

# CHAPTER 5

## EXAMINATION OF SCHADENFREUDE IN TERMS DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

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### INTRODUCTION

Someone's pain causes sympathy for those who are exposed to this situation (Eisenberg et al., 2006). However, at times the pain or sorrow of someone else may cause the individual who has witnessed it to enjoy this. In the literature, this is indicated by the German word schadenfreude (Feather, Wenzel, & McKee, 2013). According to Heider (1958) schadenfreude is a discordant emotion because while the actor feels good, at the same time the target feels bad. Although schadenfreude was mentioned by researchers since 1950s, the term has been studied for 25 years in psychology literature. In their review study Wang, Lilienfeld and Rochat (2019) they examined the schadenfreude in terms of social, personality, and developmental psychology perspective. To our knowledge that was the first review study which is looking over schadenfreude in scope of developmental psychology. So in this review, the aim is to examine schadenfreude in terms of developmental psychology perspective by looking over the studies which includes participants who differ in terms of sociodemographic variables such as age, gender and also includes different variables such as moral valence, envy, prosocial behaviors.

### CLASSIFICATION OF SCHADENFREUDE AS AN EMOTION

Schadenfreude is thought to be classified as self-conscious emotion. Self-conscious emotions differ from basic emotions in terms of evaluation of the self (Tracy, Robins, & Tangney, 2007). Individuals feel sorry when something bad happened and sadness is a basic emotion but when they think that this sad thing was happened because of them, they feel guilt. Similarly, when something bad happened to others, they make evaluations according to their standards, self-esteem and they may feel schadenfreude. According to Tracy & Robins (2004) self-conscious emotions have social targets like to pursue good relations with others, to develop our social status or protect it. Considering the relationship

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self-esteem and feelings of schadenfreude in terms of peer acceptance, peer rejection and socio-metric status.

As a conclusion, this review suggests a brief understanding of schadenfreude in terms of developmental psychology perspective by classifying it as an emotion and also including studies with participants at different life time period. As mentioned before, schadenfreude is relatively new phenomenon in terms of developmental psychology and it is needed to be examined in the future.

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