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An Investigation of the Relationship Between Behavior Problems and Social Skills in Secondary School Students

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine whether there is a relationship between behavior problems and social skills of secondary students. This study is a relational survey model that examines the relationship between behavioral problem and social skills in sixth- and seventh-grade students. The study was carried out with 822 sixth- and seventh-grade children from 14 different secondary schools in Istanbul. Revised Problem Behavior Checklist and Matson Evaluation of Social Skills with Youngsters were employed as data-gathering instruments. The results indicate that there is a significant relationship between the scores of behavior problems and the scores of social skills. The scores of Social Skills, Positive Social Behavior, and Negative Social Behavior could change according to the scores of Conduct Disorder, Socialized Aggression, Attention Problems, Anxiety, Motor Tension, and Psychotic Behavior.

Keywords: Adolescent, behavior problem, social skill

Introduction

The word adolescence is derived from Latin “adolescere,” which means “to grow up or to mature.” It is expressed as the period between childhood and adulthood. Development and maturity of adolescents is an ongoing process (Garrison, 1965; Rice, 1975; Yavuzer, 2011). While UNESCO shows the adolescence period as between the ages of 15 and 25, adolescence starts between the ages of 10 and 12 in girls and between the ages of 12 and 14 in boys in our country (Yavuzer, 2011). For adolescents, puberty is a developmental period in itself and contains a number of tasks. In this period, adolescents try to compromise between physical changes and their cultural environment, transfer their childhood ties to their families, and gain more psychological and physical autonomy. While doing all these, on the one hand they start to have relationships with the opposite sex and cope with sexual arousal, while on the other hand they try to develop a harmonious and stable personality in order to regulate their moods and build self-confidence (Brooks-Gunn & Reiter, 1990). When many changes that occur in puberty are considered, some possible problems that may occur in behaviors and relationships come to the fore.

Studies examining the relationship between biological changes and behavioral problems in adolescence can be grouped into two categories. The first category of studies examines the direct effect of puberty on psychological functions and behaviors. The second category of studies examines the different effects of early and late maturation (Steinberg & Belsky, 1996). In their study, Susman et al. (1987) found a relationship

between hormonal levels and emotional tendencies and aggression in boys. According to Wichstrom (1999), although there is enough evidence that psychological difficulties in puberty result from hormonal changes, the changes that occur in adolescent body have an important role in the development of depression. Keel et al. (1997) stated that girls may not be satisfied with their physical appearance as their weight increase in puberty, and this may cause eating disorder and depression. Second group of researchers are related with the time dimension of adolescence. A study conducted by Tschann et al. (1994) found that substance abuse was higher in adolescents who matured early. According to Caspi and Moffitt (1991), although a strong relationship was reported between early maturing of girls who experienced difficulties before adolescence and the increase in problem behaviors, girls who did not experience difficulties in the past but who matured early were more popular among their friends, while they tended to show behaviors such as committing crime and substance and alcohol use. In addition to this, they were more likely to have problems at school and experience early sexual intercourse (Flannery et al., 1993). Girls who mature early tend to spend more time with older adolescents, especially men, and this relationship has a negative effect in the adaptation process of girls (Silbereisen et al., 1989). Boys who mature early have a high risk of juvenile delinquency, and they may tend to show more antisocial behaviors such as higher substance and alcohol use, skipping school, and having early sexual intercourse (Felson & Haynie, 2002; Williams & Dunlop, 1999). As can be seen in the literature, there are correlations between risk factors in developmental areas and behavioral problems in adolescence. Since the present study examines social skills within

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the scope of social development, which is one of the areas of development, below is an explanation of social developmental characteristics of adolescence, social skills, and behavioral problems in adolescents. In this context, it will be useful to examine the characteristics of social development in adolescence within the context of the present study.

Social Development Characteristics of Adolescence

Social development during adolescence cannot be considered independently of other developmental characteristics. In any adolescence group consisting of girls and boys, there are close relationships between social development and emotional development, physical changes, mental activities, and sense of self. Significant and very obvious changes in social behaviors are often mentioned more in early periods of adolescence (Garrison, 1965). The social environment that has an impact on the behaviors of adolescents includes family, friend groups, and school environment.

When the effects of family on adolescent behaviors are considered, the common view is that there is a mutual interaction (socialization) between the adolescent and parents. The term “mutual socialization process” refers to a process in which children and adolescents socialize parents, just as parents socialize children and adolescents (Aydın, 2010; Santrock, 2012). Adolescents’ demands and their search for new things may cause changes in the family system and dissolution in the power balance in the family. Parents try to keep the ongoing balance and authority against change in the family, and they resist to the demands of the adolescent (Kulaksızoğlu, 2011).

Friendship has an important place in adolescent life. Adolescents’ group activities and spending time with peers are effective in developing social behaviors (Garrison, 1965; Kulaksızoğlu, 2011). Adolescents interact socially by establishing good relationships with others by having a direct or simple purpose or through various social experiences (Garrison, 1965). During the transition to adolescence, while adolescents spend most of their time alone or with friends, there is a significant decrease in the time they spend with their families and they begin to reject their families’ views (Kulaksızoğlu, 2011; Larson & Richards, 1991; Ruffin, 2009).

While school experience contributes significantly to professional and social goals, it also enriches both intellectual and esthetic aspects of many adolescents’ lives (Gander & Gardiner, 1993). During adolescence, tension in emotional life and differences in interests may decrease adolescents’ strength to study, make it harder for them to concentrate, and therefore cause failure (Yavuzer, 2011). For this reason, school teachers have important responsibilities on adolescents. When teachers know about the characteristics and problems of adolescence, they may be good role models for adolescents who cannot manage themselves independently when they free themselves from the influence of parents. School should both enable adolescents to be constructive and permanent in the group and also to develop an autonomous personality (Yavuzer, 2011; Yörükoğlu, 2007).

As can be seen in the literature, parents, friends, and school experiences of adolescents, who are within their social circle, can have an important effect on their behaviors. Adolescents can interact with the people around them through their social skills. For this reason, it will be appropriate to explain social skills.

Social Skills

Riggio (1986) defines basic social skills as learned social skills and strategies. Riggio (1986), who suggested that a social skill can differ according to cultural norms, evaluated social skills as the combination of many skills. Elksnin and Elksnin (1998) argued that social skills consist of observable and nonobservable behaviors. While social skill has a general definition such as “successful interaction of individuals

with other individuals in their natural environment, at school, at home, at work place” (Hersen-Eisler, 1976; cited from. Bacanlı, 2012), it can also be defined in more detail as “communicating, interacting with others, understanding feelings, thoughts and behaviours of others in interpersonal situations and behaving accordingly, acting in harmony with the environment, making friends, showing socially acceptable behaviours, expressing self, coping with problem situations, having good relationships with the environment and other people” (Gresham & Elliott, 1990; Guerrero & Jones, 2003; Marlowe, 1986).

After including social developmental characteristics of adolescence and the definition of the concept of social skills within the context of the study, it will be appropriate to explain behavioral problems in adolescents, which is another variable of the study. Issues such as in which situations behaviors can be considered as problem behaviors and classification of behavioral problems are examined in the “Behavioral Problems in Adolescents” section.

Behavioral Problems in Adolescents

Factors such as age appropriateness, intensity of deviant behavior, continuity, sexual role expectations, and cultural factors play a role in determining whether children and adolescents have behavioral disorders. When the negative effects of the close circle are added to the natural difficulties brought by developmental periods, children may experience emotional disorders (Yavuzer, 2011). Children who have behavioral problems experience difficulties in communicating at home, at school, and with their peers. Clues about the problems seen in children’s behaviors should be evaluated. Problems which start mildly may turn into very serious behavioral problems in time. In determining whether behavior is a problem, the frequency and intensity of the behavior are very important characteristics (Bloomquist, 2006). In order to be able to group children according to behavioral problems in researches and clinical studies and to facilitate the quantitative assessment of behavioral changes, as a result of studies conducted with female and male students between the ages of 6 and 11 and between the ages of 12 and 16, behavioral problems were classified into two main groups as internalizing and externalizing (Achenbach, 1978; Achenbach & Edelbrock 1978/1979).

Internalized behaviors which are seen and defined in childhood and adolescence are behavioral problems such as withdrawal, anxiety, fear, psychosomatic symptoms, and depression (Bailey et al., 2009; Eisenberg et al., 2001; Grietens et al., 2004; Olson et al., 1999). In addition to the specified behaviors, low self-esteem, being sad, and being shy are also considered as internalized behavioral problems (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983; cited from Ollendick & King, 1994). Externalizing behaviors in childhood and adolescence are poor impulse control, defiant, destructive, hyperactive, aggressive, antisocial, or criminal behaviors (Bailey et al., 2009; Eisenberg et al., 2001; Grietens et al., 2004; Olson et al., 1999). According to Center and Kemp (2003), lack of control, aggression, and behavioral disorder are among externalizing behaviors. Externalizing disorders are behaviors which can be observed externally and which occur interpersonally.

In the present study, social skills and behavioral problems of students between the ages of 12 and 14 have been examined with a non-clinical sample group, and the importance of pre-adolescence period has been emphasized. The present study is important in terms of drawing attention to the pre-adolescence period and being one of the studies necessary to evaluate many problems that can occur in this period and to develop appropriate intervention methods.

Methods

This study has a correlational survey model that examines the relationship between behavioral problems and social skills in sixth- and

seventh-grade students. Correlational survey is a research model that aims to determine the presence and/or degree of change between two or more variables (Karasar, 2010). This study examines the relationships between variables, the levels of these relationships, and the differences in scale scores of the variables.

The population of the study includes sixth- and seventh-grade students and counselors in formal education institutions in İstanbul. Convenience/incidental sampling method was used to determine the sample of the study. In convenience/incidental sampling method, the researcher includes the sample that can easily be accessed (Karasar, 2010). The sample in the study consists of 416 sixth-grade students, 406 seventh-grade students, and the counselors of these students who were chosen from the population with convenience/incidental sampling method.

A Personal Information Form prepared by the researcher, and the Matson Evaluation of Social Skills with Youngsters and Revised Behavior Problem Checklist (RBPC) were used within the scope of the study. Matson Evaluation of Social Skills with Youngsters (MESSY) was developed by J. L. Matson, A. F. Rotatory, and W. J. Hessel in 1983, and its Turkish adaptation, validity, and reliability study was conducted by Erdoğan and Bacanlı (2003). It has two factors as positive social behavior and negative social behavior. RBPC was prepared by Quay and Peterson (1996) to find out the behavioral problems of children and adolescents. The scale uses the evaluations of parents, teachers, and clinical staff and has six dimensions. These are Conduct Disorder, Socialized Aggression, Attention Problems—Immaturity, Anxiety—Withdrawal, Psychotic Behavior, and Motor Tension—Excess. The scale was adapted into Turkish by Kaner and Uçak-Çiçekçi (2000). Frequency and percentage distributions that describe the demographic characteristics of the students in the study were found. Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was used to find out whether the scores were normally distributed. Nonparametric tests were used because the distributions were not normal.

Spearman–Brown correlation coefficient technique was used to analyze the association between the scores obtained from MESSY and the scores obtained from the sub-dimensions of RBPC, which were applied to sixth and seventh graders attending secondary education.

Results

As can be understood from Table 1, as a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between social skills scores and conduct disorder sub-dimension scores of both sixth- and seventh-grade students, a statistically significant negative correlation was found ($r_s = -.262$, $r_s = -.287$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between social skills scores and socialized aggression sub-dimension scores, while no statistically significant correlation was found between the scores of sixth graders, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between the scores of seventh graders ($r_s = -.096$, $r_s = -.224$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between social skills scores and attention problems—immaturity sub-dimension scores, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between the scores of both sixth and seventh graders ($r_s = -.310$, $r_s = -.310$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between social skills scores and anxiety—withdrawal sub-dimension scores, a statistically

Table 1.

Results of Spearman–Brown Rank Difference Correlation Analysis Applied to Determine the Correlation Between Social Skills and Behavioral Problems

| Variables | N | r_s | p |
|--|-----|-------|------|
| Sixth-Grade Social Skill Conduct Disorder | 416 | -.262 | .000 |
| Seventh-Grade Social Skill Conduct Disorder | 406 | -.287 | .000 |
| Sixth-Grade Social Skill Socialized Aggression | 416 | -.096 | .052 |
| Seventh-Grade Social Skill Socialized Aggression | 406 | -.224 | .000 |
| Sixth-Grade Social Skill Attention Problems—Immaturity | 416 | -.310 | .000 |
| Seventh-Grade Social Skill Attention Problems—Immaturity | 406 | -.310 | .000 |
| Sixth-Grade Social Skill Anxiety—Withdrawal | 416 | -.174 | .000 |
| Seventh-Grade Social Skill Anxiety—Withdrawal | 406 | -.201 | .000 |
| Sixth-Grade Social Skills Psychotic Behavior | 416 | -.078 | .111 |
| Seventh-Grade Social Skill Psychotic Behavior | 406 | -.223 | .000 |
| Sixth-Grade Social Skills Motor Tension | 416 | -.152 | .002 |
| Seventh-Grade Social Skill Motor Tension | 406 | -.233 | .000 |

Note: N = sample number; r_s = correlation coefficient.

significant negative correlation was found between the scores of both sixth and seventh graders ($r_s = -.174$, $r_s = -.201$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank differences correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between social skills scores and psychotic behavior sub-dimension scores, while no statistically significant correlation was found between the scores of sixth graders, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between the scores of seventh graders ($r_s = -.078$, $r_s = -.223$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank differences correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between social skills scores and motor tension—excess sub-dimension scores, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between the scores of both sixth and seventh graders ($r_s = -.152$, $r_s = -.233$, $p < .05$).

As can be understood from Table 2, as a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between positive social behaviors and conduct disorder sub-dimension scores, while no statistically significant correlation was found between the scores of sixth graders, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between the scores of seventh graders ($r_s = -.79$, $r_s = -.130$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between positive social behaviors and socialized aggression sub-dimension scores, while no statistically significant correlation was found between the scores of sixth graders, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between the scores of seventh graders ($r_s = -.021$, $r_s = -.167$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between positive social behaviors and attention problems—immaturity sub-dimension scores, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between the scores of both sixth and seventh graders ($r_s = -.204$, $r_s = -.249$, $p < .05$).

Table 2.

Results of Spearman–Brown Rank Difference Correlation Analysis Applied to Determine the Correlation Between Positive Social Behaviors and Behavioral Problems

| Variables | N | r_s | p |
|--|-----|-------|------|
| Sixth-Grade Positive Social Behavior Conduct Disorder | 416 | -.790 | .106 |
| Seventh-Grade Positive Social Behavior Conduct Disorder | 406 | -.130 | .009 |
| Sixth-Grade Positive Social Behavior Socialized Aggression | 416 | -.021 | .671 |
| Seventh-Grade Positive Social Behavior Socialized Aggression | 406 | -.167 | .001 |
| Sixth-Grade Positive Social Behavior Attention Problems—Immaturity | 416 | -.204 | .000 |
| Seventh-Grade Positive Social Behavior Attention Problems—Immaturity | 406 | -.249 | .000 |
| Sixth-Grade Positive Social Behavior Anxiety—Withdrawal | 416 | -.196 | .000 |
| Seventh-Grade Positive Social Behavior Anxiety—Withdrawal | 406 | -.180 | .000 |
| Sixth-Grade Positive Social Behavior Psychotic Behavior | 416 | -.020 | .683 |
| Seventh-Grade Positive Social Behavior Psychotic Behavior | 406 | -.169 | .001 |
| Sixth-Grade Positive Social Behavior Motor Tension | 416 | -.161 | .752 |
| Seventh-Grade Positive Social Behavior Motor Tension | 406 | -.101 | .042 |

Note: N=sample number; r_s =correlation coefficient.

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank differences correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between positive social behaviors and anxiety—withdrawal sub-dimension scores, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between the scores of both sixth and seventh graders ($r_s = -.196$, $r_s = -.180$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between positive social behaviors and psychotic behavior sub-dimension scores, while no statistically significant correlation was found between the scores of sixth graders, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between the scores of seventh graders ($r_s = -.020$, $r_s = -.169$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank differences correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between positive social behaviors and motor tension—excess sub-dimension scores, while no statistically significant correlation was found between the scores of sixth graders, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between the scores of seventh graders ($r_s = -.16$, $r_s = -.101$, $p < .05$).

As can be understood from Table 3, as a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between negative social behaviors and conduct disorder sub-dimension scores, a statistically significant positive correlation was found between the scores of both sixth and seventh graders ($r_s = .386$, $r_s = .348$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank differences correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between negative social behaviors and socialized aggression sub-dimension scores, a statistically significant positive correlation was found between the scores of both sixth and seventh graders ($r_s = .204$, $r_s = .187$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank differences correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between negative social behaviors and attention problems—immaturity sub-dimension scores,

Table 3.

Results of Spearman–Brown Rank Difference Correlation Analysis Applied to Determine the Correlation Between Negative Social Behaviors and Behavioral Problems

| Variables | N | r_s | p |
|--|-----|-------|------|
| Sixth-Grade Negative Social Behavior Conduct Disorder | 416 | 0.386 | .000 |
| Seventh-Grade Negative Social Behavior Conduct Disorder | 406 | 0.348 | .000 |
| Sixth-Grade Negative Social Behavior Socialized Aggression | 416 | 0.204 | .000 |
| Seventh-Grade Negative Social Behavior Socialized Aggression | 406 | 0.187 | .000 |
| Sixth-Grade Negative Social Behavior Attention Problems—Immaturity | 416 | 0.293 | .000 |
| Seventh-Grade Negative Social Behavior Attention Problems—Immaturity | 406 | 0.206 | .000 |
| Sixth-Grade Negative Social Behavior Anxiety—Withdrawal | 416 | 0.081 | .098 |
| Seventh-Grade Negative Social Behavior Anxiety—Withdrawal | 406 | 0.086 | .082 |
| Sixth-Grade Negative Social Behavior Psychotic Behavior | 416 | 0.137 | .005 |
| Seventh-Grade Negative Social Behavior Psychotic Behavior | 406 | 0.190 | .000 |
| Sixth-Grade Negative Social Behavior Motor Tension | 416 | 0.242 | .000 |
| Seventh-Grade Negative Social Behavior Motor Tension | 406 | 0.319 | .000 |

Note: N=sample number; r_s =correlation coefficient.

a statistically significant positive correlation was found between the scores of both sixth and seventh graders ($r_s = .293$, $r_s = .206$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between negative social behaviors and anxiety—withdrawal sub-dimension scores, no statistically significant correlation was found between the scores of both sixth and seventh graders ($r_s = .081$, $r_s = .086$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between negative social behaviors and psychotic behavior sub-dimension scores, a statistically significant positive correlation was found between the scores of both sixth and seventh graders ($r_s = .137$, $r_s = .190$, $p < .05$).

As a result of the Spearman–Brown rank difference correlation analysis conducted to find out the correlation between negative social behaviors and motor tension—excess sub-dimension scores, a statistically significant positive correlation was found between the scores of both sixth and seventh graders ($r_s = .242$, $p < .05$).

Discussion

High scores from MESSY show high levels of social skill. High scores from RBPC indicate that adolescents experience problems in the related problem areas. While RBPC does not give a total score, high scores obtained from conduct disorder, socialized aggression, attention problems—immaturity, anxiety—withdrawal, psychotic behavior, and motor tension—excess sub-dimensions show high levels of behavioral problems. Instead of examining each sub-dimension of RBPC one by one, the relationship between behavioral problems and social skills, which is the main purpose of this research, has been interpreted.

In the study, a negative significant association was found between sixth- and seventh-grade students' social skill scores and their conduct disorder, attention problems—immaturity, anxiety—withdrawal, and

motor tension—excess sub-dimension scores. In addition, a negative significant association was found between seventh-grade students' social skill scores and their socialized aggression and psychotic behavior scores. As individuals develop many skills such as decision-making, friendship relations, empathy, listening, expressing emotions, and controlling anger, their behavioral problems are expected to decrease. Individuals who show behavioral problems may damage their relationship with friends, family, and other people; thus, their self-expression styles may change and new behavioral problems may be added. In this context, it is of great importance to increase social skills in order to prevent behavioral problems before they occur or progress. This result obtained from both sixth and seventh graders in the study is in parallel with the literature. In adolescents with high social skills, behavioral problems are prevented or problems encountered may be improved with the development of social skills.

In addition to the prevention of psychosocial problems such as guilt and substance use in young people with social skills (Chung and Elias, 1996), social skills are suggested to be of great importance in improving behavioral and emotional problems such as conduct disorder and depression (Hersen et al., 1980; Jakson et al., 1985). For example, while there is a relationship between empathy, which is important in terms of social skills, and aggression (Güler & Hasta, 2013), it can be said that empathy increases social behaviors and decreases aggressive behaviors (Bayraktar et al., 2009; Murphy et al., 1999).

In the study, a negative significant association was found between sixth- and seventh-grade students' positive social behaviors and their attention problems—immaturity and anxiety—withdrawal sub-dimension scores. A negative significant association was found between seventh-grade students' positive social behaviors and also their conduct disorder, socialized aggression, psychotic behavior, and motor tension—excess sub-dimension scores. In individuals who can show positive social behaviors such as making social interactions, offering help, asking for help, praising others, joining a group, expressing feelings, expressing needs without resorting to anger, starting, and maintaining communication, some behavioral problems are predicted to be rare. It is expected that especially assertive individuals who can express themselves and their feelings and who have strong interpersonal communication are less likely to feel nervous, anxious, and withdrawn and to show aggressive behaviors. The results of this study are in parallel with the results found in the literature. While adolescents who are shy in interpersonal relationships, who have high level of anxiety in social environments, and who have poor skills of making close relationships and therefore low self-respect may have high probability of feeling lonely (Erözkan, 2009), it can be seen that children with low social skills experience problems in making friends (Crawford & Manassis, 2011), and children with low friend acceptance have high social anxiety levels (Greco & Morris, 2005). In addition, individuals with some behavioral problems such as attention problems may show lower positive social behaviors. Considering the causes of attention problems, the need for social skills may increase.

While the causes of attention problems may be genetic factors (Rietveld et al., 2004), environmental components such as watching too much television, being exposed to video games (Swing et al., 2010), and being exposed to emotional and physical abuse are also important risk factors for attention problems (Carroll et al., 2012). Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is defined as a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that interferes with functioning or development (APA, 2013). Although individuals with ADHD are sensitive about complying with social norms, they have difficulty in regulating their social behaviors (Friedman et al., 2003). Academic problems and behavior problems cause children with ADHD to experience problems in interpersonal relationships with the family,

environment, and the class. It may be very difficult to teach social skills to individuals with ADHD (Wender & Garfinkel, 1989). Social skill training programs help a child to get in a group, to develop mutual interaction skills, and to gain skills of problem solving and anger management (Pekcanlar, 1998; as cited in Kanay, 2006, p. 27).

Conclusion and Recommendations

In the study, a positive significant association was found between sixth- and seventh-grade students' negative social behaviors and their conduct disorder, socialized aggression, attention problems—immaturity, psychotic behavior, and motor tension—excess sub-dimension scores. Despite this, no significant association was found between sixth- and seventh-grade students' negative social behaviors and their anxiety—withdrawal sub-dimension. In individuals with too many negative social behaviors such as not respecting others' rights, failure in making interpersonal relationships, inability for empathy, insufficient problem solving skills, and inability to express feelings suitably, it is possible to see some behavioral problems. It is a point that should not be overlooked that various behavioral problems do not only harm the group and the society the individuals are in, but they may also have serious negative feedback for the individual. According to a study conducted with 619 people aged between 14 and 62 years, if individuals between the ages of 14 and 24 years have insufficient problem-solving skills, intense feelings of anger and aggression, and high impulsivity, these individuals may have a risk in terms of suicide (Batıgün & Şahin, 2003). Based on this study, it is recommended to conduct group studies within the context of protective factors to increase social skills in schools such as problem-solving skills, self-confidence, sense of humor, creating expectations for the future, increasing expectations about the future, increasing positive experiences related with teachers and the school, being approved by peers, and empathy level. In addition, within the scope of preventive intervention to behavioral problems, it is recommended to develop social skills at young ages in schools.

Ethics Committee Approval: This study was produced from a master's thesis made before 2018. therefore, there is no ethics committee approval.

Informed Consent: Written informed consent was obtained from all participants who participated in this study.

Peer-review: Externally peer-reviewed.

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