INVESTIGATION OF SOCIAL SKILL LEVELS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ACCORDING TO VARIOUS VARIABLES

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the social skill levels of secondary school students according to various variables. In this quantitative study, screening model was adopted. The study group consists of students continuing their education in secondary education institutions affiliated to the Ministry of National Education. The sampling group determined by convenient sampling method consists of 285 females and 245 males, totalling 530 participants. The Matson Evaluation of Social Skills with Youngsters (MESSY) developed by Matson, Ratatory and Helsel (1983) and adapted into Turkish by Erdoğan (2002) was used as the measurement tool. Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was applied to the obtained data and although the results of the test did not show normal distribution, it was accepted that the data had a normal distribution because the skewness and kurtosis values were between -3 and +3. In the light of these results, independent sample test (T-test) and one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) were applied to the data obtained. According to the results of the data analysis, Welch values were taken into consideration depending on the homogeneity assumption of the data and Games-Howell test, one of the Post Hoc tests, was applied as a second level test. The findings were evaluated according to $p < 0.05$ significance value. Depending on the gender variable, a statistically significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of social adjustment, overconfidence, and inappropriate assertiveness. Statistically significant differences were found in social adjustment, positive social behaviour, social communication, overconfidence sub-dimensions and social skills total scores depending on the variable of doing sports. Statistically significant differences were found in social adjustment, overconfidence, inappropriate assertiveness sub-dimensions depending on the class variable. As a result, the social skill levels of students continuing their education in secondary education institutions vary according to various variables.

Keywords: Learning, secondary education, social skills, sport.

INTRODUCTION

Exhibiting the behaviours expected or desired by the society of which the individual is a member is related to the social development of the individual. Social development is defined as the whole of the individual's relations with other people from birth until they become an adult and the behaviours they develop towards them and they are interested in (Çubukçu & Gültekin, 2006). An individual's relationships with other people and their attitudes from birth onwards constitute the basis of their social development. Social development of the child in the first years forms the basis of their future social behaviours. The socialisation of the individual contributes to becoming a member of the society in which they live, becoming aware that they are a part of the society and their learning. This is only related to the development of qualities such as defining and reflecting one's feelings as they are, acting as a bridge with the outside world, identifying with others and giving time to feelings (Ibid). Socialisation is a process in which individuals, especially children, become functional members of a particular group and acquire the values, behaviours and beliefs of other members of the group (Gander & Gardiner, 2010). In other words, socialisation, as a social phenomenon, is the process of becoming aware of the appropriate roles expected of an individual in gaining membership of the society by going through certain stages from birth (Erkal, 2006). As can be understood from the definitions, it is possible to evaluate socialisation as a process that enables the individual to become a part of the society. In order for the individual to complete this process in a healthy way, they need to have social skills, social skills are very important in terms of sustaining one's life. Lack of social skills is a problem in adapting to different environments, maintaining bilateral relationships and school success. The individual needs to acquire social skills in order not to experience such negativities (Antia & Kreimeyer, 1988). Individuals whose social skills are not sufficiently developed experience significant problems in socialisation. Children with social skills deficiency have fewer options in solving the problems they encounter compared to those without social skills deficiency (Samancı & Uçan, 2017). Individuals with social skills problems also have low academic achievement levels (Köksal, Dilci, & Koç, 2013). Since the development of social skills also affects academic success, acquisition of social skills is a positive factor in school success, social relations and adaptation difficulties (Akkök, 2006). Therefore, the development of social skills has become vital. After all, individuals with adequate social skills are more successful in their social lives and are more beneficial to the society of which they are a member. One of the important aims of education is to help individuals adapt to the society they live in. In other words, in order for the individual to adapt to the society in which they live in a desired way, they must complete their social development in a healthy way in order to become an effective member of the society. In this respect, physical education and sports lessons have a critical role in contributing to the cognitive, emotional, motor, personal and social development of students, facilitating their adaptation to society and preparing them for the future. (Giraldéz, 2006). When the structure of sport is considered, it is seen that it is a competitive, solidaristic and cultural phenomenon that develops the abilities of the individual while transforming their natural environment into a human environment, as well as socialising and integrating them with the society, developing their spirit and physique, individually or collectively, within the scope of leisure time activity or in a way that takes full time (Çelik and Bulgu, 2010; Erkal, 1992; Soyer, 2004; Tod, 2014). Physical education and sports courses, which

enable sports to become a culture, also enable the society to exhibit the behaviours expected from the individual. The habit of doing sports acquired through these courses in secondary education institutions can help the individual to acquire social skills more quickly. In this direction, in this study, the social skill levels of students continuing their education in secondary education institutions were examined according to various variables and it is aimed to contribute to the relevant field.

METHOD

Research Design

In this study, which is a quantitative research, the survey model was adopted. The survey model is a research approach that aims to describe a past or current situation as it is. The individual or object that is the subject of the research is tried to be defined within its own conditions and without any intervention (Karasar, 2005).

Research Group

The study group consists of students at secondary education institutions affiliated to the Ministry of National Education. The sampling group determined by the convenience sampling method consists of 285 females and 245 males, totalling 530 participants.

Data Collection Tool

In the first part of the measurement tool consisting of two parts, there are questions prepared for the demographic information of the participants. The second part involves the Matson Evaluation of Social Skills with Youngsters (MESSY) developed by Matson, Ratatory and Helsel (1983) and adapted into Turkish by Erdoğan (2002) in order to measure the social skill levels of the participants. The five-point Likert-type measurement tool (1: Not at all suitable for me, 2: Not very suitable for me 3: Somewhat suitable for me 4: Quite suitable for me 5: Completely suitable for me) consists of 5 sub-dimensions and 47 items in total. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale was determined as .81. In the study conducted by Kılıç (2019), while the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of thescale was foundto be.83, itwas determined as .77, .71, .71, .64 and .74 for the sub-dimensions, respectively.

Analysing the Data

After the obtained data were transferred to the Excel programme, the participants who provided incomplete information were excluded from the study. The edited data were transferred to the SPSS 23.0 package programme and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was applied, and although the results obtained did not show a normal distribution, it was accepted that the data had a normal distribution because the skewness and kurtosis values were between -3 and +3 (Jondeau & Rockinger, 2003). Independent sample test (T-test) and one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) were applied to the data. According to the results of the data analysis, Welch values were taken into consideration depending on the homogeneity assumption of the data

and Games-Howell test, one of the Post Hoc tests, was applied as a second level test. The findings were evaluated according to p<0.05 significance value (Tukey, 1949).

FINDINGS

Within the scope of the aim of our research, the social skill levels of the participants were examined according to various variables and the results of the data analyses were presented

Table 1. T-Test Results for Gender Variable.

Sub-dimension	G e n d e r	N	X̄± Sd	t	p
Social Cohesion	Female	285	23.8±5.38	2.541	**.011***
	Male	245	22.5±5.81		
Positive Social Behaviour	Female	285	15.1±2.95	.576	.565
	Male	245	14.9±3.55		
To be able to Establish Social Communication	Female	285	17.1±3.56	1.071	.284
	Male	245	16.7±3.86		
Overconfidence	Female	285	6.3±3.18	-2.908	**.004***
	Male	245	7.14±3.4		
Inappropriate Assertiveness	Female	285	5.45±3.38	-2.801	**.005***
	Male	245	6.28±3.38		
Social Skills Total	Female	285	67.79±8.55	0.0974	.920
	Male	245	67.71±10.5		

p<0.05*

According to Table 1, a statistically significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of social adaptation (t(528)= 2.541; p<0.05), overconfidence (t(528)= -2.908; p<0.05), inappropriate assertiveness (t(528)=-2.801; p<0.05)depending on the gender variable. No significant difference was found in social skills total score and other sub-dimensions depending on gender variable. When the mean values are analysed, it is seen that the mean scores of female students in social adjustment (x=23.8) are significantly higher than the scores of male students, while the mean scores of male students in the sub-dimensions of overconfidence (x=7.14) and inappropriate assertiveness (x=6.28) are significantly higher than those of female students.

Table 2. T-Test Results for The Variable Of Doing Sport.

Sub-dimension	Playing Sports	N	X̄± Sd	t	p
Social Cohesion	Yes	202	25.6±4.54	-2.177	**.030***
	No	328	21.5±6.12		
Positive Social Behaviour	Yes	202	19.1±2.51	2.542	**.025***
	No	328	13.9±4.07		
To be able to Establish Social Communication	Yes	202	18.3±2.43	-2.887	**.004***
	No	328	14.3±3.5		
Overconfidence	Yes	202	8.09±2.53	2.226	**.026***
	No	328	5.44±3.15		
Inappropriate Assertiveness	Yes	202	6.44±3.65	3.105	.120
	No	328	5.47±3.19		
Social Skills Total	Yes	202	77.53±15.66	-1.302	**.046***
	No	328	60.61±20.03		

p<0.05*

According to Table 2, depending on the variable of doing sports, a statistically significant difference was found in social adjustment (t(528)= -2.177; p<0.05), positive social behaviour (t(528)= 2.542; p<0.05), social communication (t(528)= -2.887; p<0.05, overconfidence (t(528)= 2.226; p<0.05) sub-dimensions and social skills

total scores (t(528)= -1.302; p<0.05). In the sub-dimension of inappropriate assertiveness, no statistically significant difference was found depending on the status of doing sports. When the mean scores are examined, it is seen that the significant difference is in favour of the individuals who do sports.

Table 3. One-Way ANOVA Results for The Grade Variable.

Sub-dimension	Class	N	X̄± Sd	F	p	Difference
Social Cohesion	9	135	21.4±2.35	6.486	**.000***	a-d
	10	138	23.1±3.26			b-d
	11	125	24.6±4.14			c-d
	12	132	26.5±4.45			
Positive Social Behaviour	9	135	13.1±3.11	1.884	.131	
	10	138	13.8±3.2			
	11	125	14.3±2.91			
	12	132	15.8±3.65			
To be able to Establish Social Communication	9	135	15.9±3.12	2.071	.103	
	10	138	16.3±3.35			
	11	125	16.8±3.42			
	12	132	17.9±3.8			
Overconfidence	9	135	6.7±3.16	4.490	**.004***	a-d
	10	138	7.41±3.47			
	11	125	7.92±3.38			
	12	132	9.65±3.01			
Inappropriate Assertiveness	9	135	6.62±3.64	6.176	**.000***	a-d
	10	138	4.5±2.46			
	11	125	4.97±2.7			
	12	132	5.18±3.42			
Social Skills Total	9	135	63.7±15.3	1.087	.355	
	10	138	65.1±15.7			
	11	125	68.5±16.5			
	12	132	75.0±18.3			

p<0.01**, p<0.05*, a=9th grade, b=10th grade, c=11th grade, d=12th grade

According to Table 3, a statistically significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of social adaptation (F(3; 292.64)= 6.486; p<0.05), overconfidence (F(3; 529)= 4.490; p<.005), inappropriate assertiveness (F(3; 291.55)= 6.176; p<0.05) depending on the grade variable. No significant difference was found in social skills total score and other sub-dimensions depending on the class variable. When the results of the Games-Howell Post-Hoc test were examined to determine which groups were different, it was found that there was a difference between the 12th grade and the other three grades in the social adjustment sub-dimension, a difference between the 9th grade and the 12th grade in the overconfidence sub-dimension, and finally a difference between the 9th grade and the 12th grade in the inappropriate assertiveness sub-dimension. The mean values show that the scores of 12th grade students (x=26.5) in the social adjustment sub-dimension, 12th grade students (x=9.65) in the overconfidence sub-dimension, and 9th grade students (x=6.62) in the inappropriate assertiveness sub-dimension are higher than the other grades.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

In this study, in which we examined the social skills level of students continuing their education in secondary education institutions according to various variables, while a statistically significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of social adaptation, overconfidence, inappropriate assertiveness depending on the gender variable, no statistically significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of social skills total score,

positive social behaviour and social communication. When the mean scores were examined, it was seen that the significant difference was in favour of females in the social adaptation sub-dimension and in favour of males in the overconfidence and inappropriate assertiveness sub-dimensions (Table 1). It is thought that the traditional social structure causes the difference between the sub-dimensions. Positive discrimination of parents during adolescence is thought to play an effective role on the child's social skills, attitudes and behaviours. In the study conducted by Connell et al. (2016), it is stated that women help with housework more than men. It is thought that a patriarchal structure may influence women during adolescence and thus cause a significant difference in social skills sub-dimensions. When the related literature studies are examined, Özyürek and Özkan (2015) examined the social skills levels of adolescents and found no statistically significant difference in the total scores of the social skills inventory depending on the gender variable. In the study by Kılıç (2019), in which the attitudes and social skills levels of students in secondary education institutions towards physical education and sports course were examined, statistically significant differences were found in social adaptation, overconfidence and inappropriate assertiveness sub-dimensions depending on gender. It is emphasised that the statistical difference in the sub-dimension of social adaptation is in favour of female participants, and the statistical difference in the sub-dimensions of overconfidence and inappropriate assertiveness is in favour of male participants. The results we obtained are in parallel with the results of the studies in the literature (Avcu, 2021; Çiriş, 2014; Süt, 2014).

A statistically significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of social adaptation, positive social behaviour, social communication, overconfidence and social skills total scores depending on the variable of doing sports. However, no statistically significant difference was found in the sub-dimension of inappropriate assertiveness depending on the variable of doing sports. When the mean scores are examined, it is seen that the significant difference is in favour of the participants who do sports (Table 2). When the related literature studies are examined, in the study by Sanır and Huy (2019), in which high school students' methods of coping with stress and social skills levels were examined according to their sporting status, a significant difference was found in social skills scores depending on the variable of doing sports. It is emphasised that participants who do sports have higher social skills than participants who do not do sports. In the study conducted by Akbaş et al. (2019), it was concluded that the positive social skill levels of students who do sports are significantly higher than the negative social skill levels of students who do not do sports. The results we obtained are in parallel with the results of the studies in the literatüre (Ağkurt, 2018; Eroğlu, 2016; Nergiz, 2018; Zengin, 2017; Yılmaz, 2013; Yurttaş, 2016).

While a statistically significant difference was found in social adjustment, overconfidence and inappropriate assertiveness sub-dimensions depending on the grade variable, no statistically significant difference was found in social skills total score, positive social behaviour and social communication sub-dimensions. When the second level test (Games-Howell) applied to determine the difference between the groups was examined, it was seen that there was a difference between the 12th grade and the other three grades in the social

adaptation sub-dimension, a difference between the 9th grade and the 12th grade in the overconfidence sub-dimension, and finally a difference between the 9th grade and the 12th grade in the inappropriate assertiveness sub-dimension (Table 3). While students who have just started high school education experience the comfort of starting high school, 12th grade students experience the anxiety of taking university selection exams. It is thought that this situation may influence students' social skill levels. When the related literature studies are examined, in the study conducted by Çiriş (2014) in which the social skill levels of students who do and do not do sports were examined, no statistically significant difference was found in positive social behaviours depending on the class variable. However, the average scores show that as the class level increases, positive social behaviour scores increase as well. In the study by Yüce (2019), in which the effect of group games on the social skills development of secondary school students was examined, no statistically significant difference was found between the pre-test and post-test total scores of the social skills scale depending on the class variable. In the study conducted by Terkin and Abakay (2023) in which the social skill levels of 12-15 age group athletes were examined, it was emphasized that fifth grade students had higher negative behaviours than eighth grade students. The results we obtained are in parallel with the results of the studies in the literature.As a result, the social skill levels of students continuing their education in secondary education institutions vary according to various variables. It was concluded that especially doing sports is an important factor on social skills. As a result, the social skill levels of students continuing their education in secondary education institutions vary according to various variables. It was concluded that especially doing sports is an important factor on social skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Secondary school students should be encouraged to do sports to meet social norms. It is recommended to increase the number of sports practices used as a tool in gaining social skills and to offer environments where students can develop their social skills in line with their interests and needs, considering their developmental qualities.

ETHICAL TEXT

The research and publication process adhered to journal publication rules, principles, and research and publication ethics. Authors are responsible for any kind of ethical violation concerning the article. The study procedure was approved by the Human Subjects Ethics Committee of Kütahya Dumlupınar (11.01.2023/240347).

Conflict of interest: No conflict of interest has been declared regarding the article.

The authors' contribution rates: The contribution rates of the authors are as follows: the first author contributed 50%, the second author contributed 20%, the third author contributed 20% and the fourth author contributed 10%.

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