

# The Problems Narcissistic Children May Experience In The Future With Their Peers And Surroundings

Musa Eroğlu

Dr. Mersin University, Türkiye, Email: eroglumusa33@gmail.com

---

Received: 13.04.2024

Revised: 11.05.2024

Accepted: 27.05.2024

---

## ABSTRACT

Children are recognized as the most valuable assets for the future of a generation. Not approaching children objectively, in other words, looking at them positively or negatively from the perspective of the people who raise them, has a direct impact on their development. When we look at narcissism, it is constantly mentioned that childhood should be examined. In the last period of the first year of life, a parent who exhibits cold behavior has great effects on his/her child. The child adopts these feelings and thoughts because they care about their parents' opinions. This causes the narcissistic individual to have problems with his/her peers or with the social environment at a later age. Based on this, this study deals with various problems narcissistic children face with their social environment.

**Keywords:** Child, Narcissist, Parent, Behavior

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Negative consequences in terms of psychosocial development and personality emerge in the child as a result of neglect in the early period. Pathological narcissism develops in the person after neglect and abuse in childhood. Narcissistic people are known as people who are neglected, exploited and made to feel worthless by their parents. When the parent's need for love, approval and attention for the child is not met, the child focuses on outsiders to meet these needs and expects attention and admiration from others.

It is explained that as a result of physical and emotional abuse, narcissistic individuals with fragile self qualities may have problems such as difficulty in expressing themselves, insecure attachment, and difficulty in establishing close relationships. Narcissists who present their characters to other people under a mask, their communication with other people is generally based on interest and exploitation. These individuals are known to have talent, intelligence, skills and physical attractiveness that attract the attention of others. When parental attitudes are considered in a separate context, it is explained that grandiose narcissism emerges when the mother ignores the child and fragile narcissism emerges when the father ignores the child. In addition, when individuals who are emotionally neglected are examined in the field of psychopathology, they have difficulty in establishing sincere, healthy, trust-based relationships with other people and prefer non-functional solutions and coping methods to cope with negative emotions. Again, in relation to the sub-dimensions of narcissism, it is understood that individuals who are not openly loved show grandiose narcissism, and individuals who are not accepted by their peers show fragile narcissism characteristics. Grandiose narcissism is expressed as entitlement, envy, arrogance, exhibitionism, being overly demanding, lack of empathy, low anxiety level, and desire for attention. Fragile narcissism is defined as timidity, excessive modesty, high anxiety level, sensitivity to criticism, thinking that one is suffering, sensitivity to criticism. In line with the researches, it is concluded that the general outlines of the foundations of narcissism are laid in infancy. Emotional conflicts between the child and his/her mother and negative attitudes in child rearing methods lead to pathological narcissism. As a result of all these narcissistic behaviors, the child experiences problems with his/her peers or with the social environment at a later age (Bakircioğlu, 2012: 480-494).

Within the scope of this study, the problems that narcissistic children may experience with their peers or with the social environment at an older age are discussed. Because even if the behaviours of children who are ignored at a young age are found funny, they cause big problems at a later age.

### 1.1. Method

In this study, the review method was used. The review method is a method that enables the synthesis of findings, results and evaluations by examining two or more studies published on a specific topic. In general, it includes the writings in which the information obtained from different sources in different

ways without using a specific method by people in the field of research is compiled (Burns & Grove, 2009; Gerrish & Lacey, 2010). Therefore, in this study, studies on the social lives of narcissistic children were examined.

## 2. General Information

### 2.1. The Concept of Narcissism

This word, known as the concept of self-love in Turkish, has meanings such as seeing oneself very superior, excessive self-love, and self-centeredness. It generally begins in young adulthood and is manifested in contexts such as behaviour and thought. It is seen as a common disease with the desire to be liked, superiority and lack of empathy (Bakırcıoğlu, 2012: 480-494).

This concept takes its name from Narkissos in the history of mythology (Akhtar and Thomson, 1982:15-20) It is known that Narkissos was a physically perfect young man. Even if he did not show interest in water nymphs, they would not stop liking him. When we look at mythology, it is known that all young girls fell in love with Narcissus. Ekho is also known as one of the rejects. However, she does not want to leave Narcissus' side even if she is rejected. It is mentioned that Ekho, who could no longer endure Narkissos' rejections, ended her life out of sadness and grief. Water nymphs are also saddened by this state of Ekho. Therefore, they went to the Queen of Vengeance and asked her for help. The Queen cursed Narkissos to fall in love but not to meet. One day after the passing of time, Narcissus witnesses his own reflection in the water while looking at a clear water. Because he is in love, he cannot save himself from his reflection in the water. Each time he wants to embrace his reflection. It is known that Narkissos, who could not get a reaction after each embrace, started not to eat because he could not meet. It is known that when he left himself in the water, he turned into the flower named after him and died. The flower he transformed into is the daffodil (Bulfinch, 1898: 6-12).

### 2.2. Causes of Narcissism

When we look at the origin of narcissism, it is seen that institutional approaches form the hypothesis of each theoretical theory. Many experts agree that narcissistic pathology occurs due to early parental attitudes (Ronningstam, 2005: 49).

In a study conducted in 1988, Masterson first emphasizes cold and abusive mothers while revealing the causes of narcissistic personality disorder. At this point, the mother uses the child to meet the child's individualization and separation needs. Since no emotional investment is made in the child, the child is forced to fulfil his/her own needs. The child constantly identifies with the mother's idealizing impositions. At this point the child begins to feel that all the possibilities of the world are at its feet. The child who is not exposed to carefully measured doses of inhibitions maintains the grandiose self-image typical of early development. The child who is transformed into a strong mother who has every opportunity steps into adulthood feeling that he/she is in the same situation as the mother and thinking that he/she is also strong and grandiose.

When we look at their childhood, narcissistic people, who are seen emotionally hungry, show traces of narcissistic pathology, which is a form of defense against the emotionally cold mother in the last period of the first year of life. It is said that the main reason for this is that the mother sees the child as special. These special views sometimes include discourses such as the most beautiful child of the family, the hero of the family. There are also mothers who think that a mother who loses her child has another child and that this child replaces the dead sibling. In such cases, the child is perceived as immortal as soon as it is born. The mother, who is still in mourning, cannot make emotional investments in this child. This causes the child to form a special self (Çevik and Ceyhun, 1996: 407).

Healthy bonding with the mother at an early age helps the baby to form positive memories. The baby sees itself as important, valuable and deserving of care and love. In this context, it forms self-esteem and self-worth as a more developed structure compared to primary narcissism. However, the feeling that the mother's neglectful and rejecting attitude results in is expressed as worthlessness. The rejecting, inconsistent, emotionally abandoning, unpredictable mother causes the baby to perceive the outside world as insecure and leaves disappointment damage in the baby. "Libidinal investment is withdrawn from the mother, which the baby chooses and invests in as a secondary object. Libidinal investment is directed to the primary object, the self, which is thought to be the only predictable and reliable place. There is a return to the primitive form of narcissism" (Ozan ve vd., 2008: 28).

In this case, according to Kernberg, narcissistic parents cause narcissistic children to grow up. It is also emphasized that this pathology is transmitted from generation to generation. The parent's indifference to the inner world of the child, ignoring the basic needs and difficulties required by the developmental age, evaluating the child according to their own behavioral and physical evaluation criteria, not communicating appropriately with the child unless the facts and expectations coincide, critical attitudes

and excessive anger cause the child to internalize it. It is suggested that narcissistic development consists of two different independent parts as “idealized parental imagination” and “grandiose self”. Over time, the child tries to regain this perfection through the self-object. The child makes narcissistic investments in the self-object, and these investments are withdrawn with optimal breaks over time. In the second stage of development, the child tries to regain the lost perfection by idealizing the parent. The child needs to be calmed and protected by a strong figure when needed. In this period, when the child is in need, a resource with unlimited power is ready for him/her. Over time, he/she comes across optimal breaks and gains awareness that the people in the parental role are not unlimited. Afterwards, he/she does not constantly try to find a source. The hesitation in the first stage results in feelings of shame, worthlessness and anger, and the hesitation in the second stage results in the search for a source to comfort oneself throughout life (Anlı, 2010: 58-61).

From the point of view of social cognitive theory, the development of narcissism is related to parenting attitudes such as overvaluing the child, seeing the child as deserving even if every action is negative, and seeing the child as a surreal being. A parent who overvalues his/her child excessively sees his/her child's characteristics more than they are and glorifies the child with excessive praise. For example, these people give their children names that are rarely used and differentiate them from other children. Experiences like this cause the child to perceive himself as superior to others. This belief is shown as the basic belief underlying the name of narcissism (Brummelman vd., 2018: 51).

Looking at the object relations theory, narcissism develops as a result of the parent using his/her child to satisfy his/her personal ambitions. In 1979, Rothstein states that parental behavior is formed by two motivational mechanisms that are in competition with each other in some cases. One remains focused on the parent himself. The other remains focused solely on the child. For effective parenting, it is necessary not to be both child-focused and self-focused. A narcissistic child emerges as a result of parenting that focuses too much on the parent's self. Similarly, a selfish parent shows love to the child only when the child meets his/her own standards of success. In this way, the child sees narcissism not as someone to be cared for, but as an object that acts only to fulfill the hysterical needs of the parent. It is seen as a response or fixation in response to parenting (Horton, 2011).

In the context of Millon's social learning view, children recognize other people and themselves through their behavior towards their parents. Parents who show excessive love to their children instill in children the perception that they are entitled and superior. When we look at these two characteristics, it is seen that narcissism has a cognitive feature. In addition, children who are constantly exposed to their parents' giving and tolerant behavior expect to see the same behavior from others. According to Millon, due to this kind of parental behavior, the child comes to the conclusion that other children are weaker, inferior and easily manipulated. It turns out that these are the thoughts that constitute the interpersonal core of narcissism. Thus, when we look at Millon's social learning approach, the infinite tolerance and appreciation that the parent will offer to his/her child gives the child information, and the child uses this information in a direct way to develop his/her narcissistic effect on other children and himself/herself (Horton, 2011: 181-190).

### **2.3. Types of Narcissism**

In various sources, narcissism is categorized in different ways. In the book written by Malkin (A New Look at Narcissism), these types are listed as follows (Malkin, 2017: 50):

- Extroverted narcissists
- Introverted narcissists
- Social narcissists

Freud, on the other hand, classifies narcissism as “primary narcissism” and “secondary narcissism”. In Lubit's study, there is a general classification as “healthy narcissism” and “destructive narcissism”. When we look at different studies, narcissism is examined in two frameworks as “normal narcissism” and “pathological narcissism”, even if narcissism is generally classified in different ways (Koçyiğit & Yıldız, 2020: 51).

#### **2.3.1. Normal Narcissism**

It is known that this study emerged in 1979 through the study conducted by Raskin and Hall to develop the narcissistic personality inventory. In this study, normal narcissism is referred to as “subclinical narcissism”. This type of narcissism is not considered as a personality disorder, but as a personality trait (Koçyiğit & Yıldız, 2020: 60).

Normal narcissism refers to the process of living in harmony with the environment and other people around the person and being able to meet what will come from it (Karaaziz, Atak 2013: 46).

Normal narcissism is used to explain the high level of self-esteem in the person. From a different perspective, normal narcissism is explained as a person's "libidinal investment". Normal narcissistic person or normal narcissism is used to describe people who are aware of their shortcomings, who are open to all criticism from the people around them, who are aware of their shortcomings and who are not ashamed of this situation, who are ambitious but know how to be content with their achievements (Rozenblatt 2002: 53).

Kernberg explains that in order for the normal narcissistic sides of the person to develop, external factors and internal aspects should be related to each other in a balanced way by including cognitions and emotions. All external factors consist of providing the needs of the individual, satisfying the cultural or intellectual aspirations developing in the environment, and meeting social desires and activities. Based on these considerations, it is concluded that he equates normal narcissism with self-esteem. Kernberg lists the internal structures and external factors affecting normal narcissism as follows (Kernberg, 2012. 275):

- Object representations
- Superego factors
- Superego factors
- External elements

Normal narcissists have absolutely no doubts about the self-confidence and value they place on themselves. What other people think or say is of no importance to them. Looking at these issues, it is understood that narcissism is the point that offers self-confidence to the person. It is known that the person's acceptance of himself/herself to his/her environment and feeling pleasure in this way are among the attitudes and behaviors exhibited by normal narcissistic individuals. A normal narcissistic individual enjoys his/her experiences, is proud of his/her achievements, and easily eliminates the feeling of shame due to deficiencies and failures (Şahin & Ocak, 2020: 70- 82).

The narcissistic person is happy to be appreciated and loved by other people. These behaviors are known to be narcissistic behaviors. Being loved is a behavior that every person desires. However, the need to be loved can cause negative emotions. In this direction, the goal is to be accepted and approved by the environment. As a result of all these efforts and efforts, the fact that the person does not see the value he/she deserves compares him/her with a narcissistic injury (Karaaziz & Atak, 2013: 44-47).

The area covered by normal narcissism is known as the integrity of the internal psychological structures of the self. In the same direction, the connection associated with libidinal and aggressive impulse derivatives is among the factors affecting normal narcissism. In addition, normal narcissism is related to the expectations, ideals, self of adult individuals towards themselves and the level at which complex psychological structures are realized in relation to this. Even though normal narcissism appears as a libidinal investment of the self, the self is in a structure formed by the combination of aggressive and libidinal invested contents. This event can be expressed with the contradiction of being dependent on the condition of combining hate and love for a normal feeling of love (Kernberg, 2012: 273-277).

Humans need energy in order to sustain their lives and survive. This energy is transferred to humans through narcissism. When we look at narcissism from this side, although it is a necessity for life, it also includes dangerous aspects. It causes normal narcissistic aspects to occur in the person as the person strives towards this goal. For service and artistic purposes, a person who produces or expresses an idea can be proud of himself/herself because of the products he/she creates. This pride is constantly reflected in the services and products they create and continues in a balanced manner. As long as this cycle is repeated, the individual is constantly energizing himself/herself to work and produce. The great impact of narcissism on creativity is expressed in this cycle. Normal narcissism has a positive effect when it is considered in terms of providing a service and producing, and a dangerous and destructive effect when its number increases (Cihangiroğlu vd., 2015: 3-10).

### 2.3.2. Pathological Narcissism

In 1980, pathological narcissism was recognized as an equivalent term to narcissistic personality disorder in the American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic manual "DSM-III" and its subsequent editions. This personality disorder occurs in people during their young-adult years. Although there are many definitions in the literature on pathological narcissism, there is no common approach (Kocyiğit & Yıldız, 2020: 59).

Pathological narcissism explains the individual's perception of himself as superior to other people, lack of empathy, excessive sense of self-esteem, and the desire to be constantly approved by his environment. Pathological narcissism occurs when the person is unable to integrate the ideal characteristics of himself/herself with the perception of inadequacy that normally exists (Can & Eke, 2021: 400).

"Pathological narcissistic individuals may care about other people's thoughts excessively and make inferences from those people's thoughts to themselves. While doing this, they act as if they do not actually care about other people and that other people's thoughts are unimportant to them. Pathological

narcissists, who continue this behavior in a confident manner, actually appear as an internally insecure character, even though they leave the impression of a confident individual to the outside. At this point, the most important point in a pathological narcissistic individual is considered to be the need for other people's comments" (Karaaziz & Atak, 2013: 47).

Some sources explain that pathological narcissism has two subtypes as grandiose and fragile. Grandiose narcissism can be explained as entitlement, exhibitionism, envy, arrogance, excessive demandingness, lack of empathy, low anxiety level, and desire for attention. Fragile narcissism, on the other hand, is defined as high anxiety level, timidity, excessive modesty, sensitivity to criticism, thinking that they are suffering, sensitivity to criticism (Şen & Barışkın, 2019: 119-121).

When pathological narcissists describe themselves, they use sentences such as "I feel that I have a different creation than many people". Pathological narcissists, who have an insistent and angry attitude, are aggressive because society does not understand their special abilities or they are not aware of them (Malkin, 2017: 51).

From a different perspective, it can be explained that many negative situations experienced by pathological narcissists in childhood are among the important factors underlying this personality disorder. Children who are unloved/uninterested and rejected by their parents are involved in a pathological process by focusing on themselves and turning into people who trust only themselves and have a closed attitude towards other people. Neglected children return to their own inner worlds because they cannot establish a secure bond. Based on these words, pathological narcissists are said to have an extremely insecure personality behind these behaviors, no matter how self-confident they are (Faganoglu, 2021: 9).

Narcissistic individuals feel a sense of loneliness even when they are still in their infancy. They try to be self-sufficient even when they are not given the necessary attention. Thus, the person in infancy sees it appropriate to make the libidinal investment that should be made in the object directly in himself and to maintain it in his inner world instead of the outside world. Contrary to appearances, pathological narcissists despise themselves and therefore do not love themselves (Timuroglu and İşcan 2008: 240).

The communication of pathological narcissists who present their real characters to other people under a mask is generally based on interest and exploitation. It is stated that they have talent, intelligence, skills and physical attractiveness that attract the attention of other people. Based on these characteristics, pathological narcissistic individuals show themselves in the society by being in the occupational groups of experts in the academic field, leaders, famous artists. No matter how attractive and famous they are, when we look deeper into the products they have produced, it is stated that they lack depth and are presented in a sloppy manner (Evren, 1997: 8-9).

Pathological narcissists are characterized as people who attach great importance to wealth, appearance, their own power, knowledge and beauty. When they gain power (prestige, social status), it is seen that they adopt approaches such as establishing authority over other people and protecting their role in that society. Therefore, the individual needs to work continuously to maintain this image and status (Uysal, 2019: 128).

Pathological narcissism and normal narcissism are explained by looking at the theoretical facts. There are several criteria that distinguish normal narcissism and pathological narcissism. Behaviors acquired in early childhood are given as examples of these issues. For example, the needs and wishes of a young child are very likely to be met when he or she is a well-adjusted child. However, the desires and wishes of a child with pathological narcissism are said to be almost impossible to meet (Harter, 2019: 46).

If we look at Kernberg's thoughts in this field, he explains that it is possible to talk about many different features that distinguish pathological narcissism from normal narcissism. He lists them as follows: narcissistic resistance specific to pathological narcissism distinguishes it from normal narcissism in this context. Unlike normal narcissism, pathological narcissism arises from pathological object relations. Apart from this, there is a pathological lack of integration and dissociation in the super ego and ego, apart from normal narcissism. In normal narcissism, libidinal and aggressive invested object images are integrated. In pathological narcissism, pathological development of these internalized object images is observed. Again, apart from pathological narcissism, in normal narcissism, apart from blame, criticism and excessive attitudes towards failure, interest in objects, dependence and trust in objects exist together. When we look at normal childlike narcissism, the demands and needs of the child are proportional. However, in pathological narcissism, the demands are excessive and impossible. The fact that narcissistic patients are distant, devalue coldness, belittle and otherize is explained differently from the selfishness of a small child (Kernberg, 1985: 45-55).

### 2.3.3. Grandiose and Fragile Narcissism

When we look at grandiose and fragile narcissism, it is explained that it is conceptualized in many different ways in the literature. It is also known that concepts such as stubborn, manipulative, negligent, negligent, callous are used instead of grandiose narcissism. For fragile narcissism, concepts such as sensitive, implicit, masochistic, hypersensitive, depressive gif are also used (Pincus vd., 2009: 365-370).

It is seen that different forms of narcissism can be characterized by the nature of being preoccupied with their concerns and self-interests, as well as the feeling of having special privileges and self-importance. Apart from this common point, grandiose and fragile narcissism can be distinguished as two dimensions that are clearly seen in the psychological literature. In daily life, it is generally explained by self-importance, arrogance and authoritarian attitudes (Buss and Chiodo 1991: 179-215).

It accurately describes the widely known maladaptive self-enhancement expressions related to pathological narcissism and grandiose narcissism. "Narcissism can also be defined as maladaptive self-enhancement, a disorder that leads to self, emotional, and behavioral dysregulation in response to ego threats or self-enhancement failures" (Pincus & Roche, 2011).

When fragile narcissism is examined, it is seen that it reflects aggression, anger, helplessness, low self-esteem, suicidal tendencies, and avoidance of personal relationships (Ritter vd., 2014: 429-437).

When we look at the two types of narcissism, it is concluded that the concept of egocentrism is shared. However, this situation occurs in different personality forms. It is stated that grandiose narcissists are socially courageous, extroverted and even attractive. Fragile narcissists, on the contrary, are described as avoidant, introverted and defensive. While grandiose narcissism establishes consistent and important relationships with extraversion, they define fragile narcissism with an introverted attitude (Jauk et al., 2017:1600).

People with grandiose and fragile narcissism pathology are also evaluated differently by the people they communicate with. In 1991, Winx emphasized that spouses with high scores in both dimensions of narcissism are seen as cruel, intolerant, opportunistic, arrogant, demanding, and arrogant by their partners. In addition, the spouses of people with grandiose narcissism evaluate them as stubborn, aggressive, outspoken, determined, assertive and shameless. The spouses of people with high levels of fragile narcissism interpret them as emotional, anxious, nervous, complaining and extremely fragile (Winx, 1991: 590-597).

### 2.4. Dimensions of Narcissism

In 1987, Emmons conducted research on narcissism. In his study titled "Narcissism: Theory and Measurement", he examines it in four different categories by looking at the level and structure of adaptation, and these four different categories are as follows (Taze, 2019:30):

- Leadership-Authority
- Self-Admiration-Self-Interest
- Supremacy-aggrandizement
- Exploitation - Claiming Rights

It is known that in 1988, Raskin and Terry continued the 4 different narcissism dimensions expressed by Emmons in his study in line with their own studies and reached a 7-dimensional narcissistic personality structure. The 7-dimensional narcissistic personality structure reached by Raskin and Terry are as follows:

#### Authority

It has the power to make the obeying person accept a certain action without the need for physical pressure. The definitions made by Robert's dictionary regarding the word authority are as follows:

- The right to give orders or the ability to make people obey is called authority.
- The people and institutions that exercise authority are defined as authorities.
- Authoritarian or fully guaranteed behavior is defined as authority.
- The attraction that makes people obey without applying pressure is called authority.
- Being an expert in a field is called authority (Pazarbaş, 2012: 79).

The concept of authority comes from the French word "autorité". According to the research conducted by the Turkish Language Association, it is defined as the right to prohibit, order, make, political power, and the right to make obedience. When there is a relationship in which at least two people face each other and the stronger of these two people dominates over the other, this situation is defined as authority. In relations based on authority, inequality is stated as a common feature. The word power comes to the fore as the cause of inequality. Power is explained as the superiority of one party over the other. In other words, authority is defined as the ability to make any individual perform an action contrary to his/her

will and the use of physical force. Considering the definitions, it is said that authority is the name given to the influence exerted on people by people or by a person (Öztürk, 2021:7).

### **Exhibitionism**

Exhibitionism refers to feelings such as the inability to control one's inner impulses, show-off, extroversion and thrill-seeking. Another meaning is expressed as self-admiration. When we look at the behavioral-based statements of exhibitionists, they usually experience similar situations with exhibitionism of sexual pleasure during their first adolescence. Even if it is not a single experience they have had, other experiences similar to the relationship between sexual mouth and exhibitionism may have been reinforced. Situations similar to social skill deficiencies are the basis for the development of exhibitionism (Bolat et al., 2016: 490).

There are many examples of exhibitionism in daily life. To give an example to this issue; situations such as showing off one's luxury car in order to impress other people around him/her, or wanting to attract people's attention, shouting in an environment are shown (Kocakula & Altunoğlu, 2017: 58).

### **Exploitation**

When we look at this dimension, it is seen that it is considered as an unhealthy dimension among other dimensions. When all the researches that have been conducted until today are examined, it is determined that the exploitative dimension is related to the person's hostility, stubbornness, indifference towards other people, a state of disharmony, and also a lack of tolerance. The narcissistic person, instead of exploiting the other person by taking advantage of the other person, makes this process more complicated and turns it into a behavior. Those who reach this dimension are only to provide the benefit they want without caring about the wishes, interests, feelings and thoughts of the other individual in any way (Koç Ekinci; 2018:8).

### **Claiming Rights**

Narcissistic individuals believe that they deserve special treatment and as a result, they maintain the sense of distributing id, which is included in the sub-dimensions of narcissistic personality. Based on the claiming sub-dimension, people tend to claim their roles and break the rules that apply to other people (Kocakula & Altunoğlu, 2017: 59).

### **Superiority**

It is expressed as the fifth sub-dimension of narcissistic personality. This dimension is considered as one of the foundations of narcissistic personality. Narcissistic individuals adopt the perception of superiority for themselves. It causes this superiority to be constantly approved by other people and to be in an effort to make other people accept them. Because of this dimension, they have the urge to be approved and accepted in many areas of their lives. The sense of superiority reflects the person's self-confidence, assertiveness in everything without any restrictions, the need for success, independence, and also creates situations such as being fragile (Kocakula & Altunoğlu, 2017: 59-60).

### **Self-Sufficiency**

This dimension is directly linked to the emergence of narcissistic pathology. It is assumed that people develop the self-sufficiency sub-dimension in order to eliminate their negative emotional states. According to this dimension, the world is a threat and the person who cannot get rid of the feeling of hopelessness leaves the impression of an idealistic, perfect personality who does not need other individuals. Nevertheless, he/she continues to represent a free and assertive nature with a need for success. The person's over-dependent attitude towards being loved is called the self-sufficiency dimension. In situations that the person encounters, if his/her expectations for that situation do not reach too many results, he/she tends to be fragile. The person who cannot get what he wants cannot tolerate this situation. For this reason, the narcissistic defense system comes into play and creates the self-sufficient sub-dimension (Mazılı, 2018:11).

### **Self-liking**

In this dimension of narcissistic personality, the person thinks that he/she is quite attractive in terms of physical appearance. However, they put expectations on themselves that other people also think so. The dimension of self-admiration is explained as the positive impression that the person imagines about his/her self. For the narcissistic person, it is called the self-defense mechanism they show against the feeling of being seen as worthless and inadequate (Mazılı, 2018:13)

### 2.5. Narcissistic Personality Traits

When the literature is examined, narcissistic personality traits such as self-admiration, being superior to other people, grandiosity, jealousy, exhibitionism, lack of empathy, acceptance, approval, authority, leadership, all-powerfulness, arrogance are expressed. The narcissistic individual is alone with himself/herself in his/her life. This feeling is related to the loneliness he/she experienced in the first years of his/her life and comes into the world with many needs from the moment the person leaves the mother's womb. It is observed that narcissistic people exaggerate and reflect most of their characteristics even if they are present in themselves. In this way, they create their self. Looking at personality theories, it is seen that narcissism is an important concept. When we look at many personality theories, narcissistic person models state that they are in contact with other people in order to confirm their physical attractiveness and to access the pleasure of satisfaction. This personality also embodies traits such as interpersonal exploitation, egocentrism, and an exaggerated need for success and power. On the other hand, they tend to despise others for the sake of self-development, personal whims and aspirations. Although they cognitively appeal to a wide range of areas, they tend to constantly emphasize unrealistic goals, endless success, personal characteristics and abilities, and skills (Meng & Leung, 2021).

Individuals with narcissistic personality disorder state that they are proud of themselves both mentally and physically. They argue that they have a privileged life and that they feel entitled to it in any way they can. They may feel great hurt and frustration when they have delusions and high expectations. They think that they can maintain their self-esteem only through factors such as bragging, attention and external recognition, and they cannot tolerate negative criticism. They constantly expect praise and appreciation. The most basic characteristic of these people is that they talk about their abilities and themselves exaggeratedly. With a narcissist, they feel themselves superior to everyone, very special, with all rights and unique. When they have problems in their relationships with people, they constantly see the reason for the problems on the other side and take an aggressive attitude. These people are also excessively fond of affluence. They establish relationships even for a short time in order to meet their needs (Köroğlu & Bayraktar, 2007: 32-39).

The problem of narcissistic individual was first addressed by APA (American Psychological Association). When we look at the study, the narcissistic individual believes that he/she has features such as success, desire to be unique, deprivation of features such as weakness indicators, and physical perfection. In addition to these characteristics, a list of narcissistic individual characteristics consisting of 9 items is created for the studies conducted. American Psychiatric Association's 5th Edition Diagnostic Manual (DMS-5) consists of the following characteristics (Köroğlu, 1994):

- Choosing someone else as the culprit in case of a failure and seeing himself/herself as the sole owner of success in case of a success.
- He/she exaggerates his/her positive characteristics and demands these characteristics to be endless.
- The narcissistic person wants the individuals he wants to communicate with to have a certain level of intelligence and superiority like him.
- He expects others to find him beautiful all the time.
- It is explained as the narcissistic person's expectation that the treatment and diagnosis that he/she especially demands to be emphasized and that is not specific to other people should be applied to himself/herself. For example, they think that they have a unique disease even in the illness or discomfort they experience. For this reason, they expect that they will be in the treatment stages with the same level of importance as the disease.
- They do not hesitate to use the negative characteristics of the individuals around them for their own goals. They consider this situation normal.
- They learn about the shortcomings of the people around them, but they put the solutions for these negative characteristics in the background.
- They are in a state of widespread jealousy and this jealousy is realized as believing that the other party is jealous of them in line with their own jealousy.
- They experience external and internal anger, embarrassment, and severe anger in response to criticism of their arrogant side or looking down on them even in daily events in their social environment.

### 2.6. Narcissism in Childhood

In 1914 Freud explained this concept as primary narcissism. The child is integrated with the mother before and after birth. In the womb, the child receives physical needs from the mother. After birth, they are only physically separated. After this moment, the perception is formed that the mother is with the child while meeting the child's needs, fulfilling all his/her wishes, that he/she is the only one who can access everything, that he/she is seen as the apple of the eye and that he/she is the only one. This egocentric attitude in the child gradually decreases as the child perceives his/her environment and begins



to behave to meet his/her needs. For this reason, the approach of fathers and mothers in the context of meeting the needs of children is important for the healthy completion of the developmental stage (Winnicott, 1975: 54-67).

Kernberg associates narcissism with object theory. He states that the deterioration of narcissistic people in the context of object relations also affects their self-esteem, and that narcissistic people are stronger in terms of internal control and sociability than those with borderline personality structure (Kernberg, 2016: 199-201).

Narcissistic pathology is seen to benefit ego development as a result of separation after the boiling of the object of the self. Mahler explains the separation-unification phase of development as a period of great narcissistic investment in their functions and their own body (Masterson, 2006: 24).

In 2003, Young, Klosko and Weishaar emphasized the environment in which narcissistic people grow up as socially lonely and isolated places where they are accepted only when they do what they want, and where no boundaries are set. In narcissistic personality disorder, it is observed that overcompensation mechanism is used to cope with incompatible issues, and someone with an imperfection schema exhibits the opposite behaviors in order to avoid issues such as striving to look perfect (Young et al., 2003 :813-822).

In line with the researches, it is concluded that the general lines of the foundations of narcissism are laid in infancy. It is stated that emotional conflicts between the child and his/her mother and negative attitudes in child rearing methods lead to pathological narcissism (Özel, 2014: 310-323).

### **2.7. Childhood Traumas and Narcissism**

When we want to look at the research on childhood traumas and narcissism in the literature, it is seen that it is limited. However, when we look at the research and definitions, narcissism is not considered as a clinical case but rather as a personality trait (Campbell & Foster, 2007 1321-1330).

When the negligent attitudes of the parent towards the child (the need for love, approval, attention that must be met) are exhibited, the child meets these needs by focusing on outsiders and expecting attention and admiration from others.

"In 2005, Cesarei stated that the experiences of neglect and abuse in childhood cause a void in the child's self and this void is filled with a rigid ideal self and these experiences are associated with the grandiose cold aspect of narcissism. Warmth and coldness in the relationship with the parent have an important place in the development of the child. In one study, the terms warmth and coldness were defined in child-family relationships. The concept of warmth is matched with the concept of warmth when the family meets the child's needs, gives importance and value, and does not neglect the child" (Brummelman et al., 2015: 3659-3662).

Not meeting the physical and emotional needs of the child in the environment where the child grows up establishes a positive connection with the leadership dimension of grandiose narcissism. The development of the child's self-perception and the acquisition of both emotional and cognitive knowledge are important in terms of maintaining this perception (Strauman, 2001: 239-242).

### **2.8. Problems Narcissistic Children May Experience**

As mentioned in the sections on normal narcissism, pathological narcissism, grandiose and fragile narcissism, there is a relationship between narcissism and aggression. When this relationship is examined, self-esteem is expressed as an important variable. When the literature is examined, it is stated as an ongoing debate whether narcissism is a different nomenclature of the same group as high self-esteem or not. In addition, in a comprehensive study, it is stated that adolescents show aggression tendency when there is a threat to the self instead of self-esteem or high self-esteem. In this context, what is meant by threatening the self is perceived as questioning, ridiculing, challenging or being in opposition to an exaggerated self-perception by a condition or a person. It is concluded that aggression is related to negative criticism from the environment and self-perception. Based on this definition, it is observed that narcissism is also related to the perception of threat associated with the self, the need for excessive approval, and the demand for attention. Based on this approach, it is stated that people with extremely high self-esteem have a very aggressive attitude when they face threats to their self-esteem compared to those with low self-esteem. A threat to the self is considered valid not for respectful people but for people with high but fragile and unstable self-esteem, especially narcissists.

In addition to these, when digital game addiction in children is examined, the result within the scope of the literatures that may be effective in understanding this, it is determined that children who show narcissism characteristics will resort to digital games more frequently, and children with high life satisfaction rate prefer digital games less. Looking at the 2021 study conducted by Çevik and others, it is

understood that there is a connection between game playing disorder and narcissism and happiness levels of children between the ages of 9 and 15 (Çevik, 2021: 7137).

### 3. CONCLUSION

In the upbringing, development and character shaping of children, the family, relatives, peers and the environment in which they live play a major role. When we look at this theory, it is seen that parents compare their children with their peers in the presence of their own children. There are also parents who argue that their own children are superior and special to other children. In this context, the child internalizes these feelings and thoughts as they care about their parents' opinions. In this direction, it is known that the child tends to make unrealistic comparisons with other people and himself/herself in the future and exhibits this attitude.

Narcissism is explained as a matter of existence for the narcissist. They constantly want to hear that they are the best. This is the only way they feel their own existence. They do not doubt the self-confidence and value they have shaped for themselves. What other people think and say is unimportant for them. In line with these issues, it is seen as the point that offers self-confidence to the person. It is known that the fact that the person accepts himself/herself to his/her environment and feels pleasure in this way is shown among the attitudes and behaviors exhibited by normal narcissistic individuals. The narcissistic person is happy to be appreciated and loved by other people. These behaviors are known to be narcissistic behaviors. Being loved is a behavior that every person desires. However, when we look at it, the need to be loved brings along the experience of negative emotions. When the reasons for these are investigated, the result always leads to the same period. This period is expressed as childhood. When we look at their childhood, we see traces of narcissistic pathology known as a form of defense against the emotionally cold mother in the last period of the first age in narcissistic people who are emotionally hungry. The main reason for this is said to be that the mother sees the child as special. These special views sometimes include discourses such as the most beautiful child of the family, the hero of the family

As a result of all these narcissistic behaviors, the child experiences problems with his/her peers or with the social environment at a later age. Whether or not narcissism is a different nomenclature of the same group as high self-esteem is an ongoing debate. It is stated that when there is a threat to the self instead of self-esteem or high self-esteem, adolescents tend to show aggression. In this context, what is meant by threatening the self occurs when an exaggerated self-perception is questioned or ridiculed by a condition or a person. It is concluded that aggression is related to negative criticism from the environment and self-perception. When digital game addiction in children is examined, as a result of studies that may be effective in understanding this, it has been revealed that children with narcissism characteristics will resort to digital games more often, and children with high life satisfaction rate prefer digital games less.

As a result of this study, it is understood that narcissism has reached childhood. However, it is also explained that this situation turns into a problem that is difficult to prevent in the future.

### REFERENCES

- [1] Akhtar, S. ve Thomson, J. A. (1982). Overview: Narcissistic personality disorder. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 139(1), 12-20
- [2] Anlı, İ. (2010). *Psikanalizde narsisizm*. Nobel Tıp Kitabevleri.
- [3] Bakırcioğlu, R. (2012). *Ansiklopedik eğitim ve psikoloji sözlüğü*. Anı Yayıncılık.
- [4] Bolat, Y., Ülker, M. ve Demir, C.G. (2016). Kavramsal Açından Narsisizm ve Eğitimde Narsistik Kişilik. *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 9(46):484-490.
- [5] Bolelli, M. (2018). Narsistik Kişilik Özelliklerinin İşe Bağlılığa Etkileri: Örnek Bir Araştırma. *Gazi İktisat ve İşletme Dergisi*, 4(3):187.
- [6] Brummelman, E., Gürel, Ç., Thomaes, S., ve Sedikides, C. (2018). What separates narcissism from self-esteem? A social-cognitive perspective. A. D. Hermann, A. M. Brunell ve J. D. Foster (Ed.), *In Handbook of trait narcissism: Key advances, research methods, and controversies içinde* (s.47-55). Springer International Publishing.
- [7] Brummelman, E., Thomaes, S., Nelemans, S. A., De Castro, B. O., Overbeek, G. ve Bushman, B. J. (2015). Origins of narcissism in children. *Proceedings Of The National Academy Of Sciences*, 112(12), 3659-3662.
- [8] Bulfinch, T. (1898). *The age of fable or beauties of mythology*, ed. L. Loughran Scott (Philadelphia, Pa.: David Mckay, 1898), 6-12.
- [9] Burns, N., & Grove, S. K. (2009). *The practice of nursing research: Appraisal, synthesis, and generation of evidence*. (6th ed., pp. 90-119, 598-610). USA: Saunders
- [10] Buss, D. M., & Chiodo, L. M. (1991). Narcissistic acts in everyday life. *Journal of Personality*, 59, 179-215. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1991.tb00773.x>.

- [11] Can S., Eke E. (2021). Yönetimde Narsistik ve Narsist Liderler/Yöneticiler, içinde, Yönetim Hastalıkları (s. 399-422). Siyasal Kitabevi.
- [12] Cihangiroğlu N., Teke A., Uzuntarla Y. ve Uğrak U. (2015). "Narsist Kişilik Eğilimleri ile Kurumsal Bağlılık Düzeyleri Arasındaki İlişkinin Analizi", Yönetim ve Ekonomi Araştırmaları Dergisi, 13(1), 1-18.
- [13] Çevik, A. ve Ceyhun, B. (1996). Nesne ilişkileri kuramına göre narsistik kişilik bozukluğu. Ege Psikiyatri Sürekli Yayınları, 1(3), 395-412.
- [14] Çevik, O., Koçak, O., Younis, M. Z., & Çevik, E. (2021). The mediating role of gaming disorder in the effect of narcissism on happiness in children. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18(13), 7137.
- [15] Evren, C. (1997). Narsisizm, BDS Yayınları.
- [16] Faganoglu, P. (2021). Karanlık Kişilik Özellikleri, içinde, Örgütlerin Karanlık Yüzü (s. 7-24). Siyasal Kitabevi.
- [17] Gerrish, K., & Lacey, A. (2010). The research process in nursing. (6th ed., pp. 79-92, 188-198, 284-302). London: Wiley-Blackwell.
- [18] Harter, S. (2019). Benliğin İnşası: Gelişimsel ve Sosyokültürel Temeller, (1 bs.). (Çev: Mehmet Kandemir ve Caner Çetiner) Pegem Akademi.
- [19] Horton, R. S. (2011). Parenting as a cause of narcissism: Empirical support for psychodynamic and social learning theories. W. K. Campbell ve J. D. Miller (Ed.), The handbook of narcissism and narcissistic personality disorder: Theoretical approaches, empirical findings, and treatments ,181-190.
- [20] Jauk, E., Weigle, E., Lehmann, K., Benedek, M., & Neubauer, A. C. (2017). The relationship between grandiose and vulnerable (hypersensitive) narcissism. Frontiers in Psychology, 8, Article 1600. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01600>.
- [21] Karaaziz M. ve Atak İ. E. (2013). Narsisizm ve Narsisizmle İlgili Araştırmalar Üzerine Bir Gözden Geçirme, Nesne Psikoloji Dergisi, 1(2): 44-59.
- [22] Kernberg, O. F. (1985). Borderline conditions and pathological narcissism.
- [23] Kernberg, O. F. (2012). Sınırlı Durumlar ve Patolojik Narsisizm, (Çev: Mustafa Atakay) Metis Yayınları
- [24] Kernberg, O. F. (2016). Sınır durumlar ve patolojik narsisizm. (Çev: Mustafa Atakay), 4. Baskı, Metis Yayınları.
- [25] Kocakula, Ö. ve Altunoğlu, A.E. (2017). Narsistik Kişilik Özelliklerinin Karar Süreçlerine Etkisi. İstanbul Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, (18):58-59
- [26] Koç Ekinci, C. (2018). Erişkinlerde Narsistik Kişilik Özelliklerinin Mizaç ve Karakter Boyutları ile Bağlanma Stilleri Açısından İncelenmesi. Hasan Kalyoncu 101 Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Psikoloji Anabilim Dalı, Klinik Psikoloji Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı. Gaziantep.
- [27] Koçyiğit N., Yıldız E. (2020). Örgütlerde Karanlık Unsurlar: NarsisizmMakyavelizm-Psikopati, içinde, Farklı Boyutlarıyla Örgütsel Davranış (s. 51- 78). Gazi Kitabevi.
- [28] Köroğlu, E. (1994). DSM-IV: Tanı Ölçütleri Başvuru Kitabı. Amerikan Psikiyatri Birliği.
- [29] Köroğlu, E., & Bayraktar, S. (2007). Kişilik bozuklukları. HYB Yayınları.
- [30] Malkin, C. (2017) Narsizme Yeni Bir Bakış. İletişim Yayınları.
- [31] Malkin, C. (2017). Narsisizme Yeni Bir Bakış, (Çev: Serap Arslanpay) İletişim Yayınları
- [32] Masterson, J. F. (2006). Narsistik ve borderline kişilik bozuklukları (B. Açıl, Çev.). Litera Yayıncılık.
- [33] Mazılı, N. (2018). Türkiye'deki Taekwondo ve Karate Sporcularının Narsist Kişilik Özellikleri, Mizaç Tipleri ve Saldırganlık Düzeylerinin Araştırılması. Ege Üniversitesi, Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Sporda Psiko-Sosyal Alanlar Anabilim Dalı. İzmir.
- [34] Meng, KS ve Leung, L. (2021). Çin'de TikTok katılım davranışlarını etkileyen faktörler: Aranan doyumların, narsisizmin ve Beş Büyük kişilik özelliğinin incelenmesi. Telekomünikasyon Politikası, 45 (7), 102172. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.telpol.2021.102172>.
- [35] Özel, İ. (2014). Dindarlarda narsizm: yüksek din eitimi alan öğrenciler üzerine bir araştırma. Journal of International Social Research, 7(32), 310-327.
- [36] Pazarbaş, M. (2012). Liderlik ve Otorite: Lise Öğrencilerinin Liderlik ve Otorite Algısı Üzerine Bir Araştırma. Selçuk Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Halkla İlişkiler Ve Tanıtım Anabilim Dalı, Halkla İlişkiler Bilim Dalı. Konya.
- [37] Pincus, A. L. & Roche, M. J. (2011). Narcissistic grandiosity and narcissistic vulnerability. In W. K. Campbell & J. D. Miller (Eds.), The handbook of narcissism and narcissistic personality disorder: Theoretical approaches, empirical findings, and treatments. 31-40. John Wiley & Sons.

- [38] Pincus, A. L., Ansell, E. B., Pimentel, C. A., Cain, N. M., Wright, A. G. C., & Levy, K. N. (2009). Initial construction and validation of the Pathological Narcissism Inventory. *Psychological Assessment*, 21(3), 365–379. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016530>.
- [39] Ritter, K., Vater, A., Rsch, N., Schrder-Ab, M., Schtz, A., Fydrich, T., Lammers, C.-H., & Roepke, S. (2014). Shame in patients with narcissistic personality disorder. *Psychiatry Research*, 215(2), 429–437. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2013.11.019>.
- [40] Rozenblatt, Shool (2002). In *Defenes Of The Self: The Relationship Of Self-Esteem And Narcissism To Aggressive Behavior*, Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri: Long Island University.
- [41] Strauman, T. J. (2001). Self-regulation, affect regulation, and narcissism: pieces of the puzzle. *Psychological Inquiry*, 12(4), 239–242.
- [42] Şahin T. ve Ocak S. (2020). Birey ve Kişilik, içinde, Sağlık Kuruluşlarında Örgütsel Davranış: Araştırma ve Olgularla 69-83. Siyasal Kitabevi.
- [43] Şen G. ve Barışkın E. (2019). “Patolojik Narsisizm Envanterinin Türkçe Standardizasyonu, Geçerlik ve Güvenirliğin Sınanması”, *Türk Psikiyatri Dergisi*, 30(2), 118-129.
- [44] Uysal, A. (2019). *Hubris Sendromu: Liderlerin Gizli Hastalığı*, Siyasal Kitabevi.
- [45] Wink, P. (1991). Two faces of narcissism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 61(4), 590–597. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.61.4.590>.
- [46] Winnicott, D. W. (1975). Aggression in relation to emotional development. *Through Paediatrics To Psycho-Analysis*.
- [47] Young, M. H., Miller, B. C., Norton, M. C., & Hill, E. J. (1995). The effect of parental supportive behaviors on life satisfaction of adolescent offspring. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 813-822.