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Siblings Attitudes Towards Persons With Severe/Profound And Multiple Disabilities In Turkey

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Abstract

All family members are affected when he joined the family, an individual with severe/profound and multiple disabilities. Duties and responsibilities of family members increase. As well normal siblings in the family is affected from this situation. Therefore, normal siblings' attitudes expected to be different about siblings who have sever/profound and multiple disabilities. The purpose of this study, normal siblings who have severe/profound and Multiple Disabilities (PMD) brother and sister to determine the attitude toward the siblings. This research is a descriptive study. 105 normal siblings who is living in Turkey (province of Bolu, Istanbul, Samsun, Düzce, Sakarya, Trabzon, Çanakkale, Malatya) participated in this research. Participant have brother and sister with severe/profound and multiple disabilities. "Siblings Handicapped Attitude Scale" who developed by Küçükler was used in this study (1997). Data analysis, t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. Results were interpreted at the level of $p = 0.05$. As a result of this research, normal siblings' attitudes toward siblings who have severe/profound and multiple disabilities were found to be generally as positive attitudes. It has been identified that attitudes are not variable according to sex, age and level of education. Results of the study support the findings of other studies.

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1. Introduction

Individuals live in communities whose smallest units are families. There are many definitions for family which is

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a social institution that regenerates population, transmits national culture, socializes children and meets the economic, biological and psychological needs of the individuals (Erkal, 1995). In other words, family; the smallest unit of society with psychological, social, sexual, economic, legal and moral aspects, is formed by at least two individuals, sometimes including children and extended family members, has specific rules and meets all needs of individuals to some extent (Sağlam, 2011). The family is the first place where learning in various ideas and how to cope with feelings starts in the development of children as social beings (Meadows, 2010). Sibling relationships are also important in families which include at least two children. Sibling relations are defined as long term relationships that start with the birth of the smallest sibling and continue until death and these relationships last longer than all the other relationships. Since sibling relationships are the first social ties for the child, they form the basis of communication with individuals outside the family (Korkmaz, 2008). Sibling relationship is a process that affects personality development of children. Siblings are both the friends and teachers to one another. Siblings experience many feelings such as support, sharing, cooperation and solidarity with each other and the foundations of social skills are laid in this manner. Therefore, the case of disability in the sibling who is just included in the family affects both the parents and the other siblings. A child born with disabilities affects the life, feelings and thoughts of the whole family and therefore the siblings are also affected by this situation. The fact that one of the siblings has a disability causes complex relationships among them. Their anxiety levels and attitudes towards individuals with disabilities will be especially affected. These siblings without disabilities may experience resentment, jealousy, animosity, guilt, deep sorrow, fear, shame and rejection towards the sibling with disabilities (Şenel, 1995). It is believed that increase in the level of disability will increase the level of negative feelings as well. Therefore, normal individuals may have different attitudes towards their siblings with severe/profound and multiple disabilities. Current research investigates the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with severe/profound and multiple disabilities.

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

The study which examines the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with severe/profound and multiple disabilities utilizes general survey model. This model uses surveys on the whole universe or a group, example or sample taken from the universe in order to reach a general idea about the universe composed of various elements (Karasar, 2002).

2.2. Research Group

The universe in the study was composed of normal individuals with siblings having severe/profound and multiple disabilities. The sample of the study included 150 randomly selected normal individuals with siblings who had severe/profound and multiple disabilities residing in Samsun, Düzce, Sakarya, Trabzon, Çanakkale, Bolu and Malatya provinces. According to gender distribution of the participants, 63 of the participants were females and 42 were males. In terms of age, 23 participants were in the age range of 6-11; 39 were in the age range of 12-17, 29 were in the age range of 18-23, 9 were in the age range of 24-30 and 5 participants were in the age range of 30 years and older. According to level of education, 24 participants attended primary school, 30 participants attended secondary school, 42 attended high school and 9 were going to university.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

Personal information form and attitude towards sibling with disability scale were used to collect data in the study.

Personal Information Form; the form developed by the researcher consists of information regarding the gender, age and education level of the normal siblings. *Attitude towards Sibling with Disability Scale;* The scale of attitude

towards the sibling with disability was developed by Küçüker (1997) to identify the attitudes of normal siblings towards their siblings with disabilities. The 4-point Likert type scale includes 28 items. The answers provided to the items in the scale were ranked as “Completely Agree-Agree-Disagree-Completely Disagree”. Items that display positive attitude were given values between 4-1 ranging from “Completely Agree” to “Completely Disagree”. The lowest value that can be obtained from the scale is 28 and the highest is 112. High scores indicate positive attitudes whereas low scores display negative attitudes.

2.4. Implementation

The siblings who were identified as participants were interviewed and the siblings who volunteered to participate were given scales and asked to fill the form completely and by selecting the views that best suited them.

2.5. Data Analysis

The data collected in the study were analyzed by using SPSS 16.00 package program. Data was controlled for normal distribution. Parametric test was preferred since the mode, median and means of the data were very close, Skewness and Kurtosis values were between -1 and +1 and the research group consisted of more than 30 individuals. Hypothesis tests were utilized in order to identify the differences in the attitudes towards disabled siblings as discontinuous variables. *t*-test was used when the discontinuous variable was divided into two categories and ANOVA was preferred when there were more categories. Level of significance was established to be at least 0.05 for all the results in the framework of the study.

3. Findings

3.1. Findings regarding attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities according to gender

Table 1 presents the findings regarding attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities in terms of gender.

Table 1. *t*-test results of the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities in terms of gender

Sex	N	X	S	sd	T	P
Female	63	90,04	10,73	103	,66	,50
Male	42	88,57	11,58			

No significant differences in attitudes towards siblings with profound/severe disabilities according to gender were identified [$t(103) = ,66$ $p > .05$]. Attitudes of women participants towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities ($X= 90,04$) were found to be higher than those of male participants ($X=88,57$).

3.2. Findings regarding attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities according to age

Table 2 presents the findings regarding the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities in terms of age.

Table 2. ANOVA results of the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities in terms of age

Variance source	Sum of squares	sd	Mean square	F	Sig.
Intergroup	218,022	4	54,506	,437	,782
Intragroup	12486,035	100	124,860		
Total	12704,057	104			

Results of analysis do not display significant differences regarding the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities in terms of age ($F(4-100) = ,43, p > .05$). It was determined that normal siblings with different ages do not display different attitudes.

3.3. Findings regarding attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities according to level of education

Table 3 presents the findings regarding the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities in terms of education level.

Table 3. ANOVA results of the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities in terms of education level

Variance source	Sum of squares	sd	Mean square	F	Sig.
Intergroup	281,843	3	93,948	,764	,517
Intragroup	12422,214	101	122,992		
Total	12704,057	104			

Results of analysis do not display significant differences regarding the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities in terms of education level ($F(3-101) = ,76, p > .05$). It was determined that normal siblings with different levels of education do not display different attitudes.

3.4. Findings regarding the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities

Table 4 presents the findings regarding the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities.

Table 4. Arithmetic means of the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities

	N	Mean	St
the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities	105	3,19	,39473

Based on the means of attitude scale scores, values higher than 2.50 is positive whereas values lower than 2.50 is negative. Since the means of the attitude scale scores was found to be 3.19, it was determined that the attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities were positive. It was identified in the study that general attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities were positive and these attitudes did not differ according to gender, age and education level.

4. Discussion

It was identified in the study that general attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities were positive and these attitudes did not differ according to gender, age and education level. It was identified in the study that general attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities were positive and these attitudes did not differ according to gender, age and education level. In the current study, it was found that attitudes of normal individuals towards their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities were positive in general and these attitudes did not differ according to gender, age and education level. According to Hannah and Midlarsky (1999), birth order and gender of normal individuals affect their relationships with their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities. If the normal sibling is female and older than the sibling with profound/severe and multiple disabilities, she usually assumes the responsibility of the carer and undertakes rather major responsibilities. Also individuals with siblings who have profound/severe and multiple disabilities may feel that they receive less attention from their parents (Günayer Şenel, 1995). It is believed that this feeling may increase depending on the degree of the disability and additional disabilities and therefore sibling relationships will be negatively affected. However it was identified in the current study that the attitudes of normal individuals towards siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities were positive. It is believed that family structure in Turkey is strengthened with concepts such as love, blood ties and feelings of responsibility and therefore the attitudes of normal individuals towards siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities are positive regardless of the degree of disability. Attitudes of normal individuals towards siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities do not show significant differences according to gender. However, it was observed in the current study that attitudes of normal females towards siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities are more positive. The results obtained in the current study supports the findings regarding gender obtained in Girli's (1995) study. Girli's (1995) study which examined the degree of acceptance, psychological state and anxiety levels of normal individuals with profound/severe and multiple disabilities found that compared to male siblings, female siblings were more accepting of their siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities. Since acceptance of the sibling with disabilities is the precondition of positive attitudes, the results of Girli's (1995) study support the results of the current study. The finding that female participants in the current study and Girli's study had more positive attitudes is thought to be related to the fact that both studies were undertaken in Turkey and that Turkish family structure requires active participation of female siblings in services at home. It was found that attitudes of normal individuals towards siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities did not show significant differences according to age. Findings of the study contradict the findings of Korkmaz (2008) that found less age differences between the healthy and the disabled siblings generate more aggressive attitudes towards the sibling with disabilities. Korkmaz's (2008) study examined the attitudes of normal individuals towards siblings only with mental disabilities. The current study however examined the attitudes of normal individuals towards siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities. It is believed that differences in findings were based on the working group. It was found that the attitudes of normal individuals towards siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities according to level of education. It was observed that individuals with varying levels of education had positive attitudes towards siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities. It is believed that positive attitudes of normal individuals with different levels of education are related to strong family ties in Turkey. As a result, it was identified that attitudes of normal individuals towards siblings with profound/severe and multiple disabilities are positive and attitudes are not affected by gender, age and level of education. The basic element that generates these positive attitudes is thought to be related with strong family ties.

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