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## **The Comparison of Psychological Counselling Students who had Social Skill Education Course and the Students Who did not**

### **Abstract**

*The aim of the study was to examine whether social skill education course had positive effects on social skills of psychological counselling students. Research group were subjected to social skill education course but control group did not. Study participants were 134 university students attending to Psychological Counselling Department. Research group included 78 of the participants who had social skill education course. Control group consisted of 56 participants who were not subjected to social skill education course. All of the participants were the third grade students studying at Karadeniz Technical University, Fatih Educational Faculty, and Psychological Counselling Department.*

*The major instrument in the study was Social Skills Scale, which was adapted for the university students by Galip Yüksel (2004). Also, a personal information form prepared by the researcher was utilized. Social Skills Scale included six sub-scales. T-test was used in the process of data analysis. The findings revealed that there was a correlation between the social control sub-scale and social skill education course. The study also revealed that the male participants in experiment group had significantly higher scores than the female students when emotional expressionism was regarded.*

**Keywords:** *Social Skills, Psychological Counselling Students, Social Skill Training*

## 1-Introduction

Social skill is an ability which affects the whole life of people and might be accomplished by the individual throughout their lives. The skill might be acquired by different factors such as gender, status and the culture which people belong to (Fontana, 1992). There are different concepts defining social skill (Korkut, 2004). In the study, social skill is defined as a skill which might compel positive responses and prevent negative responses, as well (Yüksel, 2004). Although there are many definitions of social skill, whole literature agrees on the idea that it can be acquired (Bacanlı, 2012). So, it is expected that social skill be taught to students primarily by the educators (Avcıoğlu, 2007). Especially when preventive counselling is taken into consideration, it might be necessary to give social skill education to pupils by the psychological counselors at schools in the frame of the preventive counseling services (Korkut, 2004). Psychological counselors at schools are expected to own social skill as they ought to teach it. The aim of the study was to find out whether there was an effect on social skills of the psychological counseling students who attained social skill education course. The aim was also to examine whether there was a difference on social skill levels between the students who attained social skill education course and the ones who did not. Moreover, whether there was a difference in sub-scales of Social Skill Inventory was examined.

## 2-Method

The study aimed to examine the social skill levels of the Psychological Counseling students who attended and who did not attend the social skill education course. The research was an experimental study with post-test control group. The design of the research was based on the post-test which was given to both experiment and the control group as suggested by Karasar (1991).

The study was carried out on 134 third-grade students studying Psychological Counseling at Karadeniz Technical University in 2014-2015 academic year. Experiment group consisted of 78 students who selectively had social skill education course whereas control group involved 56. Control group enrolled in a different optional course. Data were collected by using Social Skill Inventory first developed by Riggio (1986) and adapted to Turkish by Yüksel (2004). Personal Information Form adapted by the researcher was also used for collecting

data. Social Skill Inventory developed for Turkish university students included 90 items and six sub-scales. The sub-scales of the Inventory were; Emotional Expression, Emotional Sensitivity, Emotional Control, Social Expressionism, Social Sensitivity and Social Control.

Cronbach alfa reliability values obtained for six sub-scales of Social Skill Inventory varied from .56 to .82. Re-test test reliability for six sub-scales ranged from .81 to .89 ( $r=.81$  ve  $r=.89$ ). The correlation between Social Skill Inventory and Self Monitoring Scale were found to be .63 ( $r=.63$ ).

Experiment group was subjected to social skill education course for 14 weeks. The courses were three hours each week. Social skill education course was given by the researcher. The scales were given to experiment group and control group at the same time at the beginning of the Spring term. Since the students in experiment group were in the same class except for the optional courses, a similar program was beneficial to both groups. The courses the students attended differed only in one optional lesson when they were at second or third grade. Data were collected after the forms had been given to the students during the lessons. Data were analysed using SPSS 22. T-test, frequency, and arithmetic average were used in order to obtain findings.

### 3-Findings

As a result of the T-test given to the students attained the social skill education course and the ones who did not, the scores were shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: The scores of the T-test results**

		N	X	S	Sd	t
Social Skill	Subjected to Social Skill Education	78	252,37	26,73	132	,704
	Not Subjected to Social Skill Education	56	249,05	27,19	117,40	,702
Emotional Expressionim	Subjected to Social Skill Education	78	37,69	6,19	132	,030
	Not Subjected to Social Skill Education	56	37,66	5,74	123,62	,030
Emotional Sensitivity	Subjected to Social Skill Education	78	47,55	6,63	132	1,208
	Not Subjected to Social Skill Education	56	49,08	8,07	103,78	1,170
Emotional Control	Subjected to Social Skill Education	78	41,51	5,86	132	,029
	Not Subjected to Social Skill Education	56	41,48	6,34	112,92	,028
Social Expressionim	Subjected to Social Skill Education	78	44,44	7,30	132	,015
	Not Subjected to Social Skill Education	56	44,42	7,88	113,02	,015
Social Sensitivity	Subjected to Social Skill Education	78	43,34	6,959	132	1,60
	Not Subjected to Social Skill Education	56	41,50	5,945	127,97	1,65
Social Control	Subjected to Social Skill Education	78	37,82	6,52	132	2,719
	Not Subjected to Social Skill Education	56	34,89	5,57	127,93	2,790

As it is seen in Table 1, arithmetic mean of the social skill level of experiment group was 26,7, arithmetic mean of the social skill level of experiment group was 27,1. When sub-scales of Social Skill Inventory were taken into consideration, in social control sub-scale, there was a difference between the means of two groups. In other sub-scales,

the mean scores of both groups were close to each other. Whether there was a difference between the mean scores of experiment and control groups was determined by independent T-test. There was a significant difference between experiment and control group when Social Control trait was taken into consideration [ $t_{(132)}=2.71, P<.01$ ]. Social Control levels of the experiment group was higher ( $X=37,82$ ) than Social Control levels of control group ( $X=34,89$ ). This finding reveals that social skill education course has a positive effect on social control.

**Table 2: T-test scores according to gender after conducting Social Skill Inventory**

		N	X	S	Sd	t
Social Skill	FEMALE	89	250,29	25,45727	132	,418
	MALE	45	252,35	29,73914	77,336	,398
Emotional Expressionism	FEMALE	89	36,89	5,68899	132	2,151
	MALE	45	39,22	6,31337	80,741	2,079
Emotional Sensitivity	FEMALE	89	48,95	7,69284	132	1,714
	MALE	45	46,68	6,18952	106,952	1,840
Emotional Control	FEMALE	89	41,26	6,21538	132	,619
	MALE	45	41,95	5,74043	94,942	,635
Social Expressionism	FEMALE	89	44,35	7,45936	132	,174
	MALE	45	44,60	7,72069	85,780	,172
Social Sensitivity	FEMALE	89	42,64	6,35368	132	,162
	MALE	45	42,44	7,12089	80,066	,156
Social Control	FEMALE	89	36,16	5,88958	132	1,109
	MALE	45	37,44	7,01801	76,091	1,047

The study revealed no significant difference in social skill levels of psychological counselling students based on gender. However, it displayed a significant difference between the sub-inventory of Emotional Expressionism and gender [ $t_{(132)}=2.15, P<.01$ ]. Emotional expressionism levels of the male psychological counselling students were higher ( $X=39,22$ ) than the levels of female psychological counselling students ( $X=36,89$ ). This finding revealed that male students had higher emotional expressionism trait in comparison to their female counterparts.

#### 4-Discussion

In the study, the effect of social skill education course on the social skill levels of psychological counseling students was examined. According to the data obtained from the study, there was no significant difference between the social skill scores of experiment and control group. However, when Social Control sub-scale of Social Skill Inventory was taken into account, that there was a difference between the groups was remarkable. It might be concluded that social skill education course had positive effects on students who were subjected to social skill education course when social control was taken into consideration. The results of the study showed differences in comparison to the similar studies in literature (Karahan, 2008; Yuksel; 1997). In both studies, it was clear that university students who had social skill education course displayed an improvement on their social skill levels when their total scores for social skills were taken into account. But based on the study conducted by Yuksel (1997), in sub-inventories, only in emotional sensitivity was seen a difference whereas no differences were depicted in other sub-scales. When sub-scales were taken into consideration, the study was consistent with literature.

While social skill education course was being given, the behaviours under consideration were not supposed to be known by learners and the learners were assumed to be frightened of displaying these behaviours (Yuksel, 1997). Eventually, social skill education course was supposed to enhance social skills of students enlightening them about how social skill knowledge might be presented. The findings in the study showed that social skill education course had positive effect on social expressionism which is a sub-scale of Social Scale Inventory. Furthermore, it should be considered that there are many factors which affect social skills. Accordingly, it is recommended that future researches might include studies including other sub-scales. The study revealed that there was no relation between social skill level and gender. This finding showed consistency with other studies in literature (Sahin and Yeşil; 2010; Yuksel, 1999). It can be concluded that one of the reasons for the result might be because psychological counselling students share similar social skills. It is salient and necessary for Psychological Counselling students to have social skills in their professional life. The study also revealed that there was a positive relation between emotional expressionism and gender in favour of male students. This is consistent with Ozbulak and Serin's (2011)

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study when emotional expressionism is regarded. In the study, the school psychological counselors had higher scores than the school teachers in social control, social expressionism and emotional expressionism.

To sum up, the social skill levels of psychological counselling students attended the social skill education course were higher than those of the students who did not attend to the social skill education course when sub-scale social control was taken into consideration. This showed that social skill education course had a positive effect on social control levels of the students. However, social skill education course showed no effect on social skill levels of the students. In order to understand the effects of social skill education course better, a future study with a pre and post-test for the research and control group should be conducted. It might be said that social skill education course can be a preference by the students who assume that they lack social skill.

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