Characteristics of Social Support from Peers in Grade 6 Children

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Research Question

- What are characteristics that are related to perceived social support from peers in U.S. children?

Prior Research

- Gender:
  - Girls perceive more support than boys on average (Levitt, M., Guacci-Franco, & Levitt, J., 1993).
- Age:
  - Increased support from ages 5 to 12 (Cauce, Reid, Landesman, & Gonzales, 1990).
- Increased support from grades 5 to 7 (Burman & Buhrmester, 1992).
- Race:
  - No direct correlation was found. Minority children are more likely to list extended family than friends in their “inner circle” (Levitt, M., Guacci-Franco, & Levitt, J., 1993).
- Early Closeness with Mother:
  - Early closeness with one’s mother increases later peer competence, which increases later peer social support (Sroufe, 1979; Coleman, 2003).
- Mother’s Education:
  - No research on this exact variable could be located.
- Mother’s education does increase child school competence, which may increase child peer support.

Data

- The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development (SECCYD)

Measures of Social Support from Peers

- Perceived social support was measured based on 10 questions the study children were asked about how their friends at school treated them.

Summary of Findings

- Gender:
  - Girls reported more social support than boys.
- Age:
  - Age is positively correlated to peer social support: Peer social support increases from 3rd Grade to 6th Grade.
- Race:
  - Race was found to be nonsignificant.
- Early Closeness with Mother:
  - Closeness with mother at 3rd Grade was positively related to higher peer support at 6th Grade.
- Early Conflict with Mother:
  - Conflict with Mother at 3rd Grade was negatively related to higher peer support at 6th Grade.
- Mother’s Education:
  - Mother’s education was found to be nonsignificant.

Works Cited


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