



Emotional and behavioral problems in children living in conflict areas of Azerbaijan

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Abstract

Studies about the effects of war and migration on the mental health of children lead these conditions to various mental health disorders and disrupt psychosocial development in children. There is no relevant study about psychological problems in children living in conflict areas in Azerbaijan. The aim of this study is to examine the emotional and behavioral problems of children who have been lived in the conditions of war and have been forced to migrate for decades. The study was carried out within the scope of the project "Psychological Support to Children Living in the Conflict Areas" that developed and implemented by the author. The sample of the study consisted of 617 children living in the war zone and studying in the 1-4 classes of primary education. The students with age range 7-11 ($M = 8.9$, $SD = 1.24$) $n = 314$ (50.9%) were female, $n = 303$ (49.1%) were male. Azeri version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) was used to determine the behavioral and emotional problems of the students. As a result of descriptive analysis, 32.7% of the children were evaluated as abnormal and 21.4% of the children as borderline according to total difficulties score. In addition, 19.4% of the children had emotional, 20.3% were conduct, 12.2% were hyperactivity, 31.1% had peer relationship problems and 13.1% were abnormal in the pro-social behavior subtests. For independent samples as a result of the Independent Samples T Test analysis, it was found that male students had higher difficulty degree than female students ($p < .01$). The mean score average of female students was significantly higher than male students in the emotional symptoms subtest ($p < .05$), but the average of behavioral problems in male student was significantly higher than female students ($p < .01$). The mean scores of male students were significantly higher than female students in the hyperactivity, peer problems subtest ($p < .01$). However, pro-social behavior scores were significantly higher in female students than in male students ($p < .01$). As a result of the One-Way ANOVA test was observed that the students with poor school success had the high average of difficulty score than students with medium average and above average school success ($p < .001$). This difference was statistically significant for behavioral, hyperactivity and peer problems ($p < .001$).

Keywords: Children, emotional problems, behavioral problems, Azerbaijan, war effect

