Predictors of conflicts on self-care, room management, and chores among mother – adolescent dyads (MADs)
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Introduction
Adolescence, an era of change, may bring conflict to families, especially to mother-adolescent dyads (MAD). As suggested in Robin & Foster (1989), the MAD conflict can be measured as quantity of issues. There can be different factors predicting quantity of conflicting issues (QCI) on behaviors related to self-care, room management, and chores, which were considered as main topics of conflicting issues for present study. The present study aimed to investigate the role of adolescents’ age and gender, adolescents’ and mothers’ self-care, room management, and chores behaviors and maternal expectations on these behaviors, maternal conscientiousness, adolescent effortful control (EC), and perceived parenting (warmth, comparison, overprotection, and psychological control) on conflict experienced about adolescent self-care, room management, and chores.

Methods and Materials
Participants & Procedure
179 girls, 159 boys, and their mothers, in total 338 mother-adolescent dyads (MAD) participated to the study. The ages of adolescents ranged between 10 and 18 (M = 13.52). After necessary permissions were granted, schools were contacted. Mothers received the questionnaire packs via their children, and filled them in at home. Children and their mothers, who agreed to participate and consented to their children’s participation, were included to the study. Children filled the questionnaire packs in during school hours.

Measures
Operationalization of Self-care, Room-management, and Chores
The self-care behaviors were operationalized as the total of the following behaviors; hand-washing, brushing teeth, nail care, taking shower / having bath, changing the clothes, socks and underwear daily, armpit hair care, and deodorant use.

The room management behaviors were operationalized as the total of the following behaviors; making up the bed, changing the bed linens, putting the dirty clothes in the basket, tidying up of clean clothes, tidying up of clothes in wardrobe, drawers, studying desk, and shelves.

Adolescents’ behaviors were recorded by checking if the adolescents did the tasks. Chores were operationalized as the total of the following behaviors: helping to set up the table, cleaning the kitchen, grocery shopping, putting the garbage out, washing the dishes; giving hand when guests are hosted; helping to do the laundry, and small fix ups in the house.

Maternal Questionnaire Packs included Demographical Information Form, Conscientiousness subscale of Big Five inventory – Short Form (Sümer, Lajanen, & Dukan, 2005), Maternal Expectations Scale, Maternal Behaviors Scale, and Maternal Perceived Conflict Scale. The Cronbach alpha values were acceptable (.66 – .93).

Youth Questionnaire Pack included Effortful Control subscale of Early Adolescent Temperament Questionnaire – Revised (Ellis & Rothbart, 2001; Bayram, 2013), Youth Behaviors Scale, Youth Perceived Conflict Scale, Maternal Emotional Warmth & Maternal Comparison Subscales of Parenting Behaviors Scale (Sümer et al., 2009), Overprotection Subscale of EMBU-Short Form (Arrindell et al., 1999; Sümer, Güneydın, & Selçuk, 2006), and Psychological Control Scale – Youth Self Report (Barber, 1996; Saylı et al., 2012). The Cronbach alpha values were acceptable (.74 – .90).

Results

Three sets of hierarchical regression analyses were carried for self-care (Table 1), room management (Table 2), and chores-related quantity of conflicting issues (QCI) reported by mothers and adolescents. For all the analyses, in Step 1 adolescents’ gender and age; in Step 2 adolescents’ and mothers’ behavior frequency for specified behaviors; in Step 3 maternal expectation for specified behaviors; in Step 4 maternal conscientiousness and adolescent effortful control; and in Step 5 adolescents’ perceived parenting were entered into the equations.

The first outcome was self-care. Adolescents’ age, effortful control, and perceived maternal warmth predicted mothers’ conflict reports in negative direction. Thus, increases in adolescents’ age, effortful control, and perceived maternal warmth resulted in decreased numbers of conflict reported by mothers on self-care. Adolescents’ gender and maternal expectations were inversely related to adolescents’ conflict reports in negative directions. Hence, the adolescent girls older and their effortful control increased, the number of conflicting issues reported by adolescents decreased. Furthermore, boys seemed to report lower numbers of conflicting issues compared to the girls.

The second outcome was room management. For mother reported conflict, adolescent’s age, and adolescents’ and mothers’ room management behaviors were significant predictor in positive direction. Meaning that increases in adolescents’ age, adolescents’ and mothers’ room management behaviors would lead number of conflicting issues reported by mothers. Adolescents’ and mothers’ room management behaviors, and adolescents’ own effortful control predicted number of conflicting issues by adolescents negatively. Therefore, decreases in adolescents’ and mothers’ room management behaviors, and adolescents’ own effortful control would lead to elevated numbers of conflicting issues reported by adolescents.

The last outcome was chores. For mother reported conflict on chores, mothers’ expectation for chores was the only significant predictor in the last step, in positive direction. Thus, the maternal expectations on chores increased did the number of conflicting issues by the mothers. For adolescent reported conflict on chores, adolescents’ age and gender, perceived maternal warmth were predictors in positive direction, while maternal expectations and perceived maternal comparison were predictors in positive direction. Meaning that increases in adolescents’ age and perceived maternal warmth led to lower number of conflicting issues, while increases in maternal expectations and perceived maternal comparison led to higher number of conflicting issues. In addition to that, boys reported lower number of conflicting issues on chores, compared to girls.

Conclusions
Results seem to indicate that underlying mechanisms of various conflicting issues reported both by mothers and adolescents might be different. In addition, there was a tendency that boys reported lower number of conflicting issues compared to girls. Therefore, interventions aiming to reduce conflict among mother – adolescent dyads (MADs) may consider focusing on different aspects for mothers and adolescents, for varying conflicting topics.

Selected References

For questions and comments
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