebilirliği: Duygu düzenleme güçlüğü'nün aracı rolü* [Reactive - proactive aggression and parents emotion availability in adolescents: The mediator role of emotion regulation difficulties]. (Publication No. 454415) [Master's thesis, Çukurova University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Roberton, T., Daffern, M. & Bucks, R. S. (2012). Emotion regulation and aggression. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 17(1) 72-82. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2011.09.006>
- Röll, J., Koglin, U., & Petermann, F. (2012). Emotion regulation and childhood aggression: Longitudinal associations. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development*, 43, 909- 923. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10578-012-0303-4>
- Preacher, K. J. & Kelley, K. (2011). Effect size measures for mediation models: Quantitative strategies for communicating indirect effects. *Psychological Methods*, 16(2), 93-115. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022658>
- Sarıtaş, D., & Gençöz, T. (2011). Psychometric properties of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS) in a Turkish adolescent sample. In *12th European Congress of Psychology*. Istanbul, Turkey.
- Skripkauskaitė, S., Hawk, S. T., Branje, S. J., Koot, H. M., Van Lier, P. A., & Meeus, W. (2015). Reactive and proactive aggression: Differential links with emotion regulation difficulties, maternal criticism in adolescence. *Aggressive Behavior*, 41(3), 214-226. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.21583>
- Steinberg, L. (2007). *Ergenlik* [Adolescence] (F. Çok, Ed.). İmge.
- Sullivan, T. N., Helms, S. W., Kliwer, W., & Goodman, K. L. (2010). Associations between sadness and anger regulation coping, emotional expression, and physical and relational aggression among urban adolescents. *Social Development*, 19(1), 30-51. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9507.2008.00531.x>
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Experimental designs using ANOVA*. Thomson/Brooks Cole.
- Tackett, J. L., Kushner, S. C., Herzhoff, K., Smack, A. J., & Reardon, K. W. (2014). Viewing relational aggression through multiple lenses: Temperament, personality, and personality pathology. *Development and Psychopathology*, 26(3), 863-877. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579414000443>
- Thompson, R. A. (1994). Emotion regulation: A theme in search of definition. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 59(2-3), 25-52. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1166137>
- Turner, S. A. (2007). *Reality television and relational aggression*. (Publication No. 3286893.) [Doctoral dissertation, Indiana University of Pennsylvania]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Tuzgöl, M. (1998). *Ana-baba tutumları farklı lise öğrencilerinin saldırganlık düzeylerinin çeşitli değişkenler açısından incelenmesi* [Examining aggressiveness levels of high school students whose parents have different attitudes in terms of various variables]. (Publication No. 73627) [Master's thesis, Hacettepe University]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center.
- Verlinden, S., Hersen, M. & Thomas, J. (2000). Risk factors in school shootings. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 20(1), 13-56. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-7358\(99\)00055-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-7358(99)00055-0)
- Vernon, A. (1993). *Developmental assessment and intervention with children and adolescents*. American Counseling Association.
- Yamhure Thompson, L., Snyder, C. R., & Hoffman, L. (2005). *Heartland Forgiveness Scale* (Faculty Publications, Department of Psychology, No. 452). University of Nebraska-Lincoln Digital Commons. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/psychfacpub/452>
- Young, E. L., Boye, A. E., & Nelson, D. A. (2006). Relational aggression: Understanding, identifying, and responding in schools. *Psychology in the Schools*, 43(3), 297-312. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.20148>