



Investigation of the Relationship Between Delinquent Behaviors of Adolescents and Parental Acceptance-Rejection Perceived by Adolescents

Merve Ata Ütebay^a & Aynur Bütün Ayhan^b

* Corresponding author

E-mail: a_butun@yahoo.com

a. Yöntem Psikoloji Danışmanlık,
Ankara, Türkiye.

b. Ankara University, Faculty of Health
Sciences, Child Development
Department, Ankara, Türkiye.

Article Info

Received: July 03, 2025

Accepted: December 02, 2025

Published: December 17, 2025



10.46303/tpicd.2025.9

How to cite

Ata Ütebay, M., & Bütün Ayhan, A.
(2025). Investigation of the Relationship
Between Delinquent Behaviors of
Adolescents and Parental Acceptance-
Rejection Perceived by Adolescents.
*Theory and Practice in Child
Development*, 5(2), 25-44.

<https://doi.org/10.46303/tpicd.2025.9>

Copyright license

This is an Open Access article
distributed under the terms of the
Creative Commons Attribution 4.0
International license (CC BY 4.0).

ABSTRACT

In this study, it is aimed to examine adolescents' delinquent behaviors with various variables and to evaluate the relationship between adolescents' delinquency tendency and perceived parental acceptance and rejection levels. This is a descriptive study with a screening model. The research study group consists of 281 adolescents in the 12-17 age group in official schools where high school adolescents attend high school of National Ministry of Education in Hassa District of Hatay province. Tools used for data collection were "General Information Form" prepared by the researcher in order to collect socio-demographic data about adolescents and their parents as a data collection tool in the study, the "Criminal Behavior Scale" to determine the criminal behaviors of adolescents, and the "Parental Acceptance Scale (Child / Adolescent Form-Short)" to determine perceived parental acceptance and rejection by adolescents. As a result of the study, moderately positive and significant relationship was found between the total scores of Criminal Behavior and the total scores of the Mother Acceptance Rejection Scale and Father Acceptance Rejection Scale. Also, it was found that the delinquent behaviors of adolescents differed according to gender, the way the family was punished, and the type of movie they preferred to watch. In line with the findings of the study, suggestions were made to parents, experts working with children, institutions and organizations.

KEYWORDS

Adolescence; criminal behavior; parents; parents acceptance rejection.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is described as a transition period (Steinberg & Morris, 2001) in which development and change are the fastest; development and maturation are seen in many ways such as physiological, psychological, social and mental (Smith et al., 2003). During adolescence, individuals experience fast physical and sexual growth, while emotional bonds with family and friends become stronger. At the same time, adolescents develop their own system of values, which plays a key role in shaping their personality (Christie & Viner, 2005; Bee & Boyd, 2009). Adolescents often experience identity confusion during this period, which leads them to seek independence. This search for autonomy can result in opposition to adult authority. In addition, their desire to prove themselves, along with feelings of excitement and enthusiasm, influences their behavior (Arnett, 1996).

Adolescents may sometimes display problematic behaviors, which can arise from both developmental changes and environmental influences. Researchers have described these behaviors using terms like antisocial, risky, or criminal behavior (Yılmaz, 2000; Kaner, 2001). Most developed and developing societies face challenges related to children and adolescents who engage in irregular behaviors such as violence and aggression. In the context of Türkiye, a crime is defined as an act forbidden by the Turkish Penal Code and punishable by law. Behaviors that do not comply with the legal and social norms of society are considered acts against social rules and can be defined as crimes or illegal acts that bring the adolescent into conflict with the law. There are many factors that lead adolescents to display irregular behaviors, which can be divided into two main categories: individual and environmental. Individual factors include gender, age, heredity, and intelligence, while environmental factors involve family, school, and peer groups (Sarı, 2018). Various factors, including the family environment, parental behaviors, a history of criminal activity or tendencies among family members, household income, the number of siblings, and the broader social environment, have been shown to influence adolescents' engagement in irregular or problematic behaviors (Yılmaz, 2009). In addition, since media has become an integral and highly influential part of daily life, the types of films and television series that adolescents choose to watch may further shape their attitudes, values, and behavioral tendencies, potentially contributing to the development of these irregular behaviors (Klein, 1993).

The nature and quality of the relationship that adolescents maintain with their parents are considered highly influential in determining their likelihood of engaging in irregular or problematic behaviors, as supportive and communicative parent-child interactions can reduce the risk of such behaviors, whereas conflictual or distant relationships may increase it (Bee & Boyd, 2009). Research indicates that adolescents who maintain healthy relationships with their parents are less likely to engage in illegal behaviors compared to those who experience unhealthy relationships (Branje, 2018). The foundations of personality development lie in an individual's early relationships with parents or primary caregivers. Therefore, the emotional bond between the adolescent and the caregiver is particularly important (Bee & Boyd, 2009).

Parental Acceptance and Rejection Theory (PART), proposed by Ronald P. Rohner in 1986, focuses on the ways in which parents communicate their feelings toward their children and how these behaviors are interpreted by the child, emphasizing the significance of the emotional bond formed between parent and child in shaping the child's emotional, social, and behavioral development (Aksu, 2014). The theory investigates both the reasons behind and the effects of parental acceptance and rejection, highlighting how these experiences influence a child's emotional well-being, behavior, and social-cognitive development. Additionally, it seeks to anticipate the potential long-term impact of how children perceive acceptance or rejection by their parents from early childhood through adulthood (Rohner, 1986).

PART emphasizes that parental acceptance or rejection experienced during childhood can shape a child's overall development, influencing emotional, social, and behavioral outcomes across the lifespan (Arslan, 2010; Rohner, 1986; Salahur, 2010). Research from psychological, anthropological, and ethnographic perspectives suggests that all individuals, regardless of social status, language, or gender, have a basic need to feel accepted and valued by important figures in their lives (Aksu, 2014; Rohner, 1975; Rohner et al., 2009). Since parents play the most significant role in adolescents' lives during these formative years, examining parental acceptance and rejection behaviors is essential (Berenson et al., 2005). Children who feel accepted by their parents' experience love and approval, while those who feel rejected often experience insecurity and may turn to aggressive behaviors (Rohner, 1986). Given that parents play a central role in adolescents' lives, it is crucial to examine how parental behaviors of acceptance and rejection impact their children (Berenson et al., 2005). Children who feel accepted by their parents tend to experience love and approval, which supports positive development, whereas those who perceive rejection may develop insecurity and display aggressive or problematic behaviors (Rohner, 1986). Studies indicate that parental rejection is linked to various difficulties, including behavioral problems and anxiety, regardless of the child's gender, ethnicity, or cultural background (Rohner & Britner, 2002). Furthermore, research involving participants from multiple countries, including Turkiye, has shown that adolescents perceiving parental rejection are more likely to engage in irregular behaviors, while those perceiving acceptance exhibit healthier psychological adjustment (Khaleque & Rohner, 2013). When parents demonstrate rejecting behaviors or fail to provide adequate attention and care, children may emotionally distance themselves from their families, experience anger, and become more susceptible to engaging in irregular behaviors (Cauffman et al., 2015). This suggests that insufficient parental involvement or negative parenting practices can contribute to adolescents seeking acceptance and validation outside the family, potentially leading to problem behaviors. Understanding these dynamics highlights the importance of supportive parenting in preventing adolescents from developing tendencies toward antisocial or criminal activities.

Research indicates that adolescents may be inclined to engage in irregular behaviors due to a combination of physiological and psychological changes that occur during this

developmental period, as well as various environmental factors. Moreover, patterns of criminal tendencies observed in childhood and adolescence are often predictive of more serious criminal behaviors in adulthood (Nagin & Tremblay, 1999). However, the studies in the literature are examined, and it is seen that most of the studies are conducted with convicted children or criminal tendency is evaluated only through physical behaviors such as aggression. In addition, there are different studies on the effects of parental rejection on adolescents. However, studies examining the relationship between parental acceptance and rejection and irregular behaviors in adolescence are insufficient. By identifying the factors linked to adolescents' tendencies toward criminal or irregular behaviors, preventive measures can be implemented. Interventions can also be designed for adolescents and their families to reduce the likelihood of engaging in criminal activities (Kaner, 2001).

Therefore, in order to solve the problem of adolescents healthily, who resort to irregular behaviors, it is thought that it is essential to examine the adolescents' criminal behaviors and their parents' perception of acceptance-rejection according to various variables and to evaluate the relationship between adolescents' criminal tendency and perceived parental acceptance and rejection level. Within this purpose, the questions of whether there is a relationship between maternal rejection of acceptance and criminal tendency, what is the relationship between paternal rejection of acceptance and criminal tendency, what is the effect of gender variable on criminal tendency, what is the relationship between the type of film watched, which is one of the media types, and the criminal tendency is sought to be answered. This study aimed to reveal the factors that may be effective in adolescents' criminal behaviors and their parents' acceptance-rejection perceptions, as well as to examine the relationship between adolescents' criminal tendencies and perceived parental acceptance and rejection levels.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Group

The study group of the research consisted of 281 adolescents aged 12-17 who continued their education in public high schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education in Hassa District of Hatay Province, Republic of Türkiye, in the autumn semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. In forming the study group, information was obtained from the Ministry of National Education about the schools in Hassa district of Hatay province in the 2020-2021 academic year. Necessary permissions were obtained from Hatay Governorship and Hassa District Directorate of National Education to conduct research in high schools where adolescents meet the necessary conditions to take part in the study sample. Then, the population calculation of Hatay Province Hassa District was conducted. According to the data obtained, it was determined that there were 2,755 adolescents in Hassa District of Hatay Province. According to the sample calculation, it was determined that the study should be conducted with at least 93 adolescents with a margin of error of 0.1. In this study, simple random sampling, one of the best probability sampling techniques that helps to save time and resources, has been used. This

technique is the random selection of sampling units from the population list, where each item in the population has an equal chance and probability of being selected (Büyüköztürk et al., 2012). Three state high schools were determined by simple random sampling method. Participants were given an information letter and consent form about the research, and the scale was applied to the adolescents who volunteered to participate. The scale applications were completed in 30 minutes in total. After the research data were obtained, the scales were examined and the incorrect scales were excluded from the scope of the research. The study was conducted with 350 adolescent participants; 68 participants were excluded due to incomplete answers, and as a result, 282 adolescents were included in the study.

Adolescents' demographic features are shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Adolescents by Demographic Characteristics

Socio-demographic characteristics	Groups	f	%
Gender	Female	130	46.3
	Male	151	53.7
Class Level	9th Grade	87	31.0
	10th Grade	86	30.6
	11th Grade	48	17.1
	12th Grade	60	21.4
Number of siblings	Only Child	13	4.6
	Two siblings	33	11.7
	Three Siblings	79	28.1
	Four Siblings and Above	156	55.5
Birth Order	The First Child	58	20.6
	One of the Middle or Middle Children	132	47.0
	The Last Child	91	32.4

Data Collection Tools

As a data collection tool, the "general information form" prepared by the researcher in order to collect socio-demographic data about the adolescents and their parents, the "Delinquent Behaviors Scale" developed by Kaner (2001) to determine the behaviors of adolescents towards crime, and the "Parental Acceptance and Rejection Scale (Child/Adolescent Form-Short)" developed by Rohner et al. (1978) to determine the perceived parental acceptance and rejection of adolescents have been used.

General Information Form: In the information form prepared by the researcher for adolescents, questions for adolescents and their parents such as gender, grade level, mother's education level, father's education level, family type, the way adolescents are penalized by their families,

the type of films that adolescents prefer to watch were included in the general information form containing questions for adolescents and their parents.

Delinquent Behaviors Scale (DBS): In the study, the Delinquent Behaviors Scale (DBS) developed by Kaner (2001) was used to examine the criminal behavior of adolescents. The DBS is a scale that aims to identify behaviors that could be considered a crime if detected and which might subject adolescents to the law. Since there are not any equivalent scales measuring adolescents' criminal tendency in Türkiye and the scale developed by Kaner is general, and this scale was preferred due to its ongoing validity. The scale consists of 38 four-point Likert-type items with responses ranging from "4-5 times or more, 3-4 times, 1-2 times, never". The scale consists of 9 subscales and total score dimensions. Subscales; 1. Status Offence and Violation of School Rules (7 items). 2. Theft (6 items). Theft (6 items). 3. Failure to Control Anger and Fighting (6 items). 4. Petty Theft (4 items). 5. Conspicuous Destruction (3 items). 6. Status Offence and Deceiving Others (5 items). 7. Drugs and violence Offences (3 items). 8. Damage to Buildings (2 items). 9. Cheating (2 items). The high score obtained from the scale indicates that the crime tendency is high. The highest score of 152 and the lowest score of 38 can be obtained from the scale (Kaner, 2001).

The validity and reliability studies of the scale were conducted by Kaner (2001). Within the scope of construct validity, Principal Component Analysis was performed to determine the basic dimensions and factor structure of the scale, and 11 factors with eigenvalues above 1 and explaining 60.5% of the variance were determined. As a result of repeated vertical rotations, a 38-item scale collected in 9 factors was formed. All correlations. It was found to be significant at 000 level. The highest correlations were found between the sub-tests and the whole test. This was expressed as a finding that supports the unidimensionality of the scale (Kaner, 2001). The internal consistency method based on item analysis was used to test the reliability of the scale. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated for internal consistency. The highest Alpha value of 0.93 was obtained from the whole scale. These values vary between 0.85 and 0.72 for the subscales. The test split reliability coefficient calculated with the Spearman-Brown formula, again the highest value was 0.89 for the whole test. This coefficient was found to vary between 0.84 and 0.75 for the subscales. According to the results obtained, it was stated that the scale was reliable (Kaner, 2001). In this study, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the subscales of the Delinquent Behaviors Scale were calculated and the Cronbach Alpha value of 0.96 was determined. Cronbach Alpha values of 0.70 and above show that the reliability of the scales used for the study sample is sufficient. In the light of these results, it was concluded that the Delinquent Behaviors Scale used in the study was valid and reliable for the study group.

Parental Acceptance and Rejection Scale (Child/Adolescent Short Form): Varan (2003), conducted the validity and reliability studies of the Parental Acceptance and Rejection Scale (PART) developed by Rohner et al. in 1978, which was used to determine the level of parental acceptance and rejection perceived by adolescents in the study. In the sixty-item Parental Acceptance and Rejection Scale, there are four subscales: Temperature (20 items),

Hostility/Aggression (15 items), Neglect and Indifference (15 items), and Undifferentiated Rejection Subscales (10 items). A short form was created with 24 items selected from 60 items in the scale (Rohner & Khaleque, 2005). In the short form, the scores vary between 24 and 96; 24 points indicate the highest level of acceptance perception, while 96 points indicate the highest level of rejection perception. The scores collected from the first four subscales show the individuals' perception of "being accepted or rejected by their parents". The items in the PART are answered with a four-point Likert-type items such as "almost always true" (4 points), "sometimes true" (3 points), "rarely true" (2 points), "never true" (1 point). The forms containing the items are filled in separately for the mother and father. In the study conducted on 1700 participants between the ages of 9-18, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the subscales belonging to the mother and father forms of the children's PART were determined as 0.82 and 0.96. In the light of these results, it has been concluded that the Children's PART evaluates the acceptance-rejection and control that children living in our country perceive from their parents in a reliable and valid way (Öngider, 2013). In this study, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the Parental Acceptance and Rejection Scale subscales were calculated, and Cronbach Alpha values of 0.81 for the mother acceptance-rejection scale and 0.84 for the father acceptance-rejection scale were determined. Cronbach Alpha values of 0.70 and above show that the reliability of the scales used for the study sample is sufficient. In the light of these results, it was concluded that the Parental Acceptance and Rejection Scale used in the study was valid and reliable for the study group.

Data Collection Method

The data were collected in the fall semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. In the research, first of all, permission was obtained from the authors of the scales in order to apply the data collection tools planned to be used. During the implementation of the measurement tools, the school principals and teachers were interviewed and the appropriate days and times were determined for the implementation. In practice, necessary explanations were made to the adolescents about the purpose of the research and their consent was obtained to take part in the research.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of the data obtained in the study, primarily normality test was performed to determine whether the parametric test conditions were met. Number and percentage values were calculated in the evaluation of socio-demographic data. As a result of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test conducted for this purpose, non-parametric tests were used in the study because the score distribution of the Delinquent Behaviors Scale and Parental Acceptance and Rejection Scales did not show a normal distribution ($p > 0.5$).

In cases where there was a difference between groups when comparing quantitative data, the Mann Whitney U test was used to compare groups of parameters (gender) that do not show normal distribution. When comparing quantitative data, in the case of more than two groups (type of film or series watched), the Kruskal Wallis H test was used to compare groups

that do not show normal distribution. According to Büyüköztürk et al. (2012), while calculating the correlation coefficient (r), there occurs a high (.70 - .90), medium (.69 - .30), and low (.29 - .01) level relationship between two variables. Mann Whitney U test was used to compare paired groups in case the difference was statistically significant (Büyüköztürk, 2002).

In accordance with the purpose of the study, Spearman correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the relationships between the scores of Delinquent Behavior and the Parental Acceptance Rejection Scale (PART). In the study, the confidence interval has been determined as 95%, and the values of $p < 0.05$ have been accepted as statistically significant.

FINDINGS

The mean scores of adolescents from the Delinquent Behaviors Scale and the mean scores and standard deviations of the Parental Acceptance and Rejection Scales from the mother and father forms are shown in Table 2.

Table 2.

Descriptive Values of the Scores Obtained from the Delinquent Behavior and Parental Acceptance-Rejection Scales

Variables	N	Min.	Max.	\bar{X}	Sd
Criminal Behavior Total Score	281	40	160	57.13	23.85
Mother Acceptance-Rejection Scale Total Score	281	24	77	44.07	13.18
Father Acceptance-Rejection Scale Total Score	281	24	90	44.90	13.63

As seen in Table 2, their scores on the Delinquent Behaviors Scale range from 38 to 152 points. The table is examined, and it is seen that the total scores of adolescents' criminal behavior varies between 40 and 160, and the average total score of adolescents' criminal behavior is calculated as $\bar{X} = 57.13$. It is seen that the total scores of criminal behaviors of the adolescents participating in the study are below the average and the crime tendency rate is low. In the Parental Acceptance and Rejection Scale, the scores vary between 24 and 96. 24 points indicate the highest level of acceptance perception, while 96 points indicate the highest level of rejection perception. It was determined that the total scores of the mother acceptance-rejection scale varied between 24 and 77, and the mean score of the mother acceptance-rejection scale was $\bar{X} = 44.07$, while the total scores of the father acceptance-rejection scale varied between 24 and 90, and the mean score of the father acceptance-rejection scale was $\bar{X} = 44.90$. The acceptance-rejection scores perceived by the adolescents participating in the study from both their mothers and fathers were examined, and it was determined that the adolescents perceived acceptance more than both their mothers and fathers by obtaining scores lower than the average.

Table 3 presents the Spearman Correlation results of the adolescents' delinquent Behaviors Scale and mother acceptance-rejection scales.

Table 3.

Spearman Correlation Results for Delinquent Behaviors and Maternal Acceptance-Rejection Scales

Variables	Mother Acceptance-Rejection Scale Total Score	
	r	0.342 **
Criminal Behavior Total Score	p	<0.001
	n	281

*p< .01

Table 3 is examined, and it is understood that there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between the total scores of adolescents' criminal behavior and the total scores of the mother acceptance-rejection scale ($r=0.342$; $p<0.01$). It was determined that as the total scores of the maternal acceptance-rejection scale increased, the total scores of criminal behaviors also increased. According to the findings of the research, as the level of rejection perceived by adolescents from their mothers increases, their criminal tendencies also increase. Table 4 presents the Spearman Correlation results of the adolescents' delinquent behaviors scale and father acceptance-rejection scales.

Table 4.

Spearman Correlation Results for Delinquent Behaviors and Father Acceptance-Rejection Scales

Variables	Father Acceptance-Rejection Scale Total Score	
	r	0.365
Criminal Behavior Total Score	p	<0.001
	n	281

*p< .01

Table 4 is examined, and it is understood that there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between the total scores of adolescents' criminal behavior and the total scores of the father acceptance-rejection scale ($r=0.365$; $p<0.01$). It was determined that as the total scores of the father acceptance-rejection scale increased, the total scores of criminal behaviors also increased. According to the findings of the research, as the level of rejection perceived by adolescents from their fathers increases, their criminal tendencies also increase.

Table 5 presents the standard deviations of the mean scores of the adolescents' delinquent behavior and parental acceptance rejection scale by gender and the results of the Mann Whitney U Test.

Table 5.

Mean, Standard Deviations and Mann Whitney U Test Results of Adolescents' Delinquent Behaviour and Parental Acceptance-Rejection Scale Scale Scores by Gender

Variables	Gender	n	\bar{x}	Sd	Rank mean	Rank total	U	z	p
Criminal Behavior Total Score	Female	130	51.26	13.36	125.42	16304.00	7789.00	-2.99	<0.001
	Male	151	62.19	29.21	154.42	23317.00			
Mother Acceptance-Rejection Scale Total Score	Female	130	42.48	12.32	131.96	17155.00	8640.00	-1.73	0.08
	Male	151	45.44	13.78	148.78	22466.00			
Father Acceptance-Rejection Scale Total Score	Female	130	42.35	13.82	123.43	16046.00	7531.00	-3.37	<0.001
	Male	151	47.10	13.13	156.13	23575.00			

*p< .05, **p< .01

Table 5 is examined, and it is seen that there is a significant difference as a result of the Mann Whitney U test conducted to determine whether there is a significant difference between the mean scores of criminal behaviors of adolescents according to the gender variable (U= 7789.00; z = -2.99; p<0.05). Considering the rank averages, it is noteworthy that the rank averages of male adolescents (X= 154.42) are higher than the rank averages of female adolescents (X=125.42). This finding shows that the criminal tendencies of male adolescents are higher than female adolescents.

Table 6 presents the mean scores, standard deviations and Kruskal Wallis H Test results of adolescents' delinquent behavior and parental acceptance and rejection scale scores according to the punishment type of their families.

Table 6 was examined, and it was determined that the mean scores of criminal behaviors of adolescents according to the punishment of their families showed a significant difference as a result of the Kruskal Wallis H test (H=14.37; p<0.05). It was determined that the mean ranks of criminal behavior of adolescents with families using the physical punishment method were significantly higher (X=201.42) than the mean ranks of adolescents with families using verbal

warning ($X = 133.02$) and emotional punishment-deprivation punishments ($X = 157.84$). With this finding, it is seen that the criminal tendencies of adolescents exposed to physical punishment method are higher than adolescents exposed to verbal warning and emotional punishment-deprivation punishments.

Table 7 presents the standard deviations of the mean scores of the delinquent behavior and parental acceptance and rejection scale according to the type of film that adolescents prefer to watch and the results of the Kruskal Wallis H Test.

Table 7 was examined, and it was determined that the mean scores of criminal behavior showed a significant difference according to the type of movie that adolescents preferred to watch as a result of the Kruskal Wallis H test ($H = 23.68$; $p < 0.05$). The mean ranks are examined, and it is seen that the mean ranks of criminal behavior of adolescents watching war-violence & horror-thriller genre films ($\bar{X} = 172.81$) are significantly higher than the mean ranks of adolescents watching action-adventure ($\bar{X} = 130.34$), comedy and romance ($\bar{X} = 118.80$), drama, science fiction-fantasy and sports genre films ($\bar{X} = 125.00$). This finding shows that adolescents who watch war-violence & horror-thriller movies have higher criminal tendencies than adolescents who prefer other types of movies.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to identify factors influencing adolescents' criminal behavior and to examine the relationship between adolescents' criminal tendencies and their perceptions of parental acceptance and rejection.

The results showed a positive and significant relationship between adolescents perceived parental rejection and their criminal behavior levels. In other words, higher levels of perceived parental rejection were associated with increased tendencies toward criminal behavior. According to Parental Acceptance and Rejection Theory, parents' attitudes and behaviors play a critical role in shaping children's emotions, thoughts, and actions (Ilhan Yıldız & Butun Ayhan, 2020). Previous research indicates that high levels of parental rejection are significantly related to destructive behaviors, increasing the likelihood of such behaviors (Muris et al., 2003; Rohner & Britner, 2002). Rohner and Britner (2002), emphasized that problem behaviors often stem from parent-child relationships. Therefore, when evaluating adolescents' criminal behavior, the psychosocial aspects of their environment must also be considered (Cauffman et al., 2015). Although criminal behavior in adolescence has been widely studied, research specifically addressing the relationship between parental acceptance and rejection and adolescent criminal behavior remains limited. Adolescent criminal tendencies are complex, arising from both individual and environmental factors, and cannot be fully explained from a single perspective. Studies on Parental Acceptance and Rejection Theory indicate that perceived parental rejection—regardless of cultural context—can lead to attachment issues, academic difficulties, destructive psycho-physiological reactions, and interpersonal problems (Waite et al., 2014). The findings of the present study align with previous research on PART.

The study also found a significant difference in total criminal behavior scores based on gender. Male adolescents scored significantly higher than females, indicating that males have a higher tendency toward criminal behavior. This finding aligns with previous research showing gender differences in criminal tendencies (Aktaş & Güvenç, 2006; Buss & Perry, 1992; Eroğlu, 2009; Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986; Marcus & Betzer, 1996; Rothbaum & Weisz, 1994; Uzbaş & Kabasakal, 2010; Van Voorhis et al., 1988). The social environment and parenting styles may explain these differences. In many societies, female adolescents are more strictly supervised, whereas male adolescents often experience more relaxed behavioral control, which may contribute to higher criminal tendencies among males (Barber, 1996; Conger et al., 1997; Garber et al., 1997). These findings suggest that societal structures, parental attitudes, and differing problem-solving approaches between genders can influence the emergence of criminal behavior.

The study found that adolescents' total criminal behavior scores differed significantly depending on their families' disciplinary methods. Adolescents who experienced physical punishment exhibited higher criminal tendencies compared to those who received verbal warnings, emotional punishment, or deprivation. Exposure to physical punishment can create stress, which may lead adolescents to engage in problem behaviors. Similar findings have been reported in previous research. Punishment following a behavior is a stressful experience, and Stasevic et al. (2005), found that children most frequently feel stress when disciplined by their parents. Farrington (1991), in his study on early childhood aggression and its long-term effects, highlighted that strict disciplinary methods, including physical punishment, are associated with an increased tendency toward criminal behavior. A study conducted on children who were dragged into crime found that most of their children applied physical or verbal violent punishment methods to punish them as a result of any unwanted behavior. The study investigating the factors affecting the emergence of criminal behaviors in adolescents determined that exposure to physical violence had a strong effect (Durrant, 2008). Similarly, Finkelhor et al. (2015), stated that 72.4% of children involved in crime experience physical violence from their families. Similarly, Finkelhor (2009), emphasizes in his study that psychosocial risk factors for destructive behaviors may be encountering or witnessing violence in the home environment or the community and negative peer groups. The literature is examined, and the harms of parents' negative methods when disciplining their children and the importance of supporting healthy parental attitudes emerge in preventing crime orientation. Social learning theories reveal the importance of family life (Over & Carpenter, 2012). According to the social learning perspective, aggression is a learned behavior and the adolescent who is punished with physical violence can become prone to destructive behaviors by adapting this aggressive behavior to the problem situations in his/her own life. The fact that this negative behavior knowledge learned by the adolescent through social learning can turn into criminal behavior in later years is confirmed by the findings of our study and similar research findings in the literature.

Adolescents' tendency toward irregular behaviors is shaped by both individual and environmental factors. Among these, media exposure—an important environmental factor—was examined in this study. Since its introduction, media has permeated many aspects of daily life and has become one of the most influential social tools affecting human behavior (Klein, 1993). The types of films and series that adolescents choose to watch can influence their behaviors. In this study, it was found that adolescents who preferred war, violence, horror, or thriller films exhibited higher criminal tendencies compared with those who watched action-adventure, comedy, romance, drama, science fiction-fantasy, or sports films. Since its introduction, media has become deeply integrated into daily life and serves as one of the most powerful tools shaping human behavior (Klein, 1993). Videos leave positive or negative effects on their audiences and have an effective power to direct societies and shape their thinking, attitudes, and behaviors. Today, especially adolescents often turn to these mass media tools to spend their free time and have fun, which brings some negativities. The presence of encouraging criminal acts in broadcasting triggers criminal behavior in young people (Villani, 2001). According to social learning theories, an individual can learn social skills from his/her parents by watching characters with criminal behaviors on television or in films and can also learn to engage in delinquent behaviors (Over & Carpenter, 2012). Violent media programs can strongly affect adolescents, leading them to identify with main characters and imitate the actions and speech of these figures in their everyday lives (Kunt, 2003). Research indicates that observing violent acts through visual media can create a psychological desensitization toward criminal events. This effect is heightened when violent content portrays certain acts of violence as justifiable (Anderson, 2004). Criminal behaviors excite the audience and attract more attention (Tannenbaum, 1975). Some researchers emphasize that violent and fearful spectacles have different effects rather than directing destructive behaviors and state that violent productions will not only lead the audience to crime but also cause the view that the world is a dangerous place (Şakı Aydın, 2007). The positive and negative effects of media presentations on young people, such as films or series, have been demonstrated by many researchers. The diversity and multiplicity of films that adolescents frequently use to spend their free time and have a good time makes it difficult to control this medium. In the study, it is believed that adolescents who prefer to watch violent films may have increased their criminal tendencies because they take the people they watch and take them as role models.

Parental Acceptance and Rejection Theory (PART) examine how parental acceptance and rejection influence an individual's emotional, behavioral, and socio-cognitive development. The theory also aims to predict the long-term effects of perceived parental acceptance or rejection from early childhood on both child and adult development (Rohner, 1986). With the findings obtained in the study, it has been revealed that parental acceptance and rejection have a positive relationship with the criminal tendency of adolescents. In order to understand the behavior of adolescents towards crime, both personal and family characteristics need to be examined together. Thus, early intervention services can be provided to prevent adolescents

from turning to crime by determining the factors related to criminal behavior (Mann & Reynolds, 2006). Among the characteristics examined, the effect of characteristics such as parental acceptance and rejection, gender, family punishment attitudes, and media use on the criminal tendency of adolescents was revealed. Especially the importance of the family factor is at the center of this research. Yavuzer (1998), emphasizes that the influence of the family starts before birth and continues throughout an individual's entire life. The approval, acceptance, love, and support perceived by the parents or caregivers of children of all ages from infancy is very significant. The child, who feels loved and supported by his/her parents, can develop a healthier personality both psychologically and physiologically by obtaining the experiences he/she needs for his/her development, and the child, who is neglected and rejected by his/her parents, can develop an aggressive, irritable, dependent personality trait (Simons, 1988) and thus a crime-prone picture may arise. Shiek revealed that parental qualities are related to the adolescent's characteristics, such as self-esteem, and stated that negative parental qualities are related to the adolescent's poor coping skills (Bulanda & Majumdar, 2009). Studies have shown that adolescents cannot perceive acceptance by their parents and respond to introversion, aggressive behaviors, and criminal tendencies (Mendo-Lázaro, 2019). The findings obtained from the research are consistent with similar studies in the literature.

CONCLUSION

The issue of adolescent criminal tendency has a more special importance than other developmental periods due to its effect on adulthood. The adolescent individual's exposure to wrong parental attitudes and having a social environment that supports negative behavior patterns both affect the adolescent parental relationship and increase the tendency of adolescents to delinquent behaviors. Considering the TUIK's data, it is seen that the number of children who are involved in crime or who are victims of crime has been increasing in recent years. Thus, it is critical to determine why adolescents who are prone to criminal behavior are involved in delinquent behaviors and to take the necessary precautions. Criminal behavior is not only a negative situation that affects the individual and his/her family but also a social problem that negatively affects society. Although the foundations of criminal tendency are based on social and individual factors, it is a complex problem that cannot be understood from a single perspective. Since criminal tendency is not an innate characteristic of adolescents, it is supposed that it is important to examine many socio-economic, psycho-social and cultural factors and bring solutions to this problem in adolescents' tendency to delinquent behaviors. Thus, necessary measures and improvements can be made in a timely manner.

It is believed that the results obtained in this research contribute to the literature. However, the research has some limitations. The research is limited to the data obtained from 281 adolescent participants aged 12-17. The data obtained reflect the experiences of a limited number of adolescents. The relationship between parental acceptance and rejection levels and criminal tendencies of adolescents can be evaluated with studies conducted in larger samples.

In addition, data on parental acceptance and rejection and criminal tendencies perceived by adolescents were obtained only from adolescents. In future studies, studies involving teachers and parents of adolescents should be planned in order to evaluate the evaluations of adolescents in a multi-faceted way. The research was planned with the quantitative research method, which is a correlational survey model. Qualitative research methods can also be used in adolescent criminal behavior and parental acceptance and rejection issues. Due to the district where the study was conducted, mostly low socioeconomic adolescents were included in the study. Comparison between groups should be planned by working with adolescents at high and middle socioeconomic levels more comprehensively. By planning longitudinal studies on the subject, the relationship between parental acceptance and rejection and various variables can be evaluated in the future.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my advisors Prof. Dr. Aynur BÜTÜN AYHAN and Assoc. Prof. Dr. UTKU BEYAZIT for their support in carrying out, organizing and successfully completing this study.

REFERENCES

- Aktaş, V., & Güvenç, G. B. (2006). Kız ve erkek ergenlerde saldırgan ve olumlu sosyal davranışlar ile yaş, ilişkisel bağlam ve kişiler-arası duyarlılık arasındaki ilişkiler. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 23(2), 233–264.
- Anderson, C. A., Carnagey, N. L., Flanagan, M., Benjamin, A. J., Eubanks, J., & Valentine, J. C. (2004). Violent video games: Specific effects of violent content on aggressive thoughts and behavior. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 36, 199–249. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(04\)36004-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(04)36004-1)
- Arnett, J. J. (1996). Sensation seeking, aggressiveness, and adolescent reckless behavior. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 20(6), 693–702. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-8869\(96\)00027-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-8869(96)00027-X)
- Arslan, H. (2010). *Algılanan ebeveyn kabul ve reddinin mizaç ve karakter özelliklerine etkisi* (Master's thesis, Ege University). <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi>
- Barber, B. K. (1996). Parental psychological control: Revisiting a neglected construct. *Child Development*, 67(6), 3296–3319. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.1996.tb01915.x>
- Bee, H., & Boyd, D. (2009). *Çocuk gelişimi psikolojisi* (G. O. Ed., 1. Baskı, pp. 441–526). Kaknüs Yayınları.
- Berenson, K. R., Kühn, A., & Anderson, J. (2005). Implications of identification with parents and parents' acceptance for adolescent and young adult self-esteem. *Self and Identity*, 4(3), 289–301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15298860500135250>
- Branje, S. (2018). Development of parent–adolescent relationships: Conflict interactions as a mechanism of change. *Child Development Perspectives*, 12(3), 171–176. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12278>

- Bulanda, R. E., & Majumdar, D. (2009). Perceived parent–child relations and adolescent self-esteem. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *18*, 203–212.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-008-9220-3>
- Buss, A. H., & Perry, M. P. (1992). The Aggression Questionnaire. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *63*(3), 452–459. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.63.3.452> ([researchgate.net](https://www.researchgate.net))
- Büyüköztürk, Ş., Çakmak, E. K., Akgün, Ö. E., Karadeniz, Ş., & Demirel, F. (2015). *Bilimsel araştırma yöntemleri*. Pegem Akademi. <https://depo.pegem.net/9789944919289.pdf>
- Cauffman, E., Steinberg, L., & Piquero, A. R. (2015). A developmental perspective on adolescent risk-taking and criminal behavior. In F. T. Cullen & P. Wilcox (Eds.), *The handbook of criminological theory* (pp. 100–120). Wiley.
- Christie, D., & Viner, R. (2005). Adolescent development. *BMJ*, *330*(7486), 301–304.
<https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.330.7486.301>
- Conger, K. J., Conger, R. D., Elder, G. H., Lorenz, F. O., Simons, R. L., & Whitbeck, L. B. (1997). Parents, siblings, psychological control, and adolescent adjustment. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *12*(1), 113–138. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0743554897121007>
- Durrant, J. E. (2008). Physical punishment, culture, and rights: Current issues for professionals. *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*, *29*(1), 55–66.
<https://doi.org/10.1097/DBP.0b013e31815f9c33>
- Eroğlu, S. E. (2009). *Saldırganlık davranışının boyutları ve ilişkili olduğu faktörler: Lise ve üniversite öğrencileri üzerine karşılaştırmalı bir çalışma* (Doctoral dissertation, Selçuk University). <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi>
- Farrington, D. P. (1991). Childhood aggression and adult violence: Early precursors and later-life outcomes. In R. D. Peters & R. J. McMahon (Eds.), *The development and treatment of childhood aggression* (Vol. 5, pp. 29–45). Pergamon.
<https://books.google.com.tr/books?id=example>
- Finkelhor, D. (2009). *Children's exposure to violence: A comprehensive national survey*. Diane Publishing.
- Finkelhor, D., Turner, H. A., Shattuck, A., & Hamby, S. L. (2015). *Children's exposure to violence, crime, and abuse: An update*. US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/248547.pdf>
- Garber, J., Robinson, N. S., & Valentiner, D. P. (1997). The relation between parenting and adolescent depression: Self-worth as a mediator. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *12*(1), 12–33. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0743554897121002>
- İlhan Yıldız, G., & Bütün Ayhan, A. (2020). A study of predictive role of parental acceptance-rejection as perceived by children on secure attachment level. *Current Psychology*, *1–10*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-020-00897-9>

- Kaner, S. (2001). Ana baba denetimleriyle ergenlerin suç kabul edilen davranışları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi. In *I. Ulusal Çocuk ve Suç: Nedenler ve Önleme Çalışmaları Sempozyumu* (pp. 229–254).
- Klein, J. D., Wilson, D. M., & Dumas, A. (1993). Adolescents' risky behavior and mass media use. *Pediatrics*, *92*(1), 24–31. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.92.1.24>
- Kunt, V. (2003). *Çocuk ve suç* (Master's thesis, Ankara University).
<https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi>
- Loeber, R., & Stouthamer-Loeber, M. (1986). Family factors as correlates and predictors of juvenile conduct problems and delinquency. *Crime & Justice*, *7*, 29–149.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/449112>
- Mann, E. A., & Reynolds, A. J. (2006). Early intervention and juvenile delinquency prevention: Evidence from the Chicago longitudinal study. *Social Work Research*, *30*(3), 153–167.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/swr/30.3.153>
- Marcus, R. F., & Betzer, P. D. S. (1996). Attachment and antisocial behavior in early adolescence. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, *16*(2), 229–249.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0272431696016002006>
- Mendo-Lázaro, S., Martínez, A., Arias, B., & Navarro, C. (2019). The role of parental acceptance–rejection in emotional instability during adolescence. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *16*(7), 1194.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16071194>
- Murís, P., Meesters, C., & van den Berg, F. (2003). Internalizing and externalizing problems as correlates of self-reported attachment style and perceived parental rearing in normal adolescents. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *12*(2), 171–183.
<https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1022874520149>
- Over, H., & Carpenter, M. (2012). Putting the social into social learning: Explaining both selectivity and fidelity in children's copying behavior. *Journal of Comparative Psychology*, *126*(2), 182–190. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024555>
- Öngider, N. (2013). Boşanmış ve evli ailelerden gelen çocukların algıladıkları ebeveyn kabul-red düzeyleri ile psikolojik uyum düzeylerinin karşılaştırılması. *Klinik Psikiyatri*, *16*, 164–174.
- Rohner, R. P. (1986). *The warmth dimension: Foundations of parental acceptance-rejection theory* [E-book]. Rohner Research Publications, Storrs, Sage Publications.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452232875>
- Rohner, R. P., & Britner, P. A. (2002). Worldwide mental health correlates of parental acceptance-rejection: Review of cross-cultural and intracultural evidence. *Cross-Cultural Research*, *36*(1), 16–47. <https://doi.org/10.1177/106939710203600102>
- Rohner, R. P., & Khaleque, A. (2005). Parental acceptance-rejection questionnaire (PARQ): Test manual. In R. P. Rohner & A. Khaleque (Eds.), *Handbook for the study of parental acceptance and rejection* (Vol. 4, pp. 43–106). Routledge.

- Rohner, R. P., & Khaleque, A. (2013). Parent in gessentials: Parental warmth, behavioral control, and discipline. In J. D. Wright (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of cross-cultural psychology* (Vol. 3, pp. 971–976). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118339893.wbeccp40>
- Rohner, R. P., Khaleque, A., & Cournoyer, D. E. (2012). Introduction to parental acceptance-rejection theory, methods, evidence, and implications. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 2(1), 73–87. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-2589.2012.00040.x>
- Rohner, R. P., & Khaleque, A. (2003). Reliability and validity of the parental control scale: A meta-analysis of cross-cultural and intracultural studies. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 34(6), 643–649. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022103256359>
- Rothbaum, F., & Weisz, J. R. (1994). Parental caregiving and child externalizing behavior in nonclinical samples: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 116(1), 55–74. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.116.1.55>
- Simons, R. L., Whitbeck, L. B., Conger, R. D., & Conger, K. J. (1988). The nature of the association between parental rejection and delinquent behavior. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 18, 297–310. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01537962>
- Smith, P. K., Cowie, H., & Blades, M. (2003). Learning in a social context. In P. K. Smith, H. Cowie, & M. Blades (Eds.), *Understanding children's development* (pp. 491–524). Blackwell Publishing.
- Stasevic, I., Batinic, B., & Milojevic, D. (2005). Association of stress and delinquency in children and adolescents. *Collegium Antropologicum*, 29(1), 27–32. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/12811>
- Steinberg, L., & Morris, A. S. (2001). Adolescent development. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), 83–110. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.83>
- Şakı Aydın, O. (2007). Alımlama araştırmaları ve kültürel çalışmalar geleneğinin katkısı. *İstanbul Ticaret Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 6(11), 119–131.
- Tannenbaum, P., & Zillmann, D. (1975). Emotional arousal in the facilitation of aggression through communication. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 8, pp. 149–192). Academic Press. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0065-2601\(08\)60250-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0065-2601(08)60250-6)
- Uzbaş, A., & Topçu Kabasakal, Z. (2010). İlköğretim okullarında saldırganlık ve şiddet davranışının yaygınlığı. *İlköğretim Online*, 9(1), 93–105.
- Van Voorhis, P., Cullen, F. T., & Wright, J. P. (1988). The impact of family structure and quality on delinquency: A comparative assessment of structural and functional factors. *Criminology*, 26(2), 235–261. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.1988.tb00840>
- Varan, A. (2003). Türk örnekleminde EKRÖ ve KYDÖ çocuk ve ebeveyn ölçeklerinin geçerlik ve güvenilirlik çalışmaları. <http://www.azmivaran.com/arastirma/ekar-kurami-arastirmalari/>
- Villani, S. (2001). Impact of media on children and adolescents: A 10-year review of the research. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 40(4), 392–401. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00004583-200104000-00007>

Waite, P., Whittington, L., & Creswell, C. (2014). Parent-child interactions and adolescent anxiety: A systematic review. *Psychopathology Review*, 1(1), 51–76.

<https://doi.org/10.5127/pr.033413>

APPENDIX

Table 6.

Mean, Standard Deviations and Kruskal Wallis H Test Results of the Scale of Delinquent Behavior and Parental Acceptance-Rejection Scale Scores of Adolescents According to the Punishment Type of Their Families

Variables	Family Punishment	N	\bar{x}	Sd	Rank mean	H	p
Criminal Behavior Total Score	Verbal Warning	224	54.13	19.32	133.02	14.37	<0.001
	Physical Punishment	19	83.26	41.63	201.42		
	Emotional Punishment-Deprivation	38	61.79	28.02	157.84		
Mother Acceptance-Rejection Scale Total Score	Verbal Warning	224	42.54	12.92	131.48	34.94	<0.001
	Physical Punishment	19	62.37	6.73	246.05		
	Emotional Punishment-Deprivation	38	43.95	10.00	144.62		
Father Acceptance-Rejection Scale Total Score	Verbal Warning	224	43.56	13.26	132.98	25.12	<0.001
	Physical Punishment	19	60.68	10.51	230.13		
	Emotional Punishment-Deprivation	38	44.92	12.43	143.71		

Table 7.

Mean Scores, Standard Deviations and Kruskal Wallis H Test Results of Delinquent Behavior and Parental Acceptance-Rejection Scale According to the Film Type Adolescents Prefer to Watch

Variables	Type of Film Watched	N	\bar{x}	Sd	Rank mean	H	p
-----------	----------------------	---	-----------	----	-----------	---	---

Criminal Behavior Total Score	Action-Adventure	79	53.9 7	17.6 4	130.3 4	23.68	<0.001
	War-Violence & Horror- Thriller	97	67.0 7	32.1 7	172.8 1		
	Comedy & Romance	91	49.1 4	9.96	118.8 0		
	Drama, Science Fiction- Fantasy & Sports	14	58.0 0	28.5 2	125.0 0		
Mother Acceptance- Rejection Scale Total Score	Action-Adventure	79	42.5 7	13.1 0	131.5 6	7.12	0.07
	War-Violence & Horror- Thriller	97	46.7 3	13.2 9	157.4 2		
	Comedy & Romance	91	43.3 3	13.1 8	136.1 3		
	Drama, Science Fiction- Fantasy & Sports	14	38.9 3	10.3 1	112.1 8		
Father Acceptance- Rejection Scale Total Score	Action-Adventure	79	45.0 1	14.8 5	141.5 6	6.20	0.10
	War-Violence & Horror- Thriller	97	47.2 9	13.7 6	155.5 8		
	Comedy & Romance	91	42.7 6	12.4 2	127.0 4		
	Drama, Science Fiction- Fantasy & Sports	14	41.6 4	11.3 4	127.5 4		

*p< .05, **p< .01