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## Bullying toward Teachers and Classroom Management Skills \*

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**Abstract:** The aim of this study is to examine students' bullying toward teachers and classroom management skills in terms of various variables. The sample of the study consisted of 422 participant teachers. The 'Bullying toward Teachers Questionnaire' and 'Classroom Management Skills Scale' were used as data collection instruments. According to the results, it was determined that 57.2% of participant teachers have not been bullied whereas 42.8 % have been bullied by their students. The teachers who have been bullied by their students were mostly woman, had undergraduate degrees and more than 16 years of teaching experience. There was no significant difference of teachers' total scores and two sub-dimension scores of CMSS according to gender, school type, education level and years of experience variables. There were significant differences between bullied and non-bullied teachers' total scores and two sub-dimension scores obtained from CMSS. It is evident that non-bullied teachers' mean scores obtained from two sub-dimensions and total scores of CMSS were significantly higher than those of the bullied teachers.

**Keywords:** *Bullying, classroom management, teachers, students.*

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### Introduction

Bullying has been defined differently by various researchers; however, it is a concept on which researchers arrived at a consensus. An individual's or a group's repeated aggressive behaviour that intends to harm, cause distress and create stress in the victim who is socially or psychology less powerful than the perpetrator is defined as bullying (Conn, 2004; Greene, 2006; Monks & Smith, 2006; Olweus, 2003; Smith, Cowie, Olafsson & Liefoghe, 2002). Besides the violent behaviours such as beating, slapping, kicking and hitting with an object, bullying also includes behaviours that are not necessarily violent but intend to harm the victim, such as ridiculing, teasing, naming, externalising and spreading false rumours. The power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim, repetition and intention of harm are the most deterministic characteristics of the bullying behaviour (Olweus, 2003).

Bullying can be encountered by an individual at any time and in any place. However, in the last decade, an increase in the rate of bullying behaviour in childhood and adolescence attracted the attention of the researchers in the field of education (Yang, Kim, Kim, Shin, & Yoon, 2006; Koc, 2007; Kartal & Bilgin, 2008; Sawyer, Bradshaw, & O'Brennan, 2008; Kartal & Bilgin, 2009; Piskin, 2010; Ada, 2010; Ozkiliç, 2012). Each year, approximately three million persons commit crimes at schools and most of these crimes include behaviours in the scope of the school bullying (Yell & Rozaski, 2000; Smith & Sandhu, 2004).

Assuming that bullying cases at schools only exist among students would be a wrong conclusion. In addition to peer bullying observed among students at schools, principals' bullying toward teachers, (Cemaloglu, 2007; Conn, 2004; Mullet, 2006), teachers' bullying toward students (Champell et.al, 2004; Twemlow, Fonagey, Sacco & Brethour, 2006) and students' bullying toward teachers (Benefield, 2004; De Wet & Jacobs 2006; James, Lawlor, Courtney, Flynn, Henry & Murphy, 2008; Pervin & Turner, 1998; Terry, 1998) observed as the other forms of bullying.

Among these forms of bullying, it was stated that students bullying toward teachers received less attention than others, and the researches on this subject were only aimed to determine existing situation (Benefield, 2004; De Wet, 2010). The bullying from students toward teachers is defined by De Wet (2010) as an attack on an individual who is a guide

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for learners' social, cognitive and emotional development and provides security for them. The early studies related to students bullying toward teachers emerged in England at late nineties (Pervin & Turner; 1998; Terry, 1998). These were followed by others in New Zealand (Benefield, 2004) and South Africa (De Wet & Jacobs, 2006). In these studies, teachers were asked to evaluate students' bullying behaviours that were targeted on them, and they stated that they were exposed to bullying in varying proportions. Furthermore, James et al. (2008) investigated bullying toward teachers from students' perspectives. They found that 28.2% of the students in the first phase of the study in 2003 and 16.3% of the students in the second phase of the study in 2005 reported that they are bullying their teachers (James et al., 2008).

In schools, not only students but also teachers should feel comfortable, peaceful and secure in order to actualize teaching-learning activities. However, previous studies have shown that the teachers' performances, teaching-learning processes in classrooms, relationship with others, emotional states and personal lives are negatively affected because of bullying (Benefield, 2004; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006; Tinaz, 2006; De Wet, 2010). Hall (2005) and De Wet (2010) indicated that bullying has other negative effects on teachers such as nightmares, sleeplessness, back pain, weight loss or gain, migraine, digestive problems, heart attack, high blood pressure, eating disorders, stress and fatigue. These negative effects of student bullying toward teachers indirectly affects the academic success and psychology of the students (Chen & Astor, 2008) and the school at the institutional level (Ingersoll, 2001).

In Turkey, a study conducted by the Turkish Education Union (Turk Egitim-Sen, 2009) found that 23% of the 1010 teacher participants had experienced violence from their students. Among these, 65% of them reported verbal violence, 16.9% reported psychological violence, 14.4% reported physical violence, and 3.6% of them reported sexual violence. According to another research finding, teachers' mostly exposed to verbal and emotional bullying respectively (Yaman & Kocabasoglu, 2011). The results of the study showed that teachers were mostly bullied by 10<sup>th</sup> grade students and most of these students had family problems. Also, it is concluded that media, cyber world and social environment trigger bullying (Yaman & Kocabasoglu, 2011).

Previous studies that investigated students bullying toward teachers, mostly focused on the types of bullying, frequency of bullying and characteristics of the students who bullied their teachers. For this reason, it is difficult to predict the reasons of students' bullying toward teachers and the professional characteristics of teachers who are bullied, and those who are not. Another reason that makes this prediction difficult is the power imbalance between the victim and the perpetrator (Conn, 2004; Cinkir & Kepenekci, 2003; Nansel et al, 2001; Olweus, 1993; Olweus, 2003; Piskin, 2002) and the pressure of the powerful bully on the less powerful victim. Therefore, it is significantly difficult to explain the weakness of teachers, who should professionally execute classroom leadership against bully students. To explain the reason behind the power imbalance, it is important to investigate the skills of teachers who have been bullied and non-bullied related to the teaching profession. The most basic skill in the teaching profession is the 'classroom management skills' that requires directing the students and resources to be in line with the teaching objectives (Demirtas, 2011).

Classroom management is the process of organising in-class activities and guiding student behaviours (Başar,, 2009). A teacher should have enough knowledge and skills related to classroom management in order to determine, remove and improve undesirable student behaviours (Yuksel, 2013; Ozcan, 2012; Demirtas; 2011). In a well-managed classroom, students' level of responsibilities is high, and displaying undesirable behaviours is low (Basar, 2009). De Wet (2012) determined that the class environment and teacher's classroom management style plays an important role in revealing students' violent behaviours.

Although there are many studies that have investigated teachers' classroom management skills according to various variables, the available results do not show consistent patterns. For instance, certain studies have shown that the level of teachers' classroom management skills do not depend on gender, age and experience (Yilmaz & Aydin, 2015; Culha, 2014;). Whereas, other studies have specified that classroom management abilities depend on aforementioned variables (Yuksel, 2013; Korkut, 2009; Freiberg, 2002; Meister & Melnick, 2003; Stoughton, 2007; Kirkpatrick, Lincoln & Morrow, 2006; Wilson, 2012). In this context, the aim of this study is to examine students' bullying toward teachers and classroom management skills in terms of various variables. To accomplish this aim, the following questions were posed:

1- What is the distribution of bullied and non-bullied teachers' according to years of experience, school type and education level? What types of bullying are experienced by teachers, and what is the distribution of the duration of bullying?

2- Does the level of teachers' classroom management skills differ according to gender, school type, education level, years of experiences and bullying by students?

It is evident that the results of the present study will be beneficial for preventing bullying in schools, identifying the teachers who are likely to be bullied, providing the needed support for teachers and developing bullying prevention programmes. In addition, it was thought that the findings could help teachers perform an effective role to prevent

bullying in schools and could contribute to the studies of scholars working in in-service and pre-service teacher training programmes.

### Methodology

This study is a descriptive survey type of study conducted to determine the current situation based on the opinions of secondary education teachers.

#### Sample

The population of the study consisted of teachers working at secondary schools during the academic year 2015–2016 in Nilufer, Yildirim and Osmangazi central districts of the city of Bursa. Among these high schools 4 Anatolian High Schools and 4 Vocational High Schools from each district were chosen through random sampling methodology. Totally 24 schools (12 Anatolian and 12 Vocational High Schools) and 753 teachers working in these schools were contacted; however, only 496 teachers were participated to the study. Some of the participants were excluded ( $n=74$ ) from the research because they did not complete the data collection instruments. Therefore, the sample of the present study consisted of 422 participants. Data regarding the distribution of the sample are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. The distribution of teachers according to gender, school type, education level and years of experience

n = 422		f	%
Gender	Female	235	55.7
	Male	187	44.3
School Type	Anatolian High School	239	56.6
	Vocational High School	183	43.4
Education Level	Undergraduate	366	86.7
	Postgraduate	56	13.3
Years of Experience	1–5 Year	76	18
	6–15 Year	116	27.5
	16 year and above	230	54.5

#### Instruments

The 'Bullying toward Teachers Questionnaire' and 'Classroom Management Skills Scale' (CMSS) developed by Korkut (2009) were used as data collection instruments in the present study. Bullying Toward Teachers Questionnaire was developed by the researchers in the light of related literature review. Then, two professors at Uludag University Education Faculty, one of whom is an expert in Educational Psychology and the other in Curriculum Development, and 5 teachers working in different schools and teaching different subjects were consulted about the questionnaire. Some corrections were made based on with their opinions and suggestions. A pilot study were conducted in two schools (Anatolian High School and Vocational High School which were not included in the sample) in order to obtain feedback regarding language, expressions and clarity of the questionnaire. KR-20 reliability score of the questionnaire was .60. The questionnaire consisted of items that aimed to determine the types of bullying, frequency, location, time and gender of students. In some items, teachers could mark more than one option.

CMSS was developed by Delson (as cited in Yalcinkaya & Tonbul, 2002; Korkut, 2009) and adopted to Turkish by Yalcinkaya and Tonbul (2002). Korkut (2009) re-conducted the validity-reliability analyses with the 25 items that were used in the adaptation of the instrument into Turkish. As a result of the factor analysis, Korkut (2009) obtained a scale with 15 items under three factors. In the present study, the 15-items form of CMSS which was developed by Korkut (2009) was used and exploratory factor analysis was conducted to ensure the construct validity of the scale. Kaiser-Mayer Olkin (KMO) and Barlett tests were used to test the appropriateness of the data for the factor analysis. For CMSS, the KMO value was found to be .89, and Barlett test  $\chi^2$  value was found to be 902.87 ( $p < .001$ ). As a result, the Barlett test was significant, and the KMO value was greater than .60. It showed that the data were suitable for factor analysis (Buyukozturk, 2007). The findings of exploratory factor analysis for the items are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. CMSS factor loads

Items	Factor loads of items		Item-total test correlations	
	A	B	A	B
1	.72		.62	
2	.76		.56	
3	.71		.68	
4	.68		.68	
5	.78		.60	
6	.63		.63	
8		.82		.62
9		.85		.67
10		.78		.70
11		.81		.68
12	.52		.53	
14		.68		.71
15		.65		.67
		%31.2 %29.80		
		Total variance: %61.08		

As a result of the Varimax rotation technique, the items factor loads were lower than .30, and two items that the load values difference at two factors was lower than .10 were excluded from the scale. Subsequent varimax rotation showed structure with 2 factors and 13 items which were eigenvalues greater than 1. It was found that among the items remaining in the questionnaire, the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> items yielded higher values in the first factor whereas the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> items gave higher values in the second factor. The explained variance of the first factor was 31.28% and the second factor's was 29.80%. The total variance explained by these two factors together was 61.08%. It was observed that these two factors together explained an important part of the variance. In the light of related literature and the content of the items, these factors were named as 'physical order and time' (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> items) and 'teacher-student relationship and interaction in class' (8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> items).

Also, information related to reliability coefficients is summarized in Table 3. It can be observed that the reliability scores were quite high in terms of internal consistency of whole scale and sub-dimensions. In other words, the items in the scale measure the same structure.

Table 3. CMSS Internal Reliability Coefficients

	Cronbach $\alpha$
Total CMSS	.91
Sub dimension of physical order and time	.86
Sub dimension of teacher-student relationship and interaction in class	.90

CMSS is an instrument containing 5-point likert scale. The points were ranked from 5 to 1, as 'very good', 'good', 'moderate', 'weak' and 'very weak'. The obtained scores from the scale between 0 and 21 represent 'weak classroom management skills', scores between 22 and 44 represent 'a moderate level of classroom management skills' and scores between 45 and 65 represent 'a high level of classroom management skills'. Low scores indicate a low level of classroom management skills, whereas high scores indicate a high level of classroom management skills.

#### Data Collection and Analysis

The required permissions were obtained from Uludag University's Faculty of Education and Bursa Provincial Directorate of National Education in order to collect data from teachers. The data of the study were collected in the 2015-2016 fall term when the teachers were out of class hours. The two data collection instruments were administered at the same time. An information form was added to collect the demographic information from the participants, such as gender, school type and years of experience. The teachers were given 15 minutes to respond to the questions in the survey.

The Kolmogorov Smirnov test was used to determine whether the distribution of the CMSS scores of the participant teachers' were normal or not. The results of the data obtained from this study ( $z = 2.127$ ;  $p > .05$ ) indicate that the distribution was normal. Therefore, frequency, percentage, t-test and one-way analysis of variance were used to analyse the obtained data.

#### Results

The first research question of the present study was about the distribution of gender, years of experience, school type, and education level and the type and duration of bullying among bullied and non-bullied teachers. According to the

results, it was determined that 57.2% of teachers (n = 241) have not been bullied whereas 42.8 % have been bullied (n = 181) by their students. Frequency and percentage distribution of gender, school types, education level and years of experience of participants who were not bullied by their students is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of non-bullied teachers according to gender, school type, education level and years of experience

n = 241	School Type				Educational Level				Years of Experience					
	Anatolian high school		Vocational high school		Undergraduate		Postgraduate		1-5 years		6-15 years		16 + years	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Female	74	30,71	60	24,90	119	49,38	15	6,22	1	0,41	32	13,28	71	29,46
Male	75	31,12	32	13,28	91	37,76	16	6,64	12	4,98	31	12,86	64	26,56
Total	149	61,83	92	38,17	210	87,14	31	12,86	13	5,39	63	26,14	135	56,02

In Table 4, it can be observed that most of the non-bullied teachers were women who were working in Anatolian High Schools, had undergraduate degrees and were experienced teachers who had more than 16 years of teaching experience.

Frequency and percentage distribution of gender, school types, education level and years of experience of participants who experienced bullying from their students is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Distribution of bullied teachers according to gender, school type, education level and years of experience

n = 181	School Type				Educational Level				Years of Experience					
	Anatolian high school		Vocational high school		Undergraduate		Postgraduate		1-5 years		6-15 years		16 + years	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Female	47	25,97	54	29,83	86	47,51	15	8,29	20	11,05	32	17,68	49	27,07
Male	43	23,76	37	20,44	70	38,67	10	5,52	13	7,18	21	11,60	46	25,41
Total	90	49,72	91	50,28	156	86,19	25	13,81	33	18,23	53	29,28	95	52,49

Based on Table 5, most of the teachers who have been bullied by their students were women. The number of men and women teachers who experienced bullying in Anatolian High Schools was similar. In Vocational High Schools, the number of women teachers who have been bullied was higher, and most of these teachers had undergraduate degrees with more than 16 years of teaching experience. Bullied teachers were asked to determine types of bullying by marking more than one option. According to the responses, the percentage and frequency values of bullying types that teachers experienced from their students are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Types of bullying experienced by teachers

Bullying Types	One Student		A Group of Student		One Student / A Group of Student	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Extortion, shoving	6	3.3	2	1.1	-	-
Punching, kicking	7	3.9	2	1.1	-	-
Theft of personal belongings	16	8.8	2	1.1	-	-
Physical threats	16	8.8	1	.6	-	-
Verbal abuse	69	38.1	9	5	10	5.5
Ethnic personal insults	13	7.2	5	2.8	10	5.5
Spreading false rumours	33	18.2	7	3.9	6	3.3
Sharp object injury	1	.6	-	-	-	-
Struck with an object	3	1.7	-	-	-	-
Attack resulting in medical intervention	1	.6	1	.6	-	-

In Table 6, it can be observed that the most encountered bullying type was 'verbal violence' and this was followed by 'spreading false rumours'. Some of the teachers reported that they had been exposed to verbal violence from both a group of students and individual ones. Some of them reported that they had been exposed to bullying in the form of 'spreading false rumours to others' by both group of students and individual ones. 'Attacks resulting in medical intervention' and 'sharp object injury' were among the types that had been least experienced; only one teacher was exposed to these types of attacks. The question, 'How long did the last experience of bullying last?' was asked in order to determine the duration of the bullying. The percentage and frequency values regarding this question are presented in Table 7.



Table 7. The Duration of bullying

Duration	f	%
For weeks	54	30
For months	8	4.4
Until the students left the school	29	16
Until they changed the school	5	2.8
Early in their career	81	44.4
Still continues	4	2.2
Total	181	100

According to Table 7, teachers had been bullied 'early in their career', and this was followed by bullying behaviours that 'lasted for weeks'. Also, some of the teachers indicated that they were bullied until 'the students left the school', and some teachers were exposed to bullying by their students until they changed their school'.

The second research question of the study attempted to determine whether teachers' classroom management skill level showed differences according to gender, school type, education level, years of experience and bullying by their students. For this, independent t-test and one way analysis of variance were conducted and the results are presented in Table 8, 9, 10 and 11, respectively.

Table 8. Comparison of CMSS scores according to gender

Sub-dimensions	Gender	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	t	p
Physical order and time	Female	235	28.12	4.34	-.376	.467
	Male	187	28.28	4.59		
Teacher-student relationship and interaction in class	Female	235	23.42	3.71	.074	.794
	Male	187	23.39	3.64		
Total CMSS	Female	235	51.54	3.71	-.454	.605
	Male	187	51.87	7.67		

In Table 8, it is summarized that there is no significant difference of teachers' total scores and two sub-dimension scores of CMSS according to gender.

Table 9. Comparison of CMSS scores according to school type

Sub-dimensions	School type	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	t	P
Physical order and time	Vocational High School	183	28.61	4.33	1.69	.484
	Anatolian High School	239	27.87	4.53		
Teacher-student relationship and interaction in class	Vocational High School	183	23.08	3.99	-1.61	.066
	Anatolian High School	239	23.66	3.41		
Total CMSS	Vocational High School	183	51.74	7.67	.139	.762
	Anatolian High School	239	51.64	7.43		

In Table 9, it can be observed that there is no significant difference between the total scores and two sub-dimension scores of CMSS according to the school type.

Table 10. Comparison of CMSS scores according to educational level

Sub-dimensions	Educational Level	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	t	p
Physical order and time	Undergraduate	366	28.13	4.43	-.866	.341
	Postgraduate	56	28.71	4.66		
Teacher-student relationship and interaction in class	Undergraduate	366	23.40	3.74	-.301	3.42
	Postgraduate	56	23.57	3.26		
Total CMSS	Undergraduate	366	51.63	7.61	-.572	.467
	Postgraduate	56	52.29	7.00		

As it can be observed in Table 10, there was no significant difference between the total scores and two sub-dimension scores of CMSS according to education level variable. In other words, no significant difference was found between teachers with undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in terms of their classroom management skills.

Table 11. Comparison of CMSS scores according to years of experience

Sub-dimensions	Years of Experience	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	F	p
Physical order and Time	1–5 years	76	28.29	4.06	1.415	.244
	6–15 years	116	28.23	4.56		
	16 years and above	230	27.89	4.52		
Teacher-student relationship and interaction in class	1–5 years	76	22.97	4.05	.706	.494
	6–15 years	116	23.60	3.80		
	16 years and above	230	23.45	3.49		
Total CMSS	1–5 years	76	51.39	7.33	.600	.549
	6–15 years	116	52.34	7.73		
	16 years and above	230	51.45	7.50		

Based on Table 11, it was found that there was no significant difference between total scores and two sub-dimension scores of CMSS in terms of years of experience of participant teachers.

Table 12. Comparison of CMSS scores between bullied and non-bullied teachers

Sub-dimensions	Teachers' being bullied	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	t	p
Physical order and Time	Non-bullied	241	29.97	3.23	10.66	.00*
	Bullied	181	25.82	4.76		
Teacher-student relationship and interaction in class	Non-bullied	241	24.65	3.13	-8.68	.00*
	Bullied	181	21.75	3.71		
Total CMSS	Non-bullied	241	54.66	5.71	10.51	.00*
	Bullied	181	47.72	7.83		

\*p < .05

As evident in Table 12, there were significant differences between bullied and non-bullied teachers' total scores and two sub-dimension scores obtained from CMSS. It is evident that non-bullied teachers' mean scores obtained from two sub-dimensions and total scores of CMSS were significantly higher than those of the bullied teachers.

## Discussion

In recent years, many studies revealing the importance of student bullying toward teachers have been conducted in different countries (Ozkilic, 2014; Wilson, Douglas & Lyon, 2011; De Wet, 2010; Chen, & Astor, 2008; Koiv, 2015; Benefield, 2004; Terry, 1998.) Similarly, the results of the analysis conducted to answer to the first question of the present study indicate that 42.9% of the teachers were bullied by their students, which suggests that the number of bullied teachers by their students is considerable.

Another result of this study is that, there was no significant difference between female and male teachers who were bullied by their students. The present findings are consistent with the findings of Ozkilic (2014); however, no consistency between the previous studies findings that male teachers are bullied more often than female ones was evident (Terry, 1998; Benefield, 2004; Wilson, Douglas & Lyon, 2011). It can be said that different results in studies investigating the relationship between students bullying toward teachers and the gender of the bullied teacher could be because of varying sample sizes, different methodology and materials.

Most of the participants responded that they were exposed to 'verbal bullying'. Many researchers concluded that teachers are mostly exposed to 'verbal bullying' (Benefield, 2004; Chen & Astor, 2008; De Wet, 2010; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006; Koiv, 2015; Pervin & Turner, 1998; Terry, 1998; Yaman & Kocabasoglu, 2011; Wilson et al., 2011). As consistent with those studies, there are some studies have also indicated that teachers are physically less bullied by their students (James et al., 2008; Pervin & Turner, 1998; Terry, 1998).

Every student wants to be in a classroom environment that is neat, without anxiety, worry and fear and has positive interactions. Unfortunately, some teachers have difficulties in creating positive classroom environments. The analyses conducted to respond to the second question of the present study focused on examining teachers' classroom management skills according to gender, school type, education level, years of experience and bullying by students. The results revealed that the level of classroom management skills did not differ by teachers' genders, school types, education levels and years of experience. Some of the previous studies related to the gender of the teachers showed consistency with the present study that there was no difference between classroom management skills of male and female teachers (Korkut, 2009; Terzi, 2002; Burc, 2006; Kutlu, 2006); whereas, some studies showed that female teachers had higher levels of classroom management skills than male ones (Alkan, 2007; Bozkurt-Bulut, 2004). According to those researchers' point of view, this could be because female teachers tend to use higher levels of communication skills. It was stated that women may have a tendency to establish good relations with others and to be more sensitive to others' problems (Bozkurt-Bulut, 2004). As consistent with the present results, the studies by

Yalcinkaya and Tonbul (2002) and Guven and Cevher (2005) demonstrated that the classroom management skills of teachers did not differ by years of experience. On the other hand, Korkut (2009), Alkan (2007), Kutlu (2006) and Erol (2006) determined that teachers with more experience had superior levels of classroom management skills, and they attributed that teachers become more aware of the behaviours of the students depending on their developmental period.

Lastly, bullied and non-bullied teachers were compared according to their classroom management skills. It has been determined that between bullied and non-bullied teachers there were significant differences both in the total score of the CMSS, and the average scores obtained from the sub-dimensions of the CMSS. The classroom skill levels of the teachers who were bullied by their students were found to be significantly lower than non-bullied teachers in both 'physical order and time' and 'teacher-student relationship and interaction in class' sub-dimensions and in total scores of the scale. Therefore, it is possible to argue that teachers with higher classroom management skills experience less bullying. In parallel with this finding, Warner, Weist and Krulak (1999) and Chen and Astor (2009) also underlined that the school and classroom management types influence students' bullying behaviours. Similarly, in the study by Yaman and Kocabasoglu (2011), some participant teachers associated student bullying with insufficient skills of classroom management.

Earlier studies indicate that it is not possible to have a positive learning environment in classroom environments where bullying exist (Allen, 2010; Chen & Astor, 2008; Yaman & Kocabasoglu, 2011; Warner, Weist & Krulak 1999). Mayer (2002) argued that classroom environments in which punitive classroom and school management techniques are used and which are away from an effective management cause students to engage in bullying and anti-social behaviours. These findings suggest that the quality of classroom management courses taken by teacher candidates during undergraduate training should be improved, and the theoretical education should coincide with the real of classroom conditions. Besides, it would also be useful to offer support service or education in the first year of teachers' professional lives. Teachers and teacher candidates should be primarily informed about verbal bullying and protective methods. The awareness of the society about this issue should be increased by including programmes about student bullying toward teachers in the visual and written media. Lastly, it is well known that explanations about student bullying toward teachers are not included in the programmes developed for preventing bullying in schools (James et al., 2008; De Wet & Jacobs, 2006). Thus, students bullying toward teachers should also be included into the bullying prevention programmes applied in schools.

The data from this study are limited to teachers' self-reports about students bullying toward them and their classroom management skills. The researches, which include the opinions of students, school administrators and parents about students bullying toward teachers and teachers' classroom management skills, will provide more contribution to the field of education.

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