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## Teachers' Perspectives on Bullying Behaviors in Value-Based School Culture

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### Abstract

*Bullying is defined as the situation in which an individual is exposed to negative behaviors that are repeated over time by another person or group. This situation is an important problem that negatively affects not only peer relationships but also teacher-student relationships. Bullying can occur in different types. These are classified as physical, verbal, social and psychological bullying. School culture can be defined as a dynamic structure created by school stakeholders (such as teachers, administrators and parents) within the framework of common values and rules. This culture directly affects students' social development and behaviors in the school environment. In this context, Values Education is of great importance for children to develop positive behaviors and to adapt to their environment in a healthy way. Values Education contributes to both the individual development of students and ensures their integration with social values. In particular, the acquisition of social values plays an important role in reducing bullying behaviors. This study aimed to examine teachers' views on bullying behaviors in a value-centered school culture. A case study, one of the qualitative research designs, was used in the study. Data were collected through a semi-structured interview form and a personal information form. The case study design is a method that aims to examine a specific event, phenomenon or social group in depth within its own context. The study group of the research consists of a total of 22 class and branch teachers working in primary schools and preschool education institutions affiliated with the Ministry of National Education of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The participants were determined using the purposive sampling method. The obtained data were analyzed using the content analysis method. According to the research findings, it was determined that the value that teachers care most about instilling in their students in the school environment is respect. Love is second. In the light of this data, the scope of Values Education can be further expanded by including parental opinions in future studies.*

**Keywords:** School Culture, Values in School Culture, Bullying, Types of Bullying.

### Introduction

Bullying behaviors are increasingly common in schools and are a situation that negatively affects both peer relationships and teacher-student relationships. In order to prevent these behaviors from occurring, teachers and parents should come together on a common ground. It shows that developing school culture is very important for children to change their behaviors and gain common values.

School culture is a unity that includes administrators, teachers and other relevant people, and includes the behaviors, values and rules of the school. All stakeholders here decide together to create the rules by expressing their opinions (Göldal, 2015). School culture is a phenomenon that regulates the behavior of individuals and directs their social relationships (Peterson and Deal, 1990). Therefore, creating a culture of its own for each school will ensure that social values

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are transferred to children and their moral aspects are developed (Zengin and Çelik, 2019).

A new lifestyle has emerged due to developments in the world in areas such as education, politics, business, and media. The importance given to teaching values in schools is increasing day by day so that individuals can adapt to this lifestyle (Çelik and Zengin, 2019).

Values education is defined as "educational efforts carried out for children and young people to discover and develop positive values and to progress according to their own potential" (Meydan, 2012). The first people responsible for the moral education of children are their parents. This education should continue in school (Kasapoğlu, 2013). New processes have been initiated to obtain important steps for schools to undertake some tasks in order to teach values. These tasks are of great importance in terms of teaching values (Kan, 2023).

There are different definitions of bullying in the literature. Glew and colleagues (2000) define bullying as behaviors aimed at harming a child who is more passive than other children or who is hesitant to protect himself. In Olweus' (1996) definition of bullying, bullying is defined as an individual being exposed to negative behaviors by another person or group that are repeated over time (Karademir, 2021).

According to Nelson, there are four types of bullying: Verbal bullying; name-calling, mocking, ridiculing, insulting and humiliating. Physical bullying; hitting, tripping, pushing or damaging the child's belongings. Social bullying; excluding the child from the group, ignoring and spreading rumors about him. Psychological bullying; constantly watching the child or looking at him negatively (Hakan, 2011). Apart from these types, there are also social exclusion and relational bullying. Social exclusion is in the form of spreading rumors about the victim, silencing, slander, and spreading unfounded rumors. In the relational bullying type, behaviors are exhibited to disrupt the victim's social relationships (Karademir, 2021).

In order to effectively reduce bullying in schools, values education needs to be reviewed. International organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have also understood the importance of values in education and have undertaken important studies in this direction (Meydan, 2012). According to the list of values prepared by UNESCO, there are 11 different values that should be transferred to children in schools. These are; honesty, modesty, cooperation, freedom, love, peace, respect, responsibility, happiness, simplicity and tolerance. Instilling these values in schools in line with a program prepared will help the relationship between children to be better.

When we look at the relevant literature, Yiğittir (2010) conducted a study on the values that parents of children in primary schools wanted to be taught in schools. As a result of this study, it was revealed that families gave priority to values related to family unity, diligence, respect for the flag and the National Anthem, patriotism, responsibility, honesty, truthfulness, respect, helpfulness and courage. The socio-economic levels of families were effective in their preference of values (Yiğittir, 2010).

In 2011, the Antalya Governorship Provincial Directorate of National Education launched a project on values education in schools. For this project, "values education" program books were prepared for preschool, primary and secondary education. These books were prepared and put into practice. Uygun conducted a study on the applicability of these books in schools. According to the findings of Uygun's research, the program design prepared for values education provides important clues about its applicability (Uygun, 2013).

The researches show us that bullying can be reduced in a value-centered school culture. Values Education should be given first in the family and then continued in the school. This process is important for the formation of a better and more orderly environment in schools. Therefore, the aim of this research is to evaluate the opinions of teachers on bullying behaviors in a value-centered school culture. In line with this aim, the following sub-goals are aimed to be achieved:

What is the level of knowledge of teachers about school culture?

What is the level of views of teachers about value-centered school culture?

What is the level of knowledge of teachers about bullying?

## Method

### Research Model

The purpose of this research is to evaluate bullying behaviors in a value-centered school culture from the perspective of teachers. In accordance with this purpose, a case study, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. A case study, which is a qualitative research model, is a model that allows us to obtain detailed information about scientific questions. Case studies are studies in which an event, a social group, and interconnected systems are examined in depth (Büyüköztürk et al., 2021).

### Study Group

The study group of this research consists of 22 teachers working in state and private primary schools and independent kindergartens affiliated with the TRNC Ministry of National Education. The teachers who participated in the study were selected using the purposive sampling method.

### Data Collection Tool

The data in the study will be obtained using semi-structured interview questions, personal information form and voice recorder. Similar studies in the literature were examined in the preparation of the interview questions.

### Personal Information Form

Questions about the teacher's gender, age, years of seniority and education status were included.

Age	Frequency
23-27	7
28-32	1
33-37	7
38-42	3
43-47	2
48-52	1
Ages 53 and over	1
Gender	Frequency
Woman	16
Man	6
Year of Seniority	Frequency
0-5	10

6-10	1
11-15	5
16-20	2
21 years and above	4
<b>Education status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Licence	18
Master's degree	3
Doctorate	1
<b>Branch</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Preschool Teacher	8
Classroom Teacher	7
Branch Teacher	7
<b>Status of Receiving Education for Value-Centered School Culture</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Yes	2
No	20
<b>Is there bullying in schools?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Yes	21
No	1

Table 1. Personal Information Form

Table 1 shows the analysis of the personal information form created to provide more detailed information about the participants. When the responses in this form are examined, it is seen that the age groups most frequently included in the study are the 23-27 and 33-37 age ranges. The second most frequently included age range is 38-42 and the third most included age range is 43-47. The least frequently included age groups are 28-32, 48-52 and 53 and above with one frequency each. When we look at the distribution by gender, 16 of the participating teachers are female and 6 are male. The third question asked is the years of seniority. When we look at the distribution of participants according to their years of seniority, it is seen that the most seniority years are between 0-5 with 10 people. The second highest number of seniority years consists of 5 participant teachers who have served between 11-15 years. The third highest number of seniority years consists of 4 participant teachers who have served for 21 years and above. When we look at the distribution according to branches, it is seen that 8 preschool teachers, 8 classroom teachers and 7 branch teachers participated. When we examine the educational backgrounds of the teachers, 18 of them have a bachelor's degree, 3 have a master's degree and 1 participant teacher has a doctorate degree. Only 2 teachers participated in the training on Value-Centered School Culture. The remaining 20 teachers did not participate in any training. In the question about the existence of bullying in schools; 21 teachers stated that there is bullying and 1 teacher said that there is no bullying.

### **Semi-Structured Interview Form.**

The interview questions prepared for this research conducted for "Evaluation of bullying behaviors of teachers in value-centered school culture" are as follows:

- 1) What do you understand by the concept of school culture? Is there a purpose determined by the school?
- 2) What do you understand by the concept of value? Can you define it?

- 3) What do you understand by the concept of values education? Can you define it?
- 4) Which three values come to mind first as the easiest to teach in a value-centered school culture? Respect? Love?
- 5) Which three values come to mind first as the most difficult to teach in a value-centered school culture?
- 6) Do parents cooperate with the school regarding the values that should be taught in school?
- 7) What values do parents want to be taught in school?
- 8) What values do teachers want to be taught in school?
- 9) What methods do teachers apply when providing information to children about values education?
- 10) What are your thoughts on bullying behavior?
- 11) What values should be taught in schools to prevent bullying?
- 12) What kind of disciplinary punishment is given for bullying that occurs in schools?

### Data Analysis

In this study, the demographic information of the participants was first evaluated with the descriptive analysis method. The data obtained in the interviews were analyzed with the content analysis method. Content analysis is one of the techniques frequently used in the field of social sciences. Content analysis is a technique in which the text is divided into smaller categories with certain codes (Büyüköztürk et al., 2021). In these analyzed data, the data found to be similar or related to each other will be collected and interpreted within the framework of a certain theme. In order to increase reliability in qualitative studies, the results obtained are confirmed by getting help from another researcher in the analysis of the obtained data (Büyüköztürk et al., 2021).

### Findings

In this section, the semi-structured interview questions prepared by the researcher are thematized and shown in tables.

Theme	Participants	F
Behaviour	T1	1
Fact	T3, T19	2
Teaching	T2	1
Value	T6, T12, T21	3
Activity	T4, T9	2
Peace	T5	1
Stakeholder	T7, T8, T20	3
Education	T10, T22	2
Student	T11	1
Rules	T13, T14, T15	3
Collaboration	T16	1
Harmony	T17	1
Habit	T18	1

Table 2. Teachers' Views on the concept of School Culture

Table 2 presents the comments made by teachers regarding the concept of school culture, organized into themes. According to this table, the most common views expressed by teachers regarding the concept of school culture are “value”, “stakeholder” and “rules”. The second views that come to mind are “fact”, “activity” and “education”. The least mentioned views are “behavior”, “teaching”, “peace”, “student”, “cooperation”, “harmony” and “habit”.

Theme	Participants	F
Subjective	T11, T12, T14, T21	4
Respect	T13, T15, T18, T22	4
Importance	T3, T9, T20	3
Attitude	T2, T7	2
Morality	T1, T5	2
Value	T4, T6	2
Principle	T8	1
Common Understanding	T17	1
Beliefs	T16	1
Necessary	T19	1

Table 3. Teachers' Views on the Concept of Value

Table 3 shows the teachers' views on the concept of value. The most frequently mentioned views on the concept of value are the concepts of “subjective” and “respect”. The second most frequently mentioned view is the concept of “importance”. The least frequently mentioned views are the concepts of “attitude”, “morality”, “value”, “principle”, “common understanding”, “necessary” and “beliefs”, respectively.

Theme	Participants	F
Transmitting Culture	T5, T12, T16, T19	4
Behavior Set	T2, T20	2
Value	T3, T14	2
Morality	T6, T8	2
Universal	T7, T11	2
Education	T9, T22	2
Teaching Relationships	T4	1
Ethics	T1	1
Teaching	T10	1
Caring	T13	1
Choice	T15	1
Understanding	T17	1
Work	T21	1
Habit	T18	1

Table 4. Teachers' Views on the concept of Values Education

Table 4 includes the opinions of teachers regarding the concept of “Values Education”.

According to this table, when Values Education is mentioned, the most common comment that comes to teachers' minds is "transmitting culture". The second most common opinions are "value", "universal", "morality", "set of behavior" and "education". The least common comments are "teaching relationships", "ethics", "education", "caring", "choice", "understanding", "study", "habit".

Theme	Participants	F
Respect	T1, T4, T5, T6, T9, T10, T11, T12, T14, T15, T16, T17, T20, T21, T22	15
Love	T2, T4, T5, T6, T8, T10, T12, T13, T14, T15, T16, T18, T20	13
Responsibility	T1, T3, T4, T16, T19	5
Helpfulness	T3, T7, T14, T18, T19	5
Tolerance	T6, T12, T20	3
Sharing	T7, T8	2
Cooperation	T1	1
Friendship	T3	1
Peace	T5	1
Honesty	T18	1

Table 5. Teachers' Views on Values Easily Acquired in Value-Centered School Culture

Table 5 shows the values that can be easily taught in school culture. According to this table, the most easily taught values are "respect" and "love". According to the comments of the teachers, the second easiest values to teach are "responsibility" and "helpfulness". The least mentioned values among the easily taught values are "tolerance", "sharing", "cooperation", "friendship", "peace" and "honesty".

Theme	Participants	F
Respect	T2, T3, T7, T8, T9, T13, T14, T19	8
Empathy	T5, T11, T16, T18, T19, T20, T21	7
Love	T3, T9, T17, T19, T22	5
Honesty	T4, T6, T10, T15, T20	5
Tolerance	T1, T11, T12, T21, T22	5
Sharing	T1, T5, T8	3
Humility	T5, T6, T22	3
Patience	T1, T5, T8	3
Justice	T3, T8	2
Responsibility	T6, T7	2
Helpfulness	T10, T12	2
Happiness	T9	1

Freedom	T16	1
Goodness	T12	1
Courage	T11	1
Patriotism	T7	1

Table 6. Teachers' Views on Hard-Acquired Values in a Value-Centered School Culture

Table 6 shows the teachers' views on the values that are taught with difficulty in the Value-Centered School Culture. According to this table, the most difficult values to teach children in schools are "respect", "empathy", "love", "honesty" and "tolerance". According to the comments made by the teachers, the second most difficult values to teach are "sharing", "humility" and "patience". The least mentioned values among the values that are taught with difficulty are "responsibility", "helpfulness", "happiness", "freedom", "kindness", "courage" and "patriotism".

Theme	Participants	F
Yes	T5, T6, T10, T12, T14, T18, T19, T21	8
Partly yes	T4, T8, T15, T20	4
No	T1, T7, T9	3
Sometimes	T2, T7	2
Mostly no	T3, T13	2
Not always	T11	1
Not very much	T16	1
A little	T22	1

Table 7. Do Parents Collaborate with Teachers on the Values They Want to be Instilled in School?

Table 7 shows the frequency of parents cooperating with teachers regarding the values to be taught at school. According to the comments, 8 participant teachers stated that parents are prone to cooperation. 4 participant teachers stated that they partially agreed. 3 participant teachers stated that parents do not cooperate with teachers regarding values.

Theme	Participants	F
Respect	T3, T4, T5, T6, T8, T9, T10, T14, T16, T18, T21, T22	12
Love	T4, T5, T6, T9, T16, T22	6
Tolerance	T5, T6, T9, T10, T21, T22	6
Sharing	T2, T12, T15, T16, T20	5
Responsibility	T3, T6, T7, T9, T19	5
Happiness	T4, T6, T9, T20	4
Cooperation	T6, T9, T12	3
Honesty	T6, T9, T18	3
No feedback from parents	T1, T11	2
Good communication	T17	1
Teaching the rules	T13	1
Anger management	T2	1

Solidarity	T12	1
Humility	T6	1

Table 8. Values That Parents Want to be Acquired in School

Table 8 shows the values that parents want to be taught in school. According to this table, the values that parents want to be taught the most are "respect", "love", "tolerance", "sharing" and "responsibility". "Happiness", "cooperation", "honesty", "humility" are among the values that parents want their children to learn. Teachers coded as T1 and T11 stated that they did not receive feedback from parents on this issue.

Theme	Participants	F
Respect	T1,T2, T3,T4, T5, T6, T7,T8, T9, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15,T16, T20, T19, T20, T21, T22	20
Love	T1, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T11, T12, T14, T15, Ö20, T22	14
Responsibility	T1, T3, T4, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T16	10
Tolerance	T2, T4, T6, T8, T9, T11, T12, T20, T21, T22	10
Honesty	T1, T4, T6, T9, T10, T12, T19, T20	8
Cooperation	T1, T4, T6, T9	4
Empathy	T2, T8, T16, T17	4
Happiness	T4, T6, T9	3
Solidarity	T12, T19, T21	3
Hardworking	T7, T10	2
Sensitivity	T2	1
Justice	T3	1
Freedom	T4	1
Peace	T5	1
Humility	T6	1
Unity	T7	1
Patience	T8	1
Sincerity	T9	1
Sharing	T10	1

Table 9. Values That Teachers Want to Instill in Schools

Table 9 shows the values that teachers want to instill in school. According to this table, the values that teachers want to instill most in school are "respect" and "love". In addition, the majority of teachers emphasized that teaching the values of "responsibility", "tolerance", "honesty", "cooperation" and "empathy" is important.

Theme	Participants	F
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Giving Examples (Concretization)	T2, T8, T11, T14, T16, T17, T18	7
Plain Narration	T4, T6, T7, T20, T22	5
Telling Through Story	T11, T12, T14, T18, T19	5
Dramatization	T11, T12, T19, T20	4
Activities	T1, T2, T5	3
Telling Through Doing and Living	T3, T8, T22	3
Telling Through Games	T4, T11, T15	3
Being a Role/Model	T1, T21	2
Question-Answer	T12, T20	2
Watching Animation	T19	1
Interviewing the Family	T7	1
Using Visuals	T10	1
Giving advice	T13	1
Social Experience	T10	1

Table 10. Methods Used to Provide Information on Values Education

Table 10 shows the methods that teachers use to provide information on values education. The methods that teachers prefer to use most when providing information on "Values Education" are "providing examples", "plain narration", "telling through stories" and "dramatization". "Interviewing the family", "using visuals", "giving advice" and "social experience" are among the methods that teachers prefer to use least in school. The teacher coded as S9 commented as "There is no opportunity for Values Education".

Theme	Participants	F
Increased behaviors	T8, T11, T13	3
Should never be accepted	T1, T2, T18	3
Should be prevented	T3, T12, T15	3
Negative behaviour	T2, T7	2
Propensity for violence	T5, T21	2
Putting pressure	T4	1
Correct behaviors should be increased	T20	1
Breaking hearts	T19	1
Harming	T22	1
Sad situations	T6	1
Lack of love	T9	1
Punishing	T10	1
Communicating with family	T10	1
Should never be	T14	1

“Social Skills” lessons should be given	T16	1
Inability to empathize	T17	1
Very common	T18	1

Table 11. Teachers' Views on Bullying Behaviors

Table 11 includes teachers' comments on bullying behaviors. Teachers expressed bullying as “increased behaviors,” “should never be accepted,” and “should be prevented.” Comments such as “breaking hearts,” “sad situation,” “lack of love,” “pressuring,” “tendency to violence,” “should never happen,” and “negative behavior” were encountered less frequently.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>F</b>
Respect	T1, T2, T3, T4, T6, T7, T8, T12, T13, T14, T15, T17, T18, T20, T21	15
Empathy	T1, T5, T8, T9, T10, T11, T15, T16, T18, T19, T20, T21, T22	13
Love	T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T13, T14, T15, T18	10
Tolerance	T1, T2, T4, T11, T12, T19, T21	7
Helpfulness	T1, T9, T20	3
Sharing	T2, T20	2
Friendship	T18, T19	2
Cooperation	T1	1
Understanding	T21	1
Justice	T3	1
Patience	T5	1
Peace	T5	1
Sensitivity	T12	1
Equality	T20	1
Honesty	T20	1

Table 12. Values That Should Be Instilled to Prevent Bullying at School

Table 12 shows the values that need to be taught to prevent bullying in schools. According to this table, the values that need to be taught most to reduce bullying are “respect”, “love”, and “empathy”. It is seen that teachers express the values of “cooperation”, “patience”, “peace”, “honesty”, “equality”, “understanding”, and “justice” less frequently to prevent bullying in schools.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>F</b>
No disciplinary action	T1, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T14, T15, T17, T21	10
Verbal warning	T4, T16, T20, T21	4

Informing the family	T8, T14, T18, T19	4
Not letting them go to recess	T18, T19, T22	3
Different punishments	T5, T6	2
Taking away something they like	T2	1
Not doing what they want	T3	1
Empathizing	T13	1
Not getting a reward	T18	1
Preventing them from attending a class they like	T19	1
Not letting them play	T22	1

Table 13. Disciplinary Penalties Given for Bullying Behaviors

Table 13 shows the disciplinary punishments given to prevent bullying in schools. 10 participant teachers said that disciplinary punishments are not applied for bullying in schools. It is seen that the most common warnings are “verbal warning” and “family notification”. Punishments such as “not doing what they want”, “not giving a reward”, “preventing them from attending the class they like” are given less frequently. Teachers coded as T1 and T20 suggested that a disciplinary regulation be created for primary schools. They also suggested that there should be a disciplinary board in schools. Participant T7 said that certain practices should be implemented for bullying.

## Conclusion and Discussion

According to the results of this research, the values that teachers want to gain the most in the “Value-Centered School Culture” are “respect, love, responsibility and tolerance”. In the process of teaching values, all teaching methods were mentioned. However, the most frequently used methods are “using examples, stories, dramatization and plain narration”.

The research revealed that there is no cooperation with parents regarding “Values Education”. In addition, the absence of a disciplinary board and a disciplinary charter for primary schools prevents the establishment of a harmonious and stable order in schools.

When the findings of the study were interpreted, it was determined that the values that needed to be taught most in order to prevent bullying in schools were “respect, love and empathy”.

Budak and Arıcı (2022) investigated “Teachers' views on value-centered school culture”. According to the results of this research, teachers have a positive perspective on “Value” education. They also see themselves as competent when providing information on values education. In the research conducted by Budak and Arıcı (2022), it was revealed that cooperation between teachers and parents on values education is rare. This situation is parallel to the present study.

In another study, the views of parents and teachers on values were examined (Dinçer and Gözel, 2019). In line with the data obtained from the study, it was determined that parents and teachers have a positive perspective on teaching values. Parents are of the opinion that in order to teach values, they need to be done in a planned manner, like lessons.

Aktepe, Keser, and Seref (2020) examined the opinions of classroom teachers on values education in their study. According to the results of the research, most teachers argue that values

support children's personality development. Teachers stated that their biggest problem is that they do not know the names of the values taught to children. According to another result of the research, teachers use different strategies when teaching values to children. In this study, teachers also use different strategies when teaching values. This study is parallel to the findings of Aktepe, Keser, and Seref (2020) regarding the strategies used.

Sözer and Bozkurt (2017) tried to teach values to children through games in their research. This research aims to teach 5 different values. These values are determined as responsibility, respect, cooperation and self-confidence. According to the results of the research, it was concluded that there was a big difference between the group that participated in the experiment and the group that did not. According to the data of this research, it was concluded that values can be transferred to students. Sözer and Bozkurt (2017) used a quantitative research method in their research. In this study, a qualitative research method was used. The methods used in the research do not show parallelism. The following suggestions can be made for this research:

- Disciplinary Boards can be established in private and public schools affiliated with the TRNC Ministry of National Education.
- The “Values Education” course can be made compulsory.
- Opinions of parents can be obtained in future studies on Value-Centered Education.
- Quantitative research methods can be used more in the process of obtaining data in studies on “Values”.

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