






## In-Service Teacher Training Program Development Study to Prevent Peer Bullying<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

Peer bullying is a problem that is difficult to notice and is increasingly affecting the health of society. Responding to peer bullying requires the determination and intense effort of school administrators, teachers, parents, and other school staff. Teachers who feel more competent about bullying are more likely to intervene in situations of bullying and victimization situations. However, many teachers have difficulty diagnosing bullying, do not know how to cope with bullying, or have trouble applying coping methods. This study aims to introduce the in-service teacher training program to prevent peer bullying. This program was developed using a problem-centered education program design. The content was determined with a thematic approach. The values emphasized by this program, the tools and methods it proposes, and the outcomes of the program reflect the progressive and existentialist perspectives. As a result of the evaluation of the program, it was seen that the in-service training program effectively improved teachers' competencies by increasing their awareness of peer bullying and combating bullying. It is recommended that future studies should be conducted in broad scope, including developing the competencies of teachers in dealing with cyberbullying that increased during online education.

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## Introduction

Today, school violence, especially peer bullying, which is frequently emphasized to prevent and reduce, continues to be a global problem. Large-scale international studies conducted in recent years (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2017; United Nations International Children's Emergency Found [UNICEF], 2018; Yıldırım, Özgürlük, Parlak, Gönen & Polat,

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2016) reveals that bullying, especially among primary and secondary school students in Turkey, is an undeniably widespread problem. Bullying is the deliberate and regular use of force, coercion, psychological or physical harm, or threatening by an individual to behave aggressively towards, dominate or suppress another individual they consider less powerful than themselves.

Exposure to bullying negatively affects the psychological, social, spiritual, and emotional state of the individual in childhood, youth, and even adulthood for a long time. Studies in both education and psychology show that bullying causes many health problems and mental problems in victims, bullies, and bystanders (Alikaşifoğlu & Ercan, 2007; Copeland, Wolke, Angold & Costello, 2013; deLara 2016; 2019; DeVooght et al., 2015; Espelage, Hong & Mebane, 2016; Lehti et al., 2011; Lereya, Copeland, Costello & Wolke, 2015; Ttofi, Farrington, Lösel & Loeber, 2011; UNICEF, 2018). Regardless of role, being involved in a bullying situation can increase the risk of developing psychotic experiences during adolescence (Wolke, Lereya, Fisher, Lewis & Zammit, 2014). Both short-term and long-term adverse effects of bullying on the health and behavior of the three actors-bully, victim and bystander - involved in the bullying incident are summarized below.

### **The Effects of Bullying on Victims, Bullies, and Bystanders**

*Victims of bullying* often experience low academic achievement, higher rates of depression, decreased self-esteem, and difficulties with lifelong interpersonal relationships. Victims may also show disappointment, anger, and aggressive behavior. In addition, the physical health of children exposed to bullying is adversely affected (Bogart et al., 2014). Baldwin, Arseneault and Danese (2015) state that children who experience continuing bullying experience more obesity problems. Victims may also have sleep disorders, gastrointestinal problems, headaches, palpitations, and chronic pains (Chen, Chen, Zhu, Chan & Ip, 2018; Ford, King, Priest & Kavanagh, 2017; Gini & Pozzoli, 2013; Hunter, Durkin, Boyle, Booth & Rasmussen, 2014; van Geel, Vedder & Tanilon, 2014).

*Children who bully* are at higher risk of developing psychosomatic disturbances (e.g. aches and pains, insomnia, indigestion) than peers who do not bully (Gini & Pozzoli, 2009). Bullies are more prone to commit suicide than individuals who have never been involved in bullying, and children displaying bullying behavior have a greater risk of developing depression (Roland, 2002). According to psychopathology, which examines the causes, development, course, classification and treatment of mental disorders, bullying is one of the lowest level disorders. Bullies have a purpose (e.g. to hurt someone, to become more popular, to achieve and/or maintain hegemony) and for this purpose they plan how to attack their victims, that is, they use aggression instrumentally (Rodkin, Espelage & Hanish, 2015; Vaillancourt, Hymel & McDougall, 2003).

Studies show that, as well as victims and bullies, *bystanders/witnesses/viewers* may also be at psychological risk. Bystanders' physical health, mental health, and even academic success are affected by the bullying incident (Polanin, Espelage & Pigott, 2012). Witnessing bullying causes many emotions and stress that can harm the bystander, such as anxiety, fear of uncertainty, and guilt (Sprigg, Niven, Dawson, Farley & Armitage, 2019). Students who witness bullying avoid intervening and helping out because they may become victims, and the bully might retaliate (Musher-Eizenman et al., 2004; Unnever & Cornell, 2003).

The problems caused by the exposure of bullying events are not limited to school life, on the contrary, the negative effects of bullying last throughout the lives of individuals and negatively affect public health (Copeland et al., 2013; Wolke et al., 2015). The fact that bullying has negative consequences, up to the suicide of the individual, makes bullying a syndrome in schools (Yaman, Eroğlu & Peker, 2011; Yelboğa & Koçak, 2019). Since peer bullying is a complex and increasing problem, the assumption that bullying is a harmless and insignificant situation arising from the nature of childhood and ignoring its adverse effects can cause irreversible social problems. Training programs are developed and implemented in many countries to prevent, reduce and combat bullying.

### School-Based Anti-Bullying Programs

The international literature shows that school-based anti-bullying programs effectively reduce both bullying and victimization of bullying (Gaffney, Ttofi & Farrington, 2019; Salmivalli, Poskiparta, Ahtola & Haataja, 2013; Thompson & Smith, 2014). Anti-bullying programs are widely implemented in public schools in Australia and the United States in many European countries, especially in Scandinavian countries (Finland, Norway), Greece and Italy. Norwegian researcher Olweus was the person who carried out the first systematic study of the bullying intervention program in the 1980s. The Norwegian Government supports this program aims to decrease bullying by rearrangement school classes and reward positive behavior. The KiVa program used in Finland, on the other hand, uses virtual learning methods and assigns students who defend victims and stand up to bullies as high-status peers (Thompson & Smith, 2014).

Violence and peer bullying in schools has become a national problem in Turkey. The Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE/Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı [MEB]) issued circulars in 1995, 2003, 2005 and 2006 to prevent violence in schools. In line with the 2006 circular, a "Committee for the Prevention of Violence" was established in each school in order to develop action plans for the prevention of violence (MEB, 2014). When the literature examined, it has been recognized that the number of studies on combating bullying in Turkey is limited, and primarily experimental studies are based on small samples and there are initiatives at a local level (Dölek, 2002; Karataş, 2011; Kartal & Bilgin, 2007). In 2013, Ankara-Çankaya Counseling Research Center attempted to initiate a national anti-bullying program. However, this program could not be successfully implemented, as comprehensive training for teachers and guidance counselors could not be provided and the content of the program could not be determined precisely (Ertunç, Yogev & Kılıç, 2013). Although peer bullying in schools is seen as a fundamental problem in the Turkish Education System, action plans could not be implemented at the national level, and teachers were not provided with adequate support in this regard. VSC bullying prevention is an evidence-based prevention program that promises success, but it is suitable for secondary school level (Doğan et al., 2017). The increase in violence in schools makes these institutions, not places where safe education can be obtained (MEB, 2015).

Preventing or reducing peer bullying requires the commitment and intensive effort of school administrators, teachers, parents, and other school staff. Bullying will continue when any bullying prevention/response program is implemented without adult leadership. Bullying cannot be addressed as an individual's self-regulation, so adult involvement and emphasis are required. Adults are the cornerstone of combating bullying. They are effective both in developing the bullying prevention program, implementing the program, and reinforcing students' positive attitudes towards bullying (Padgett & Notar, 2013).

On the other hand, when adults view bullying as part of development, normalize and ignore it, the likelihood of bullying increases. The lack of awareness of adults about peer bullying and their incomplete or misconceptions about the nature and extent of bullying makes it difficult to identify and prevent cases of bullying. According to (Brendtro, 2001) most teachers (96%) ignore subtle forms of aggression (such as verbal bullying) even if they notice the behavior, hoping or thinking that students will solve the problem on their own. If adults at school underestimate, ignore, or tolerate bullying, it causes victims to adopt the unspoken message that adults underestimate their worth and bring that message to maturity (Clarke & Kiselica, 1997).

In other words, bullying incidents result more negatively when parents ignore the problem and tell children to stop spying or solve the problem on their own (Davis & Nixon, 2011). Similarly, Yoon and Bauman (2014) state that teachers have an important responsibility in the management of classroom bullying. Teachers must not underestimate the seriousness of reported or observed bullying to identify, reduce and solve the verbal and nonverbal bullying (Rose, Monda-Amaya & Espelage, 2011).

However, teachers have difficulties identifying/diagnosing bullying and do not know how to cope with bullying, and even if they do, they have problems applying these methods (Mishna, Scarcello,

Pepler, & Wiener, 2005). The fact that bullies are attractive members of the peer group or rank high in valued qualities and competencies such as being good athletes (Farmer, Estell, Bishop, O'Neal & Cairns, 2003; Kaloyirou & Lindsay, 2008; Rigby & Slee, 2008; Vaillancourt et al., 2003) makes it difficult for teachers to identify/ diagnose bullies. Teachers do not know the methods of coping with bullying, and even if they do, they have problems applying these methods. Since some bullies are loved/famous students at school or classroom, teachers sometimes fail to recognize their bullying behaviors or ignore the behaviors of these students (Hammel, 2008). In addition, although teachers can easily recognize physical and direct bullying because it is visible, they have trouble recognizing indirect bullying (Dedousis-Wallace & Shute, 2009). The fact that bystanders as well as the bullies and the victims in the bullying cases make these events even more complicated. Therefore, teachers feel perplexed, uncertain of what to do, and behave inefficiently (Gerber & Solari, 2005).

The literature shows that teachers intervene more when they believe they can reduce bullying (Duong & Bradshaw, 2013; Williford & Depaolis, 2016; Yoon & Bauman, 2014). It is vital to involve teachers in programs or studies that try to comprehend and stop bullying (Bauman, Rigby & Hoppa, 2008; Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008) because when it comes to lack of education, knowledge, or competencies, teachers are unsuccessful in struggling with bullying (Fekkes, Pijpers & Verloove-Vanhorick, 2005).

Han and Weiss (2005) state that teachers' self-efficacy, the level and type of education they receive, and their perceived efficacy beliefs affect their adoption and use of intervention methods aimed at behavioral and emotional change of students. Teachers become more effective and confident in dealing with victimization issues, especially if they deal with bullying issues and actively participate in prevention projects. In this respect, the study aims to introduce the bullying prevention in-service teacher training program, developed to support teachers and school staff who want to uncover the frequency, type, and causes of bullying in schools, seeking ways to create a peaceful classroom and school atmosphere to enhance a safer learning and teaching process.

### **In-Service Teacher Training Program to Prevent Peer Bullying**

Teachers should consider themselves competent to determine the frequency and types of peer bullying events in schools and intervene in peer bullying. When teachers feel knowledgeable and competent about bullying, they are more likely to intervene in situations of bullying and victimization situations. Teachers can develop their competencies through unique training opportunities that focus on identifying the bullying situation, highlighting the dynamics of the problem, and offering the best intervention strategies (de Luca, Nocentini & Menesini, 2019). Taneri, Özbek, and Akduman (2020) developed an in-service teacher training program within the scope of the Scientific Research Project to improve teachers' competencies in combating peer bullying. The program development process is described in detail below:

## **Method**

### **Development Process of In-service Teacher Training Program to Prevent Peer Bullying**

The development process of In-service Teacher Training Program to Prevent Peer Bullying involves the selection of objectives (outcomes), content, learning, and teaching experiences (e.g., teaching methods, techniques, and materials), as well as organizing and evaluating these experiences to reveal how effective they are in achieving the set goals. As this program aims to provide teachers with knowledge and experience on dealing with and solving peer bullying, care has been taken to make it a flexible and inclusive program that emphasizes social justice, democratic lifestyle, equality, and social peace, and is open to change.

Problem-centered curriculum design was used in the development of the in-service teacher training program. Learning, which is an integrated, active, and constructive process, is not independent of social and contextual factors (Vasuthavan & Kunaratnam, 2017). Problem-centered curriculum design

is a design that "...empowers learners to research, integrate theory and practice, and apply knowledge and skills to develop a viable solution to a defined problem" (Savery, 2006, p.12).

While determining the components of the in-service teacher training curriculum for the prevention of peer bullying, the social processes and social relations that have the potential to affect peer bullying were examined by making use of the findings of both sociology, psychology and educational sciences. In this context, theories about child development, violence and peer bullying from sociological perspective, school climate and exposure to bullying are discussed. In addition, current research on the relationship between staying together, developing a peaceful, safe and meaningful society, inclusive education, democratic education, effective learning-teaching principles, behavior and classroom management, conflict resolution methods, and effective bullying intervention programs is reviewed.

This training program aims to help teachers develop skills that can be transferred to the natural classroom environment, take the initiative to prevent bullying, and become a part of the solution. In this respect, while designing the learning and teaching component of the curriculum, the training needs of teachers were taken into account. Teachers need a new political and pedagogical language to address the problems facing schools. In this respect, this training program has been designed with the critical perspective defined by Giroux (2004). In other words, this training program aims to provide teachers with the skills, knowledge, and competencies they need to create a peaceful environment at school, recognize exclusionary and discriminatory behavior patterns, and fight bullying in school and the classroom, and act accordingly.

In-Service Teacher Training Program to Prevent Peer Bullying is expected to help teachers accept their responsibilities in reducing and preventing bullying and how the methods used in responding to cases of bullying affect the course of bullying. The curriculum development process took about three years. It includes one year of preparation and literature review, one year of needs analysis, development and determination of teaching materials, and one year of implementation and evaluation of the program's impact. The steps of the development process of the In-Service Teacher Training Program to Prevent Peer Bullying shown in Figure 1 are explained in detail below:

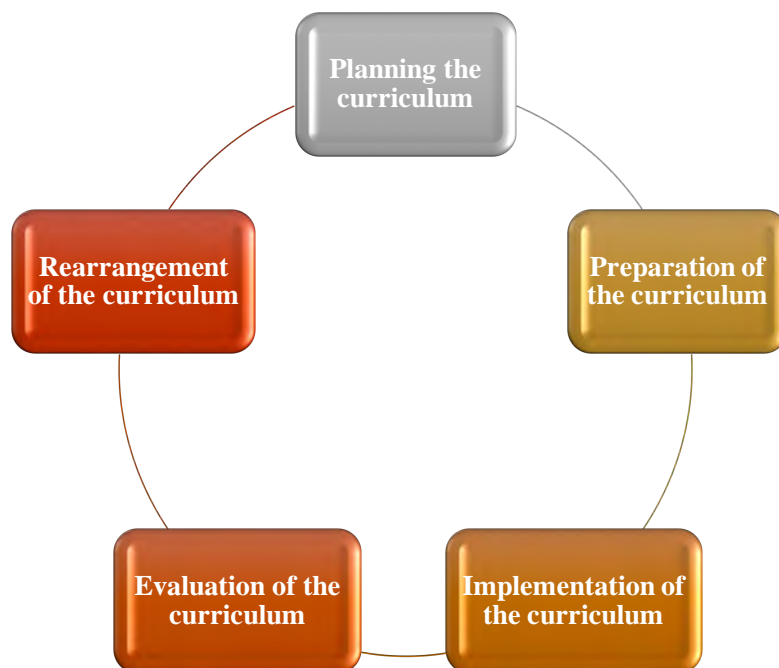


Figure 1. Curriculum development process

### Stage I: Planning the Curriculum

This study started with examining the literature on the increase in bullying events in schools in Turkey. The literature on the increase in peer bullying incidents and intervention studies in Turkey and the world was reviewed, and it was seen that the role of adults, especially teachers, was emphasized in the success of intervention programs. In order to determine the need for a teacher training program for the prevention of peer bullying, participants of this study were determined by the convenience sampling method. In convenience sampling, members of the universe are sampled because they are "convenient" data sources for researchers. In other saying, convenience sampling is a non-random or nonprobability sampling in which the members of the population planned to be reached are selected as suitable for the study if they meet predetermined criteria such as convenience at a specific place, a particular time, easy accessibility, geographical closeness, or eagerness to volunteer (Lavrakas, 2008). In this study, schools close to the institution where the second researcher works were selected. In the telephone interview with Çankırı Provincial Directorate of National Education, three primary schools with the highest number of students and guidance teachers in the city center were determined. So as to increase the generalizability of the research findings, the only private school in the province was included in the study. The study group of this research consists of 115 participants working in three public primary schools and a private school in the Çankırı province. The participants consist of 99 classroom teachers, 14 school counselors, and two school administrators. Most of the participants (89%) work in public schools.

A work schedule was developed by establishing a program development team for preventing peer bullying. The planning stage is shown in Figure 2.

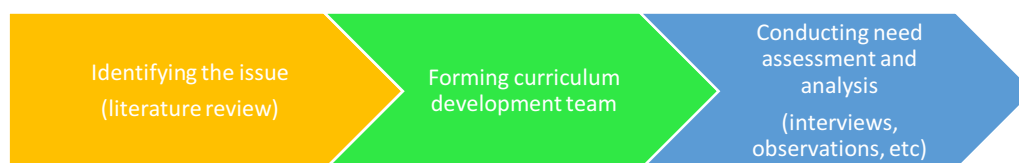


Figure 2. *The Planning Stage of Curriculum development process*

In order to establish the objectives of the in-service teacher training program realistically, a needs analysis was conducted through interviews with teachers, school administrators, and school counselors, unstructured observations, document analysis, informal discussions, and conversations. In addition, the current situation regarding the handling of the issue of peer bullying has been examined. First, the national and international literature on the definition, types, causes, and consequences of peer bullying was reviewed (Arslan, 2015; Çankaya, 2011; Dölek, 2002; Karataş, 2011; Kartal & Bilgin, 2007; Pişkin, 2010; Ünalmiş & Şahin, 2012). Then, peer bullying intervention programs were examined, and the characteristics of successful programs were reviewed. There are many different bullying intervention methods in the literature, but according to Taneri, Özbek and Şahin (2019), the most commonly used bullying methods are school-based, peer-supported, and group intervention methods. As a result of the literature review, it was seen that the programs in the fight against bullying, which focused on a single actor of bullying, were unsuccessful.

As a result of the literature review, it has been revealed that the characteristics of successful intervention programs are as follows: having a school-wide approach, evaluating bullying frequently (e.g., administering an anonymous bullying survey to students), involve staff and parents in the new bullying program, creating a team for coordination, providing leadership for implementing a bullying program, adopting an anti-bullying policy at school, establishing and enforcing school rules, and having supervisors where bullying occurs most often, conducting follow-up meetings to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of the bullying prevention program, and integrating the bullying program into the curriculum (Bossenmeyer, 2014; Olweus, 1993; Wang, Berry & Swearer, 2013).

## Stage II: Preparation of the Curriculum

The determination of the program's objectives (outcomes), content, teaching methods, techniques and materials, and evaluation methods was realized at this stage. Philosophy is the beginning of the decision-making process regarding the curriculum and is the basis for all subsequent decisions regarding the curriculum (Goodlad, 1979). In this respect, the values emphasized, the tools and methods proposed, and the outcomes of the curriculum were determined to reflect the progressive and existential perspective. In this curriculum developed with a thematic approach, emphasis is placed on the importance of change, individual differences, learning by doing-living and lifelong learning, critical thinking, group work, collaborative learning, development of social skills, adoption of democratic values, and the emancipation of individuals. However, the freedom mentioned here focuses not only on the free choices of the individual but also on being an individual who feels competent and autonomous in the face of social problems. Since the target audience of the training program is teachers, care has been taken to ensure that it is a curriculum that can respond to individual differences, needs, attitudes, values, beliefs, and interests of the teachers are connected with real-life experiences. They are consistent and compatible with working conditions.

In line with the needs determined in the planning phase of the curriculum, it was foreseen which issues should be included in the in-service training program. In the In-Service Training Program, which is planned to last for three days, 26 outcomes are planned to be achieved in 6 lesson hours per day (18 lesson hours in total) (Table 1).

The content of the training program includes (1) raising awareness about peer bullying, (2) types of peer bullying, (3) national and international statistics on peer bullying, (4) definition of peer bullying, (5) well-known mistakes about peer bullying, (6) introduction of bibliotherapy as an intervention method with peer bullying, (7) sample bibliotherapy applications, (8) integration of bibliotherapy method with the official curricula of the Ministry of Education, (9) introduction and design of teaching materials to be used in the classroom to recognize and prevent peer bullying, and (10) introducing the primary school education program to prevent peer bullying.

In the literature examined while preparing the learning-teaching activities of the curriculum, it was seen that the widely used approaches in adult education programs are self-directed learning (Tough, 1971), andragogy (Knowles, 1988), perspective transformation theory (Mezirow, 1978); and experiential learning (Candy, 1980). Considering that each of the teachers participating in the training program has different learning styles, the focus has been on providing various ways to ensure that all teachers achieve the program's goals. The curriculum included creative drama and bibliotherapy activities that allow participants to choose activities according to their learning styles and preferences, share and provide mutual assistance, require active participation such as creating and producing ideas and behaviors and provide feedback. Bibliotherapy and creative drama are effective methods in combating peer bullying (Taneri, Özbek, Şahin, & Akduman, 2019). In this respect, besides traditional teaching methods like a lecture, question, and answer, creative drama techniques such as warm-up games, still images, creative writing, animation, painting, and group work were frequently included in this curriculum. Although the most valuable teaching material used in the activities is the imagination and creativity of the participants, background cardboard, crayons, different sized papers, scissors, videos on peer bullying, picture books, and PowerPoint presentations were also used.

Table 1. *Outcomes of In-service Teacher Training Program for Preventing Peer Bullying*

<i>Day</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
1	Six	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explains the basic concepts of peer bullying.</li> <li>2. Identifies three essential elements (willfulness, power imbalance, and persistence) that determine a behavior as bullying.</li> <li>3. Defines the actors involved in peer bullying (bully, victim, audience).</li> <li>4. Defines the types of peer bullying.</li> <li>5. Realizes the frequency of peer bullying.</li> <li>6. Gives examples from his own life about peer bullying.</li> <li>7. Discusses the well-known mistakes of peer bullying.</li> <li>8. Explains the difference between peer bullying and violence.</li> <li>9. Realizes the areas where peer bullying occurs most frequently in school/classroom.</li> <li>10. Determines the precautions to be taken in the areas where peer bullying occurs most frequently in the school/classroom.</li> </ol>
2	Six	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discusses the reasons for peer bullying.</li> <li>2. Realizes the behavioral, psychological, and physiological effects of peer bullying.</li> <li>3. Realizes the victimization of students who are exposed to peer bullying and watching.</li> <li>4. Explains the ways of compensating students who are exposed to peer bullying and watching.</li> <li>5. Discusses the features of peer bullying prevention programs.</li> <li>6. Defines the stages of the bibliotherapy method.</li> <li>7. Realizes how to use the bibliotherapy method to prevent peer bullying in the classroom.</li> <li>8. Discusses the ways of integrating the bibliotherapy method with the official curricula of the Ministry of Education.</li> </ol>
3	Six	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Defines the teacher's responsibilities in dealing with peer bullying.</li> <li>2. Plans activities that will develop conscious awareness of peer bullying in students.</li> <li>3. Prepare activities for selected storybooks using the bibliotherapy method to prevent peer bullying.</li> <li>4. Designs materials to increase awareness of peer bullying (various poetry, poster, slogan, billboard).</li> <li>5. Compares the physical and emotional characteristics of the actors involved in peer bullying.</li> <li>6. Examines the Primary School Peer Bullying Prevention Curriculum. *</li> <li>7. Examines the storybooks recommended to be used in the Primary School Peer Bullying Prevention Curriculum.*</li> <li>8. Willing to implement the Primary School Peer Bullying Prevention Curriculum* in his/her classroom.</li> </ol>

\*The curriculum in question was developed by the researchers who wrote this article.

This curriculum's measurement and evaluation dimension, which was prepared with a problem-centered approach, was inclusive. During the evaluation of the teachers' level of reaching outcomes determined in the curriculum, the focus was on the process rather than the product. In this respect, "...the participants were encouraged to express themselves by establishing an effective communication and planning their future learning by recognizing their strengths and weaknesses" (Taneri, 2019, p.105). Therefore, alternative assessment methods and techniques such as self-assessment, poster



preparation, exhibition, creative writing, which are more inclusive, are used instead of traditional assessment methods.

### Stage III: Testing the Curriculum

A prepared teacher training program was implemented between 19-21 November 2019 with 115 participants, consisting of classroom teachers and guidance counselors from four primary schools (3 states and one private) selected from Çankırı province. This in-service training program, which aims to support teachers' professional development, aims to create a flexible and sensitive space of trust and respect that encourages participants to think about, assimilate, practice, and try out strategies where they can explore and share. The theoretical and application-based content of the training program has been arranged in a balanced way. The program's theoretical parts were carried out using traditional teaching methods with the joint participation of all participants, and the application parts were carried out in different sessions by dividing the participants into two groups. Each program session is planned as a 40+40-minute block schedule and six lessons a day with 10-minute intervals. The program was implemented between 09.00-13.30 hours (approximately 4.5 hours), and training lasted three days.

Interactive lessons include bibliotherapy, creative drama, group discussions, and practice opportunities. The knowledge and skills obtained from the sessions were reviewed by discussing the experiences of the participants. In the last session, participants were asked how they plan to integrate peer bullying intervention strategies into their curriculum in the in-service training program.

### Stage IV: Impact Evaluation of the Curriculum

In the evaluation of the curriculum, it was focused on whether there was a change in teachers' conceptualization of peer bullying and their strategies to prevent bullying, their views on the content of the in-service training program, how they experienced the implementation of the curriculum, changes they made in classroom practices, changes in student experiences and changes in the school.

After the curriculum was implemented, individual and small group interviews were done with the participants, and their opinions about the program were determined. In addition, art-based data such as poetry, painting, story, and animation were collected to determine participants' awareness of peer bullying during creative drama activities. In addition, the participants were asked to write the most liked, disliked, and most curious aspects of the program. Participants were asked for their opinions on the prevention of peer bullying in the arts-based activities implemented during and after the program was completed. It was observed that the training program increased teachers' awareness of bullying and their self-confidence in organizing classroom activities to prevent bullying. As can be seen from the examples below from the poems that the teachers wrote together, after the training, the teachers were able to express the actors, types quickly and likely consequences of bullying, the places where it was most frequently experienced, and the three criteria to be considered for an event to be called bullying:

#### ***Bullying\****

*The three actors in bullying are  
the bully, the victim, and the bystander,  
What separates bullying from fighting is  
persistence, willingness, and an imbalance of power.*

*Bad words hurt more than slaps and kicks,  
Wounds are invisible from the soul of the kids,  
It was a child fight that that was over.  
It will be surprising to see the child start biting nails,  
not wanting to go to school.  
It would be deceiving to underestimate bullying.*

*Bullying is hard to see,  
The most common place is the secret corridor,*

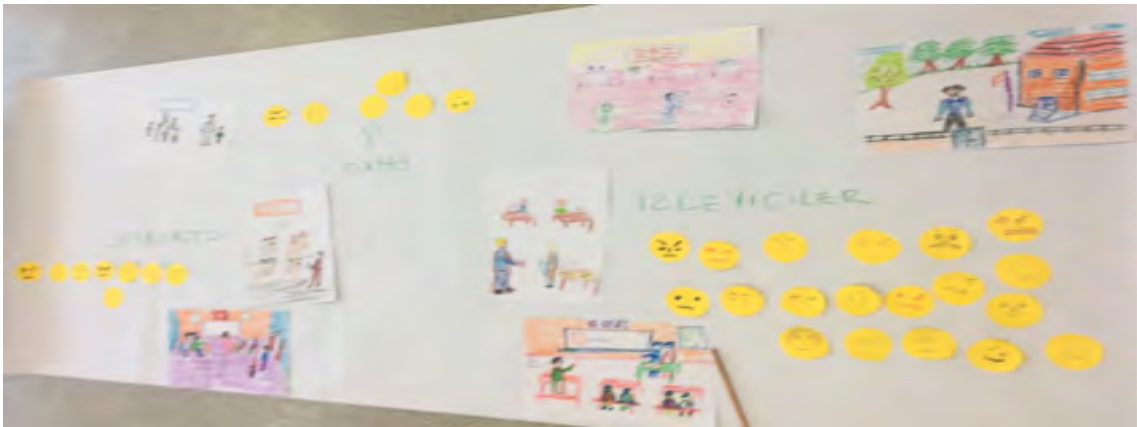
*Pushes, pokes, pulls bullies,  
If the bystanders do not support,  
the victims are doomed to be saddened and crushed.*

\*Note: The lines and stanzas in the poems written by different participants were combined. Some rhymes have been lost because they were translated from Turkish.

Pictures 1 and 2 are example drawings of the participants during the in-service training activities. These illustrations show the emotions of the three actors of bullying –the bully, the victim, and the bystander. In these drawings prepared during bibliotherapy activities, Pako represents the victim and Umberto, the bully.



Picture 1. Drawings of the participants about the actors of the bullying



Picture 2. Drawings of the participants about the actors of the bullying

Participants stated that their awareness of the areas where peer bullying occurs most frequently at school/classroom has increased, and they discussed the measures to be taken in these areas. Most of the participants stated that they had not heard of bibliotherapy before this in-service training. They stated that the bibliotherapy method would be effective in preventing peer bullying in the classroom. During the training, the participants wrote practical bibliotherapy applications for the picture books provided to them.

With the third author of this study, who was also a primary school teacher, the participant teachers have thought about the ways of integrating the bibliotherapy method with the official curricula of the Ministry of Education and concluded that the activities of the Primary School Peer Bullying Prevention Curriculum could be easily applied in lessons such as Turkish, visual arts, physical education, and free activities.

The participants think that the subject of this in-service training is suitable for their personal and professional development and that the suggested strategies are applicable and can contribute to the solution of the problem of peer bullying. At the end of the in-service training program, the teachers stated they felt more knowledgeable about diagnosing peer bullying and intervening in bullying incidents. In addition, they stated that the educators who provide in-service training try to be good role models for them.

All but six participants were willing to implement the Primary School Peer Bullying Prevention Curriculum in their classroom. However, it has been observed that participant teachers have various concerns about implementing a curriculum on combating peer bullying in their classes, in terms of the approach of the school administration, the high number of students in their classrooms, and access to the materials recommended in the curriculum. After all activities in the curriculum were implemented, various educational materials, two sets of 16-children's books, and a peer bullying prevention book were donated to the schools participating in the in-service training program. In addition, teachers' guide booklets, which were prepared by the researchers who conducted this study, including the Primary School Peer Bullying Prevention Curriculum, were distributed to all teachers who participated in the study.

The teachers evaluated the effectiveness of in-service training and as decision-makers in the parts of the curriculum that needed to be organized. Since the in-service training program was evaluated and rearranged in cooperation with teachers, teachers who participated in this training attributed more value to in-service training.

At this stage, it was also planned for the researchers to visit the classrooms of teachers participating in the in-service training program to observe how the teachers implemented the curriculum - changes in teachers' classroom practices, changes in student experiences, and changes in the school - in order to identify the problems encountered in the implementation of the primary school peer bullying curriculum. As a result of the closure of schools and transition to distance education due to the Covid-19 outbreak, only a tiny part of these studies have been carried out.

#### **Stage V: Correction and Improvement of the Curriculum**

At this stage, only the findings obtained from the unstructured interviews with the teachers and the evaluations made during the activities were used. This study reveals that teachers prefer in-service pieces of training that allow peer interaction and active participation and inform them about current trends and innovations. In general, teachers are satisfied with the in-service teacher training program's goals/outcomes and evaluation component to prevent peer bullying. However, they think that the theoretical explanations in the curriculum are complex. They find traditional methods such as the narration in the education-teaching situations component boring, teaching activities based on practices, and active participation. Based on their preferred findings, the content of the curriculum and education activities were rearranged to meet these needs.

### **Discussion, Conclusion, and Implications**

The in-service training program described in this study increases teachers' awareness of peer bullying and effectively improves teacher competencies in combating bullying. Interactive teaching approach in-service training has been shown to provide teachers with readily valuable strategies on making the classroom environment more democratic, more inclusive, and more peaceful, and how to make students feel safe at school and in the classroom.

The research highlights the unavoidable importance of teacher education in recognizing and responding to bullying incidents (Craig, Henderson & Murphy, 2000; Townsend-Wiggins, 2001). A successful bullying prevention program on a national scale is only possible by raising teachers, school counselors, students, other staff, and families working in the school and their struggle together.

Therefore, to create a school culture that does not allow and does not allow peer bullying, it is necessary to include all educational components in the anti-bullying program.

Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs affect their professional practices (Han & Weiss, 2005; Hoy, Hoy & Davis, 2009). When teachers have sufficient knowledge and skills to deal with bullying, they can be more confident, develop strategies to deal with bullying more effectively, and reduce class bullying. As Nicolaides, Toda and Smith (2002) stated, teachers, need more training to increase their self-confidence and competence to recognize and intervene in peer bullying. In this respect, teachers' preparation of in-service training programs will reduce and prevent peer bullying in schools. The literature shows that in-service training for teachers is beneficial both institutionally and individually (Durmuş, 2003; George & Lubben, 2002; Kanlı & Yağbasan, 2002; Seferoğlu, 2001). In-service training programs are instrumental for teachers to reflect on their classroom experiences and develop them.

The most substantial aspect of implementing this in-service teacher training program is that it allows teachers to be a part of the development process of the primary school education program to prevent peer bullying. During this training, the teachers analyzed current practices, applied the theoretical knowledge with a critical eye, and made suggestions to improve the proposed training program. It is thought that the inclusion of all school components in the process will be effective in reducing teachers' anxiety about implementing a training program on combating peer bullying in their classrooms. In this respect, it would be appropriate to implement anti-bullying training programs for parents, school staff such as janitors, canteen workers, security guards, and school administrators in parallel with the teacher training program.

In-service Teacher Training Program to Prevent Peer Bullying was implemented only with teachers working in four schools selected in Çankırı province. In this study, since the curriculum development process is considered an active process that constantly repairs, renews, adapts, and develops itself, it is recommended that the curriculum be disseminated throughout the country. Necessary changes and arrangements should be made before, during, and after its dissemination. In-service training programs to teachers to intervene in future peer bullying may also include helpful intervention strategies, especially for students exposed to cyberbullying during distance education, have disabilities, and learn Turkish as a second language. The adoption of appropriate teaching methods for online education in subsequent studies may also increase the prevalence of the programs.

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## TÜRKÇE GENİŞ ÖZET

### **Akran Zorbalığını Önlemek için Hizmet içi Öğretmen Eğitimi Programı Geliştirme Çalışması**

#### **Giriş**

Günümüzde engellenmesi ve azaltılması üzerinde sıkça durulan okul şiddeti, özellikle akran zorbalığı, küresel çapta bir sorun olmaya devam etmektedir. Son yıllarda yapılan geniş ölçekli uluslararası çalışmalar (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2017; United Nations International Children's Emergency Found [UNICEF], 2018; Yıldırım, Özgürlük, Parlak, Gönen, & Polat, 2016) akran zorbalığının Türkiye'de özellikle ilk ve ortaokul öğrencileri arasında yadsınamayacak ölçüde yaygın bir sorun olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Zorbalık, bir bireyin kendisinden daha güçsüz gördüğü başka bir bireye karşı saldırgan bir şekilde davranması, üzerinde egemenlik kurmak veya onu sindirmek için kasıtlı ve düzenli olarak güç kullanması, zorlaması, psikolojik ya da fiziksel olarak zarar vermesi veya tehdit etmesidir.

Zorbalığın, zorbalık olayına karışan üç aktörün - zorba, mağdur ve izleyici - sağlığı ve davranışları üzerinde hem kısa hem de uzun vadeli olumsuz etkileri bulunmaktadır. *Mağdurlar* hayal kırıklığı, öfke ve saldırgan davranışlar gösterebilmektedir. Ayrıca, zorbalığa maruz kalan çocukların fiziksel sağlığı da olumsuz etkilenmektedir (Bogart et al., 2014). *Zorbalığın* psikosomatik sorunlar sergileme riski, zorbalık yapmayan akranlarına göre daha yüksektir (Gini & Pozzoli, 2009). *Zorbalığa tanık olanların* fiziksel sağlığı, zihinsel sağlığı ve akademik başarısı zorbalık olayından etkilenmektedir (Polanin, Espelage & Pigott, 2012).

Araştırmalar, okul temelli zorbalıkla mücadele programlarının hem zorbalığı hem de zorbalık mağduriyetini azaltmada etkili olduğunu göstermektedir (Gaffney, Ttofi, & Farrington, 2019; Salmivalli, Poskiparta, Ahtola & Haataja, 2013; Thompson & Smith, 2014). Türkiye'de zorbalıkla mücadele konusunda az sayıda, sınırlı örneklemelere dayanan, yerel düzeyde girişimler bulunmaktadır (Doğan, Keser, Şen, Yanagida, Gradinger & Strohmeier, 2017; Dölek, 2002; Karataş, 2011; Kartal & Bilgin, 2007).

Akran zorbalığını önlemek ve/veya azaltmak, okul yöneticilerinin, öğretmenlerin, velilerin ve diğer okul çalışanlarının kararlılığını ve yoğun çabasını gerektirir. Ancak yetişkinlerin akran zorbalığı konusundaki farkındalıklarının yetersiz olması, zorbalığın doğası ve kapsamı hakkında eksik ya da yanlış kavramsallaştırmaları zorbalık olaylarının tanımlanmasını ve önlenmesini zorlaştırmaktadır. Alan yazın öğretmenlerin zorbalığın azalmasına katkıda bulunabileceklerine inandıkları zaman daha çok müdahale ettiklerini göstermektedir (Duong & Bradshaw, 2013; Williford & Depaolis, 2016; Yoon & Bauman, 2014). Bu bakımdan çalışmanın amacı okullardaki zorbalığın sıklığını, türünü ve nedenlerini ortaya çıkarmak isteyen, daha güvenli bir öğrenme ve öğretme sürecini geliştirmek için barışçıl bir sınıf ve okul atmosferi yaratmanın yollarını arayan öğretmenleri ve okul personelini desteklemek için geliştirilen zorbalığı önleme hizmet içi öğretmen eğitim programını tanıtmaktır.

## Yöntem

Öğretmenlerin akran zorbalığı ile mücadele etmede öğretmen yetkinliklerini geliştirmek için Taneri, Özbek ve Akduman (2020) tarafından Bilimsel Araştırma Projesi kapsamında, hizmet içi öğretmen eğitim programı geliştirilmiştir. Program geliştirme süreci aşağıda ayrıntılı olarak açıklanmaktadır:

Hizmet içi öğretmen eğitim programının geliştirilmesinde sorun merkezli eğitim program tasarımı kullanılmıştır. Sorun merkezli program yaklaşımında öğrenme, sosyal ve bağlamsal etkenlerden etkilenen aktif, bütünlük ve yapıcı bir süreç olarak görülmektedir (Vasuthavan & Kunaratnam, 2017).

### Program Geliştirme Çalışmasının Planlaması

Akran zorbalığını önleme program geliştirme ekibi kurularak iş zaman çizelgesi geliştirilmiştir. Program geliştirme ekibinde bir ölçme değerlendirme uzmanı, bir program geliştirme uzmanı ve bir sınıf öğretmeni rol almıştır. Ayrıca program geliştirmenin farklı aşamalarında psikolojik danışma ve rehberlik alanından uzmanların görüşlerine de yer verilmiştir. Eğitim programının hedeflerinin gerçekçi biçimde oluşturulması amacıyla doküman analizi, öğrenciler, öğretmenler ve okul yöneticileri ile mülakatlar, yapılandırılmamış gözlemler, gayri resmi tartışmalar ve sohbetler yoluyla ihtiyaç analizi yapılmıştır. Bu aşamada akran zorbalığı konusunun ele alınışı ile ilgili var olan durum incelenmiştir. İlk olarak akran zorbalığının tanımı, çeşitleri, nedenleri ve sonuçları konusunda ulusal ve uluslararası alan yazın taranmıştır. Daha sonra akran zorbalığı müdahale programları eleştirel bir bakış açısı ile incelenerek (Taneri, Özbek, & Şahin, 2019) başarılı programların özellikleri gözden geçirilmiştir.

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de okullarda zorbalık olaylarının görülme sıklığının artışına ilişkin literatürün incelenmesiyle başlamıştır. Türkiye'de ve dünyada akran zorbalığı olaylarının artışına ve müdahale çalışmalarına ilişkin literatür taranmış ve müdahale programlarının başarısında yetişkinlerin, özellikle de öğretmenlerin rolünün vurgulandığı görülmüştür. Akran zorbalığının önlenmesine yönelik bir öğretmen yetiştirme programına duyulan ihtiyacı belirlemek amacıyla bu araştırmanın katılımcıları kolay ulaşılabilir örnekleme yöntemiyle belirlenmiştir. Kolay ulaşılabilir örnekleme, ulaşılması planlanan evren üyelerinin coğrafi yakınlık, belirli bir yere uygunluk, belirli bir yere uygunluk, belirli bir zaman, kolay erişilebilirlik veya gönüllülük gibi önceden belirlenmiş ölçütleri karşılamaları halinde araştırmanın amacına uygun olarak seçildiği tesadüfi olmayan veya olasılık dışı örnekleme türüdür (Lavrakas, 2008). Bu araştırmanın çalışma grubunu Çankırı ilinde bulunan üç resmi ilköğretim okulunda ve bir özel okulda görev yapan 115 katılımcı oluşturmaktadır. Katılımcılar 99 sınıf öğretmeni, 14 okul psikolojik danışmanı ve 2 okul yöneticisinden oluşmaktadır. Katılımcıların %89'u devlet okullarında çalışmaktadır.

### Programın hazırlanması

Programın kazanımlarının, içeriğinin, öğretim yöntem, teknik ve materyallerinin ve değerlendirme yöntemleri bu aşamada belirlenmiştir. Programın vurguladığı değerler, önerdiği araçlar ve yöntemler ile programın sonunda elde edilecek kazanımlar, ilerlemeci ve varoluşçu bakış açısını yansıtacak biçimde belirlenmiştir. Tematik bir yaklaşımla geliştirilen programda değişimin önemi, bireysel farklılıklar, yaparak-yaşayarak ve yaşam boyu öğrenme, eleştirel düşünme, grup çalışmaları, işbirliğine dayalı öğrenme, sosyal becerilerin geliştirilmesi, demokratik değerlerin benimsenmesi ve bireylerin özgürleştirilmesine vurgu yapılmaktadır. Eğitim programında 26 *kazanım* yer almaktadır.

Eğitim programının *içeriğinde* (1) akran zorbalığı konusunda farkındalık yaratma, (2) akran zorbalığı türleri, (3) akran zorbalığı konusunda ulusal ve uluslararası istatistikler, (4) akran zorbalığının tanımı, (5) akran zorbalığı konusunda doğru bilinen yanlışlar, (6) akran zorbalığı ile müdahale yöntemi olarak bibliyoterapinin tanıtımı, (7) örnek bibliyoterapi uygulamaları, (8) bibliyoterapi yönteminin Milli Eğitim Bakanlığının resmi eğitim programlarıyla bütünleştirilmesi, (9) akran zorbalığını fark etme ve önlemek için sınıf içinde kullanılacak öğretim materyallerinin tanıtılması ve tasarlanması ve (10) akran zorbalığını önleme ilköğretim eğitim programının tanıtılması konularına yer verilmiştir.

Programın *öğrenme-öğretme etkinlikleri* hazırlanırken incelenen alan yazında yetişkinlere yönelik eğitim programlarında yaygın olarak kullanılan yaklaşımların; kendi kendine öğrenme (Tough, 1971), andragoji (Knowles, 1988), perspektif dönüşüm teorisi (Mezirow, 1978) ve deneysel öğrenme (Candy, 1980) olduğu görülmüştür.

Sorun merkezli bir yaklaşımla hazırlanan bu eğitim programının *ölçme ve değerlendirme* boyutunun kapsayıcı olmasına çalışılmıştır. Bu bakımdan “...katılımcıların etkili bir iletişim kurarak kendilerini ifade etmeleri, güçlü ve zayıf yanlarını fark ederek gelecekteki öğrenmelerini planlamaları teşvik edilmiştir” (Taneri, 2019, s. 105). Geleneksel değerlendirme yöntemleri yerine daha kapsayıcı olan öz-değerlendirme, poster hazırlama, sergi, yaratıcı yazma gibi değerlendirme yöntemleri ve tekniklerine yer verilmiştir.

### **Programın Denenmesi**

Hazırlanan öğretmen eğitim programı 19-21 Kasım 2019 tarihleri arasında Çankırı ilinden seçilen dört ilkokulun (3 devlet 1 özel) sınıf öğretmenleri ve rehber öğretmenlerinden oluşan toplam 115 katılımcı ile uygulanmıştır. Programın her bir oturumu 40+40 dakikalık blok ders ve 10 dakikalık aralarla bir günde 6 ders olacak şekilde planlanmıştır. Program 09.00-13.30 saatleri arasında (yaklaşık 4,5 saat) uygulanmış ve eğitimler üç gün sürmüştür.

### **Programın Etkisinin Değerlendirilmesi**

Eğitim programı uygulandıktan sonra katılımcılarla bireysel ve küçük grup görüşmeleri yapılmış, program hakkındaki görüşleri belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Program esnasında uygulanan sanat temelli etkinliklerde ve program tamamlandıktan sonra katılımcıların akran zorbalığını önleme programı hakkındaki görüşleri sorulmuştur.

### **Programın Düzeltmesi ve İyileştirilmesi**

Bu aşamada öğretmenlerle yapılan yapılandırılmamış görüşmeler ve etkinlikler sırasında yapılan değerlendirmelerden elde edilen bulgular kullanılmıştır. Bulgulardan hareketle programın içeriği ve eğitim-öğretim etkinlikleri yeniden düzenlenmiştir.

## **Tartışma, Sonuç ve Öneriler**

Bu çalışmada açıklanan hizmet içi eğitim programı, öğretmenlerin akran zorbalığı konusundaki farkındalıklarını artırmakta ve zorbalıkla mücadele etme konusunda öğretmen yetkinliklerini etkili bir şekilde geliştirmektedir. Etkileşimli bir öğretim yaklaşımı benimseyen bu hizmet içi eğitimin, öğretmenlere sınıf ortamını nasıl daha demokratik, daha kapsayıcı ve daha barışçıl hale getirecekleri ve öğrencilerin okulda ve sınıfta güvende hissetmelerini nasıl sağlayacakları konusunda kolay uygulanabilir stratejiler sağladığı görülmüştür.

Öğretmenler zorbalıkla baş etme konusunda yeterli derecede bilgi ve beceriye sahip oldukları zaman kendilerine daha fazla güvenmekte, zorbalık sorunuyla daha etkili bir şekilde ilgilenmek için stratejiler geliştirmekte ve sınıf zorbalığının azalmasını sağlayabilmektedirler. Bu bakımdan, öğretmenlere yönelik hizmet içi eğitim programlarının hazırlanması okullarda akran zorbalığının azaltılmasını ve önlemesini sağlayacaktır. Araştırmalar, öğretmenlere sunulan hizmet içi eğitimlerin hem kurumsal hem bireysel bakımdan yararlı olduğunu göstermektedir (Durmuş, 2003; George & Lubben, 2002; Kanlı & Yağbasan, 2002; Seferoğlu, 2001).

Gelecekte akran zorbalığına müdahale etmek için öğretmenlere sunulacak hizmet içi eğitim programlarının, özellikle uzaktan eğitim sürecinde siber zorbalığa maruz kalan, engeli olan ve ikinci dil olarak Türkçe öğrenen öğrenciler için yararlı müdahale stratejilerini de içermesi önerilebilir. Sonraki çalışmaların çevrim içi eğitim için uygun öğretim yöntemlerini benimsemesi de programların yaygınlığının artmasını sağlayabilir.

