

## Exposure of Students to Emotional and Physical Violence in the School Environment

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** While peer abuse or physical violence in school is emphasized more, the physical and emotional violence caused by school staff has been emphasized less. The purpose of this study was to investigate the variables related to emotional and physical violence that students are exposed to in the school environment.

**Methods:** This cross-sectional and descriptive study was conducted by applying a questionnaire to 434 fifth-grade students receiving education in the primary schools in Konak district of İzmir province. Being prepared by the researchers of this study, the questionnaire consisted of questions about the socio-demographic features of the child and the family, the place where the child has been raised, family income, average grade, and the emotional and physical violence of teachers, parents, and peers s/he has been exposed to within the last year. The Chi-square test, Mann-Whitney U test, and logistic regression analysis were used for statistical analyses.

**Results:** The study group consisted of 214 (49.3%) female and 220 (50.7%) male students. Students reported that they were exposed to at least one type of emotional violence from 59.4% of teachers, 52.8% of parents, and 61.8% of children at school; they were exposed to at least one type of physical violence from 42.9% of teachers, 33.6% of

parents, and 24.9% of children at school. While the rate of encountering with the beating of another child was 53%, the rate of watching this in television/cinema was 52.8%. Regarding exposure to at least one type of violence, males were found to be significantly more exposed to emotional and physical violence from male teachers, female teachers, and fathers and physical violence from children at school. The factors regarding the exposure to emotional and physical violence by teachers were evaluated using logistic regression analysis, and it was determined that the physical violence from teachers, emotional violence from children in school, and emotional violence from parents could predict the emotional violence from teachers. For males, physical violence from children in school and emotional violence from teachers could predict the physical violence from teachers.

**Conclusion:** In this study, the determination of the tendency of togetherness of different types of violence applied to students from different people groups like teachers, parents, and children in school makes us think about the possibility of common risk factors in terms of violence exposure. The risk factors determined in this study may guide us in planning protective interventions aimed at violence.

**Keywords:** Emotional violence, physical violence, teacher, student

### INTRODUCTION

All violent or abusive behaviors aiming to gain power and control over others originate from inequalities in society. There is an imbalance of power between those using violence against children and their victims. The physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, spiritual, cultural, or verbal violence experienced by children could either occur once or continue for months or years (1). While the terms of emotional abuse, emotional maltreatment, psychological violence, or verbal abuse could frequently be used interchangeably (2); physical abuse cannot be clearly discerned from corporal punishment (3). While physical abuse is defined as actions that may cause injuries or intend to injure, corporal punishment is defined as actions perpetrated to inflict pain rather than injury in order to control or correct the misconduct of children (3). The "24 hours" rule applied by some child protection services on this subject indicates that if a mark lasts greater than 24 hours, the corporal punishment limit is exceeded and physical abuse starts (4). It is remarkable that the studies examine sexual and physical aspects of child abuse rather than its emotional aspect (5).

Violence against children from family members, teachers, or peers damages their emotional and physical health (6). Emotional violent behaviors like shouting, displaying a coarse and rude attitude, criticizing harshly, and denigrating their personality may jeopardize the psychological and social development of children (7). A recent meta-analysis evaluating longitudinal studies has reported a trivial to small, but generally significant, correlation between the use of spanking and corporal punishment and long term internalizing of problems, externalizing of problems, and low cognitive performance (8).

Being usually encountered in the immediate family environment, abuse could also occur outside of family. Even though children are often abused by their teachers within the school environment, there are few studies on this subject (7). School violence is deemed among the most important social problems experienced by children. Although the peer victimization aspect of school violence has been emphasized,



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**Received:** 06.04.2015 **Accepted:** 31.07.2015

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very little attention has been paid to the violence induced by the school staff (9). Children might be exposed to emotional, physical, and sexual maltreatment by the school staff (10). Being used for discipline and behavioral change at school, corporal punishment is still allowed even in some developed countries like the United States and England (11). Corporal punishment in all settings was firstly prohibited in Sweden in 1979. Turkey is not among the 46 countries adopting this prohibition today (12).

Studies evaluating the physical and emotional violence at school suggest that variables concerning age, sex, class/school/teacher characteristics, religious/cultural factors, and familial features, such as being from a minority group, are effective (9). It is reported that corporal punishment that is generally encountered at home and sustained at school creates a cycle of violence by increasing the aggression of children (11). It is stated that a mothers' abuse may play a more important role in children's aggression compared to that of a fathers' abuse. This condition is explained by the fact that children are exposed to a greater maltreatment by their mothers than their primary caregivers and that for their children, mothers are the primary attachment figures, which is the main emotional support source from childhood to early adulthood (13).

The violence perpetrated on children by the school staff may cause long-term negative effects (9). Some research notes that student violence and homicide increases in parallel with the increase of corporal punishments at school (11). Students who see the aggressive behaviors of teachers as legitimate ways of social influence and conflict resolution could internalize them through "social learning" (9). Teachers and the school staff have important effects on the development of psychological and social skills of children. While teachers are very significant models in acquiring features like conflict resolution skills, empathy, and showing respect to others (10), peers set a model with their behaviors as well (14). Maltreatment by teachers also affects the teacher-student relationship and it may cause children, who learn to be scared of their teachers instead of showing respect, to consider teachers someone to be avoided or stayed away from (9). When children are witnesses or victims of violence from people who are in charge of protecting, supporting, and helping them (9,11), this may affect their development by causing fear, anger, aggression, low self-esteem, insecurity, communicational problems, dislike of authority, problems in peer relations, and learning problems and lead to the development of mental disorders like sleep problems, didaskaleinophobia, depression, and anxiety (11).

There are a limited number of studies concerning violence perpetrated by teachers on students in the world and in Turkey (15). In developing policies aimed at violence prevention, it is important to determine the prevalence of emotional and physical violence inflicted on students and the groups with a higher risk of violence (9). Since different cultures have different approaches about children's rights, importance attached to teachers and perspectives towards different sexes (9), there is a need for studies to determine the condition in Turkey. In Turkey, it is remarkable that, while physical violence at school is on the agenda at a higher rate (15), emotional violence, which is more difficult to evaluate and has important effects on the mental development of children, is examined less. The purpose of this study was to investigate the variables concerning emotional and physical violence to which students are exposed in the school environment.

## METHODS

This cross-sectional and descriptive study was conducted by applying a questionnaire to fifth grade students in primary schools in the Konak district of Izmir province. Since there has been no Turkish adaptation of instruments like the ISPCAN Child Abuse Screening Tool-Children's In-

stitutional Version, which is used in relevant studies, and the instruments prepared by researchers are commonly used in literature, in this study, a questionnaire prepared by the researchers was used. Being prepared by the researchers, the questionnaire involved questions investigating the socio-demographic characteristics of the child and the family, the place where the child was raised, family income, average grade in the first term, and emotional and physical violence they witnessed, or were exposed to, within the last year. Questions in the questionnaire were prepared based on the relevant literature and arranged with a socially appropriate expression. It evaluated the emotional violence (shouting, scaring, discriminating, humiliating, finding them insufficient compared to their friends, mocking or teasing, and being called by an undesired nickname or name) and physical violence (pulling ears, hitting with a ruler, rods, etc., beating, locking them somewhere or throwing them out, and throwing something) behaviors perpetrated by female or male teachers and parents against students, as well as the emotional violence (mocking or teasing, being called by an undesired nickname or name, scaring, and forcing them to do undesired acts) and physical violence (hitting, seizing their stuff or money, and threatening them with a knife or a gun) behaviors perpetrated by children at school. It investigated the individual and familial characteristics of students concerning exposure to at least one type of emotional or physical violence perpetrated by teachers, parents, and children at school.

For this study, conducted within the scope of a project (Project No: 2003K120360) that was supported by the State Planning Organization, permission of the Provincial Directorate of National Education and the required institutional approval were received. All of the study procedures were in accordance with principles listed in Declaration of Helsinki.

The number of students included in the study was determined to be 373 as a result of a calculation that was performed in the Epi Info 2002 program with a deviation of 5% and a confidence interval of 95% by taking the prevalence as 50%. It was planned to reach 410 students by including a reserve of 10% in the study. In the school year when the study was conducted, 782309 people lived in Konak district, which was more than one-third of the entire population of Izmir (16); and there were 110724 students in total (105887 at public schools (95.6%) and 4837 at private schools (4.4%)) at 125 primary schools and 13311 fifth grade students in Konak district. One class from every school was accepted as a cluster and included in the study. By assuming that the classes involved 28 students on average, 15 schools (14 public and 1 private) were selected. The schools and classes included in the study were determined according to a simple random number table. The researchers applied the questionnaire at convenient school hours in April, 2006. Before the application, the students were informed about the objective of the study and they were asked whether or not they agreed to participate in the study. Participation was voluntary for all the students who were present in the selected classes. Before the application, the students were informed about how to answer the questionnaire and the ambiguous questions were explained during the application. Teachers were not allowed to be in classes during the application. Students were required to consider behaviors of all the teachers at school while answering the questions about teachers. 9 questionnaire forms whose items mainly remained unfilled were left out of assessment and the data of the remaining 434 students were evaluated. Thus, about 106% of the targeted number of students was reached.

## Statistical Analysis

The recorded data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Inc; Chicago, IL, USA) 11.0 package software. Between the groups, frequencies were compared using the Yates-corrected chi-square test and medians were compared using the Mann-Whitney U test.

Predictor variables of emotional and physical violence from teachers were analyzed using the binary logistic regression model. In this model, the independent variables were selected from the variables that were significant in the univariate analysis. Number of siblings, monthly income, and average grade were included in the model as numeric variables. Sex (male=1), parental education (primary education/lower education=1), emotional violence from teachers/parents/children at school (yes=1), and physical violence from teachers/parents/children at school (yes=1) were included in the model as binary variables. In all the analyses, p values smaller than 0.05 were accepted to be statistically significant.

## RESULTS

In the study group, 22 (5%) of 434 students went to a private school. 7 (1.6%) of the students had failed the class and 84 (19.4%) (63 from the city/district center, 21 from a town/village) stated that they lived in Izmir since 6 months-11 years (average:  $5.2 \pm 2.6$  years) after moving from another place outside Izmir. It was determined that 378 (87.1%) of students lived in a home environment with their birth parents, 45 (10.4%) had divorced parents, 75 (17.3%) were the only child in their family, and 359 (82.7%) had siblings. The characteristics of students and their families in the study group are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

While 344 (79.3%) of the students in the study group had female classroom teachers, 90 (20.7%) had male classroom teachers. The violent behaviors perpetrated from all teachers at the school, including the classroom teachers, against the students were investigated. Rates of students' reports of emotional and physical violence behaviors from their teachers within the last year are shown in Table 3. Evaluating the female and male teachers together, 59.4% of the students reported that they were exposed to at least one type of emotional violence from their teachers and 42.9% stated that they were exposed to at least one type of physical violence from their teachers. All violent behaviors inflicted by teachers, except for 'discriminating', were reported to be significantly higher in male students than female students. It was reported that female teachers perpetrated at least one type of emotional violence or at least one type of physical violence at a higher rate compared to male teachers.

Rates of students' reports of emotional and physical violence behaviors by their parents within the last year are shown in Table 4. Evaluating mothers and fathers together, 52.8% of the students reported that they were exposed to at least one type of emotional violence from their parents, 33.6% stated that they were exposed to at least one type of physical violence from their parents. Behaviors of parents including 'pulling ears' and 'locking them somewhere or throwing them out' were significantly higher in male students compared to female students. It was reported that mothers perpetrated at least one type of emotional violence or at least one type of physical violence at a higher rate compared to fathers.

Rates of students' reports of emotional and physical violence behaviors from children at school within the last year are shown in Table 5. 61.8% of the students reported that they were exposed to at least one type of emotional violence from children at school and 24.9% stated that they were exposed to at least one type of physical violence.

Furthermore, 311 (71.7%) of the students reported that they observed the beating of another child either directly or on television/cinema within the last year. 149 (69.6%) of the girls and 162 (73.6%) of the boys witnessed the beating of another child ( $p=0.412$ ). The distribution of the rates reported by female and male students encountering the beating of another child is shown in Table 6.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of students and their families (n=434)

	n	(%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	220	(50.7)
Female	214	(49.3)
<b>Hometown</b>		
Lived in Izmir since birth	350	(80.6)
Coming from another city	84	(19.4)
<b>Family feature</b>		
Family with birth parents	378	(87.1)
Non-traditional family	56	(12.9)
<b>Number of children in family</b>		
Family with single child or two children	262	(60.4)
Family with more than two children	172	(39.6)
<b>Mother's educational level</b>		
Primary education or below	274	(63.1)
High school or higher	160	(36.9)
<b>Father's educational level</b>		
Primary education or below	246	(56.7)
High school or higher	188	(43.3)

**Table 2.** Age, sibling number, average grade, and monthly family income of students in the study

	Range	Mean $\pm$ SD	Median
Age (year) (n=434)	10-14	11.0 $\pm$ 0.6	11
Sibling number (n=434)	0-12	1.8 $\pm$ 0.9	1
Average grade (n=434)	1.3-5.0	4.1 $\pm$ 0.9	4.3
Income (TRY) (n=356)	100-7000	1051 $\pm$ 1034	800
SD: standard deviation			

The findings regarding the individual and familial characteristics of students in terms of being exposed to at least one type of emotional violence or at least one type of physical violence from their female teachers, male teachers, mothers, fathers, and children at school are presented in Table 7.

As a result of the evaluation that was made based on the exposure to at least one type of violence, it was found that male students were significantly more exposed to emotional and physical violence perpetrated from female teachers, male teachers, and fathers and to physical violence perpetrated by children at school. It was also determined that among students exposed to physical violence perpetrated by female teachers, male teachers, mothers, fathers, and children at school and to emotional violence perpetrated by male teachers, their fathers had a lower educational level.; Among students exposed to physical violence perpetrated by male teachers and fathers, their mothers had a significantly lower educational level. While students exposed to physical violence inflicted by male teachers, fathers and children at school had a significantly lower income; students exposed to physical violence inflicted by female teachers, male teachers, mothers, fathers, and children at school had a significantly lower average grade; and the numbers of siblings among students exposed to physical violence inflicted by male teachers, mothers, fathers, and children at school and to emotional violence inflicted by male teachers, were significantly higher (Table 7).

**Table 3.** Rates of students' reports of emotional and physical violence behaviors from teachers (n=434)

	Violence from female and/or male teachers							Violence from female teachers		Violence from male teachers	
	Total		Female students		Male students		p*				
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)		n	(%)	n	(%)
<b>Emotional violence</b>											
Shouting	196	(45.2)	73	(34.1)	123	(55.9)	<b>0.000</b>	151	(34.8)	131	(30.2)
Scaring	124	(28.6)	47	(22.0)	77	(35.0)	<b>0.004</b>	86	(19.8)	83	(19.1)
Discriminating	101	(23.3)	41	(19.2)	60	(27.3)	<b>0.059</b>	79	(18.2)	58	(13.4)
Humiliating	90	(20.7)	31	(14.5)	59	(26.8)	<b>0.002</b>	71	(16.4)	52	(12.0)
Finding them insufficient compared to their friends	81	(18.7)	29	(13.6)	52	(23.6)	<b>0.010</b>	66	(15.2)	49	(11.3)
Mocking or teasing	38	(8.8)	8	(3.7)	30	(13.6)	<b>0.001</b>	26	(6.0)	26	(6.0)
Being called by an undesired nickname or name	30	(9.2)	9	(4.2)	31	(14.1)	<b>0.001</b>	25	(5.8)	29	(6.7)
<b>At least one type of emotional violence</b>	258	(59.4)	106	(49.5)	152	(69.1)	<b>0.000</b>	209	(48.2)	182	(41.9)
<b>Physical violence</b>											
Pulling ears	151	(34.8)	44	(20.6)	107	(48.6)	<b>0.000</b>	114	(26.3)	102	(23.5)
Hitting with a ruler, stick, etc.	106	(24.4)	36	(16.8)	70	(31.8)	<b>0.000</b>	78	(18.0)	75	(17.3)
Beating	102	(23.5)	25	(11.7)	77	(35.0)	<b>0.000</b>	72	(16.6)	74	(17.1)
Locking them somewhere or throwing them out	59	(13.6)	14	(6.5)	45	(20.5)	<b>0.000</b>	43	(9.9)	33	(7.6)
Throwing something	57	(13.1)	16	(7.5)	41	(18.6)	<b>0.001</b>	32	(7.4)	41	(9.4)
<b>At least one type of physical violence</b>	186	(42.9)	60	(28.0)	126	(57.3)	<b>0.000</b>	154	(35.5)	140	(32.3)

\*Chi-square test (p values acquired as a result of comparing the rates of female and male students' reports of violence behaviors by female and/or male teachers)

**Table 4.** Rates of students' reports of emotional and physical violence behaviors from parents (n=434)

	Violence from mother and/or father							Violence from mother		Violence from father	
	Total		Female students		Male students		p*				
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)		n	(%)	n	(%)
<b>Emotional violence</b>											
Shouting	150	(34.6)	66	(30.8)	84	(38.2)	0.132	113	(26.0)	107	(24.7)
Scaring	90	(20.7)	36	(16.8)	54	(24.5)	0.062	62	(14.3)	66	(15.2)
Discriminating	47	(10.8)	21	(9.8)	26	(11.8)	0.605	35	(8.1)	32	(7.4)
Humiliating	56	(12.9)	29	(13.6)	27	(12.3)	0.799	42	(9.7)	29	(6.7)
Finding them insufficient compared to their friends	94	(21.7)	41	(19.2)	53	(24.1)	0.258	82	(18.9)	43	(9.9)
Mocking or teasing	43	(9.9)	18	(8.4)	25	(11.4)	0.385	23	(5.3)	32	(7.4)
Being called by an undesired nickname or name	57	(13.1)	24	(11.2)	33	(15.0)	0.305	41	(9.4)	36	(8.3)
<b>At least one type of emotional violence</b>	229	(52.8)	103	(48.1)	126	(57.3)	0.070	189	(43.5)	175	(40.5)
<b>Physical violence</b>											
Pulling ears	61	(14.1)	18	(8.4)	43	(19.5)	<b>0.001</b>	39	(9.0)	43	(9.9)
Hitting with a ruler, stick, etc.	32	(7.4)	12	(5.6)	20	(9.1)	0.228	21	(4.8)	19	(4.4)
Beating	94	(21.7)	41	(19.2)	53	(24.1)	0.258	74	(17.1)	71	(16.4)
Locking them somewhere or throwing them out	26	(6.0)	6	(2.8)	20	(9.1)	<b>0.011</b>	20	(4.6)	16	(3.7)
Throwing something	71	(16.4)	31	(14.5)	40	(18.2)	0.362	54	(12.4)	32	(7.4)
<b>At least one type of physical violence</b>	146	(33.6)	64	(29.9)	82	(37.3)	0.128	116	(26.7)	96	(22.1)

\* Chi-square test (p values acquired as a result of comparing the rates of female and male students' reports of violence behaviors from their mothers and/or fathers)

**Table 5.** Rates of students' reports of emotional and physical violence behaviors from children at school (n=434)

	Total		Female students		Male students		p*
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	
<b>Emotional violence</b>							
Mocking or teasing	191	(44.0)	100	(46.7)	91	(41.4)	0.303
Being called by an undesired nickname or name	177	(40.8)	89	(41.6)	88	(40.0)	0.811
Scaring	171	(39.4)	75	(35.0)	96	(43.6)	0.083
Forcing them to do undesired acts	78	(18.0)	35	(16.4)	43	(19.5)	0.459
<b>At least one type of emotional violence</b>	268	(61.8)	136	(63.6)	132	(60.0)	0.508
<b>Physical violence</b>							
Hitting	86	(19.8)	32	(15.0)	54	(24.5)	<b>0.017</b>
Seizing their stuff or money	47	(10.8)	16	(7.5)	31	(14.1)	<b>0.039</b>
Threatening them with a knife or a gun	23	(5.3)	3	(1.4)	20	(9.1)	<b>0.001</b>
<b>At least one type of physical violence</b>	108	(24.9)	40	(18.7)	68	(30.9)	<b>0.005</b>
*Chi-square test							

**Table 6.** Rates of female and male students to encounter with the beating of another child (n=434)

	Total		Female students		Male students		p*
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	
<b>Beating of another child</b>							
By older children	157	(36.2)	71	(33.2)	86	(39.1)	0.237
By peers/younger children	82	(18.9)	41	(19.2)	41	(18.6)	0.987
By a female teacher	58	(13.4)	30	(14.0)	28	(12.7)	0.799
By a male teacher	89	(20.5)	43	(20.1)	46	(20.9)	0.927
By her/his mother	25	(5.8)	11	(5.1)	14	(6.4)	0.733
By her/his father	21	(4.8)	6	(2.8)	15	(6.8)	0.085
By other adults	112	(25.8)	50	(23.4)	62	(28.2)	0.300
<b>Encountering with at least one type of the beating of another child</b>	230	(53.0)	108	(49.5)	124	(56.4)	0.184
Watching a child being beaten on television/cinema	229	(52.8)	118	(55.1)	111	(50.5)	0.378
*Chi-square test							

The findings of the logistic regression analysis, made to evaluate the possible predictors of exposure to emotional and physical violence perpetrated by teachers, are presented in Table 8. As a result of the logistic regression analysis, the possible predictors for emotional violence from teachers were identified as physical violence from teachers and emotional violence from children at school and parents; and for physical violence from teachers as emotional violence from teachers, physical violence from children at school, and being male.

## DISCUSSION

Violence, and especially corporal punishment, could be considered as a way of correcting the undesired behaviors in children at varying levels in different cultures (9). In a study conducted in Israel, 30.9% of 6233 students in grades 4-6 at 105 primary schools reported that they were exposed to at least one form of emotional maltreatment induced by school staff and 24.5% reported that they were exposed

to at least one form of physical maltreatment (17). In another study conducted on 5472 students in grades 4-6 in Israel, 29.1% of students stated that they were exposed to emotional maltreatment by school staff and 22.2% stated that they were exposed to physical maltreatment (9). In a study conducted on 10410 students in grades 7-11, one fourth (24.9%) of students reported that they were exposed to emotional maltreatment, one fifth (18.7%) were exposed to at least one type of physical maltreatment, and 8.2% were exposed to at least one sexually inappropriate behavior from a staff member (10). It is stated that 80% of male students and 62% of female students at secondary and high schools in Egypt were exposed to corporal punishment from their teachers within the last year (18). As a result of a study conducted on 1339 students in grades 4-6 in Cyprus, it was determined that 33.1% of students were exposed to emotional abuse from their teachers and 9.6% were exposed to physical abuse from their teachers (7).

**Table 7.** Comparing the students, who reported to be exposed to at least one type of emotional violence or at least one type of physical violence from female and male teachers, mothers, fathers, and children at school, with students, who did not report to be exposed to such violence, in terms of individual and familial characteristics

	Female Teachers		p *	Male Teachers		p *	Mother		p *	Father		p *	Children at School		p *
	Emotional violence			Emotional violence			Emotional violence			Emotional violence			Emotional violence		
	Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No	
	n (%)	n (%)		n (%)	n (%)		n (%)	n (%)		n (%)	n (%)		n (%)	n (%)	
Male student	127 (60.8)	93 (41.3)	<b>0.000</b>	109 (59.9)	111 (44.0)	<b>0.002</b>	100 (52.9)	120 (49.0)	0.474	104 (59.4)	116 (44.8)	<b>0.004</b>	132 (49.3)	88 (53.0)	0.508
Non-traditional family	27 (12.9)	29 (12.9)	1.000	23 (12.6)	33 (13.1)	1.000	2135 (11.1)	(14.3)	0.404	19 (10.9)	37 (14.3)	0.369	38 (14.2)	18 (10.8)	0.390
Mother with primary/ lower education	130 (62.2)	144 (64.0)	0.773	122 (67.0)	152 (60.3)	0.183	123 (65.1)	151 (61.6)	0.524	114 (65.1)	160 (61.8)	0.541	172 (64.2)	102 (61.4)	0.637
Father with primary/ lower education	113 (54.1)	133 (59.1)	0.336	119 (65.4)	127 (50.4)	<b>0.003</b>	114 (60.3)	132 (53.9)	0.213	103 (58.9)	143 (55.2)	0.514	154 (57.5)	92 (55.4)	0.751
Coming from outside of Izmir	36 (17.2)	48 (21.3)	0.337	34 (18.7)	50 (19.8)	0.858	38 (20.1)	46 (18.8)	0.822	35 (20.0)	49 (18.9)	0.876	52 (19.4)	32 (19.3)	1.000
	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>p **</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>p **</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>p **</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>p **</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>p **</b>
Number of siblings	1.8±1.9	1.8±1.9	0.778	2.0±1.8	1.7±1.9	<b>0.005</b>	1.9±2.0	1.8±1.9	0.304	1.9±1.9	1.8±1.9	0.181	1.9±1.9	1.8±1.8	0.857
Monthly income (TRY)	1124±1125	981±937	0.069	933±708	1134±1206	0.424	1018±987	1074±1068	0.731	1051±998	1051±1060	0.898	1008±994	1118±1093	0.283
Average Grade	4.0±0.9	4.2±0.9	0.068	4.1±0.9	4.1±0.9	0.648	4.0±0.9	4.2±0.9	0.198	4.0±0.9	4.2±0.9	0.050	4.1±0.9	4.1±0.9	0.360
	Physical violence		p *	Physical violence		p *	Physical violence		p *	Physical violence		p *	Physical violence		p *
Yes	No	Yes		No	Yes		No	Yes		No	Yes		No		
n (%)	n (%)	n (%)		n (%)	n (%)		n (%)	n (%)		n (%)	n (%)		n (%)		
n (%)	n (%)	n (%)		n (%)	n (%)		n (%)	n (%)		n (%)	n (%)		n (%)		
Male student	101 (65.6)	119 (42.5)	<b>0.000</b>	99 (70.7)	121 (41.2)	<b>0.000</b>	64 (55.2)	156 (49.1)	0.308	62 (64.6)	158 (46.7)	<b>0.003</b>	68 (63.0)	152 (46.6)	<b>0.005</b>
Non-traditional family	22 (14.3)	34 (12.1)	0.626	18 (12.9)	38 (12.9)	1.000	10 (8.6)	46 (14.5)	0.148	12 (12.5)	44 (13.0)	1.000	19 (17.6)	37 (11.3)	0.131
Mother with primary/ lower education	106 (68.8)	168 (60.0)	0.085	101 (72.1)	173 (58.8)	<b>0.010</b>	80 (69.0)	194 (61.0)	0.159	70 (72.9)	204 (60.4)	<b>0.033</b>	77 (71.3)	197 (60.4)	0.056
Father with primary/ lower education	101 (65.6)	145 (51.8)	<b>0.007</b>	95 (67.9)	151 (51.4)	<b>0.002</b>	82 (70.7)	164 (51.6)	<b>0.001</b>	68 (70.8)	178 (52.7)	<b>0.002</b>	80 (74.1)	166 (50.9)	<b>0.000</b>
Coming from outside of Izmir	28 (18.2)	56 (20.2)	0.740	30 (21.4)	54 (18.4)	0.532	25 (21.6)	59 (18.6)	0.574	24 (25.0)	60 (17.8)	0.150	22 (20.4)	62 (19.0)	0.867
	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>p **</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>p **</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>p **</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>p **</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>p **</b>
Number of siblings	2.0±1.9	1.8±1.9	0.205	2.1±2.0	1.7±1.8	<b>0.012</b>	2.1±1.9	1.7±1.9	<b>0.004</b>	2.6±2.3	1.6±1.7	<b>0.000</b>	2.4±2.3	1.6±1.7	<b>0.000</b>
Monthly income (TRY)	897±789	1135±1139	0.083	864±614	1142±1177	<b>0.049</b>	981±1068	1075±1023	0.077	719±533	1143±1117	<b>0.000</b>	769±766	1142±1093	<b>0.000</b>
Average Grade	3.9±0.9	4.2±0.9	<b>0.000</b>	3.9±1.0	4.2±0.8	<b>0.008</b>	3.8±1.0	4.2±0.8	<b>0.000</b>	3.7±1.0	4.2±0.8	<b>0.000</b>	3.9±1.0	4.2±0.8	<b>0.015</b>

SD: standard deviation; \*Chi-square test, \*\*Mann-Whitney U test

There are studies in Turkey suggesting that half of families and one fourth of teachers perpetrate violence on children and 40% of students at school are beaten by their teachers (19). In a study including 30 provinces and

711 primary schools, 38% of the students stated that they were beaten by their teachers and 73% were scolded by their teachers (20). In our study, 59.4% of the students reported that they were exposed to at least one

**Table 8.** Logistic regression analysis for being exposed to at least one type of emotional and at least one type of physical violence from teachers

Variables in the model	Emotional violence by teachers			Physical violence by teachers		
	p	Odds Ratio (OR)	95% Confidence Interval (CI)	p	Odds Ratio (OR)	95% Confidence Interval (CI)
Gender (male=1)	0.213	1.455	0.807-2.625	<b>0.001</b>	2.689	1.512-4.784
Mother's education (primary education/lower education=1)	0.685	0.868	0.36-1.725	1.000	1.000	0.508-1.969
Father's education (primary education/lower education=1)	0.536	0.804	0.403-1.605	0.132	1.664	0.858-3.227
Average grade	0.234	1.245	0.868-1.786	0.084	0.723	0.501-1.044
Number of siblings	0.846	0.983	0.826-1.170	0.789	0.976	0.818-1.165
Income (TRY)	0.198	1.000	1.000-1.000	0.132	1.000	0.999-1.000
Emotional violence by children at school (yes=1)	<b>0.001</b>	2.727	1.481-5.020	0.892	0.957	0.503-1.819
Physical violence by children at school (yes=1)	0.998	0.999	0.442-2.257	<b>0.026</b>	2.256	1.101-4.624
Emotional violence by parents (yes=1)	<b>0.000</b>	3.579	1.933-6.627	0.608	0.847	0.450-1.595
Physical violence by parents (yes=1)	0.759	0.897	0.448-1.795	0.154	1.604	0.838-3.072
Emotional violence by teachers (yes=1)				<b>0.000</b>	19.564	9.606-39.841
Physical violence by teachers (yes=1)	<b>0.000</b>	18.267	9.098-36.676			

type of emotional violence from their teachers, 52.8% from their parents, 61.8% from children at school, and 42.9% of the students stated that they were exposed to at least one type of physical violence from their teachers, 33.6% from their parents, and 24.9% from children at school. While the rate of students to encounter with the beating of another child was 53.0%, the rate of students watching such a battering on television/cinema was 52.8%. Our study revealed that the rates of emotional and physical violence from teachers were higher than most of the rates determined in other countries and these findings support other studies conducted in Turkey.

In a study conducted on 600 primary and high school students at six schools in Ankara, the rates for punishment behaviors were reported as follows: 43.83% pulling ears, 28.33% throwing chalk or eraser, 11.67% hitting with a stick, and 5.83% violent beating (21). In our study, on the other hand, the rates were determined as follows: 34.8% pulling ears, 24.4% hitting with a ruler, stick, etc., 23.5% beating, and 13.1% throwing something. Additionally, the students reported that they were mainly exposed to violent behaviors as: 'shouting' from their teachers (45.2%) and their parents (34.6%) and 'mocking or teasing' from children at school (44.0%) for emotional violence; and 'pulling ears' from their teachers (34.8%), and 'beating' from their parents (21.7%) and children at school (19.8%) for physical violence.

Violence at school involves criminal acts and aggression, which inhibit both the development and learning and harm the academic climate. It is reported that boys are more likely to be both victims and perpetrators in terms of school violence (22). The risk of maltreatment from teachers is reported to be higher in students that are male, from primary school age, from minority groups, and from families with a lower parental education and a lower socio-economic level. It is stated that since boys are more involved than girls in violent behavior, they come up against it and are punished by their teachers at a higher rate; whereas the girls are exposed to maltreatment from their teachers at a lower rate since it is inappropriate to touch their bodies, especially in a traditional society. It is also reported that teachers behave by knowing that even if parents with economic difficulties are aware of maltreatment in school, they would not question

such actions; whereas, they are more careful in terms of behaviors to be questioned by the strong and wealthy parents (17). In two studies conducted on students in grades 4-6 and 7-11 in Israel, it was determined that boys, students in Arab schools, and students from low-income and low-education families were the most vulnerable groups for maltreatment from the school staff (9,10). The rate of abuse from teachers was higher in males among students in grade 4-6 in Cyprus (7). In our study, it is remarkable that the students who reported to be exposed to various types of violent behaviors had a lower average grade, family income and parental education. Furthermore, except for 'discriminating', all the violent behaviors of teachers were observed to be significantly higher for male students than for female students. Evaluating in terms of being exposed to at least one type of violence, it was found that being male was significantly higher among students exposed to emotional and physical violence perpetrated from female teachers, male teachers, and fathers, and to physical violence perpetrated by children at school. Furthermore, exposure to violence from children at school was significantly higher in male students compared to female students. These findings support the studies suggesting that male students are exposed to violence at a higher rate.

It is stated that male teachers would advocate the use of corporal punishment on students more than female teachers (9). It was thought that as 79.3% of students had a female class teacher in our study, there would be a higher rate of being exposed to at least one type of emotional and physical violence from female teachers.

It is reported that adults who had experienced physical punishment as children have a higher tendency of supporting corporal punishment. Even though corporal punishment is an ineffective discipline method and its deleterious effects are known, it is common opinion that it will not have a negative effect for use at home and at school for discipline (11). Corporal punishment is allowed at home more than at school, which is due to the belief that parents have the right to discipline their children and that parents are considered as "owners" of children in the society (23). As attitudes and beliefs supporting violence are correlated with the use of violence, it is important to remove the beliefs supporting the use of violence

in preventing or stopping violence (23). According to a study conducted in Turkey, it was reported that 17% of teachers, and candidate teachers, and 7% of academic members at faculties of education believed that hitting is 'inevitable' in education (19). This data reveals the importance of vocational training in preventing school violence. It is significant to provide training and support in order to enable teachers to have control in classes via non-violent behavior-modification techniques (11).

As a result of the logistic regression analysis performed in our study to evaluate the possible predictors regarding students' exposure to emotional and physical violence from their teachers, it was determined that emotional violence and physical violence from teachers predicted each other; additionally, the emotional violence from children at school and from parents predicted the emotional violence from teachers, and the physical violence from children at school and being male predicted the physical violence from teachers. It was thought that exposure to emotional violence and physical violence from teachers was correlated with each other; there could be common risk factors in terms of exposure to emotional violence from parents, peers and teachers, and physical violence from teachers and peers at school were related. These findings support opinions that family violence increases the vulnerability of students in terms of peer and teacher's violence, and it follows the chronological order: first family violence, then peer violence, and finally teacher's violence (6).

It is notable that there are a limited number of studies investigating the emotional aspect of child abuse compared to sexual and physical aspects. However, physical abuse and interfamilial sexual abuse are generally the tip of the iceberg of aberrant relationships and the component doing the greatest damage is the emotional interactions experienced. While bruises or fractures usually heal rapidly and completely, the effects of emotional violence may last forever (5). Our study, which evaluated the subject of violence inflicted on students from teachers, investigated the variables regarding violence, including the emotional aspect as well. Our study findings may be helpful in planning violence prevention interventions that are convenient for the realities of Turkey in this field.

**Ethics Committee Approval:** Authors declared that the research was conducted according to the principles of the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki "Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects", (amended in October 2013)

**Informed Consent:** Verbal informed consent was obtained from students who participated in this study.

**Peer-review:** Externally peer-reviewed.

**Author Contributions:** Concept – Ş.A., S.Ö.; Design – Ş.A., S.Ö., S.Ş.; Supervision – S.Ş.; Resources – Ş.A., S.Ö., S.T.; Materials – Ş.A.; Data Collection and/or Processing – Ş.A., S.Ö., S.T., O.K.; Analysis and/or Interpretation – Ş.A., S.Ö., S.T., S.Ş., O.K.; Literature Search – Ş.A., S.Ö.; Writing Manuscript – Ş.A.; Critical Review – Ş.A., S.Ö., S.T., S.Ş., O.K.; Other – Ş.A.

**Conflict of Interest:** No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

**Financial Disclosure:** State Planning Organization (Project Number: 2003K120360).

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