



INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL SKILLS AND SELF-MANAGEMENT BEHAVIORS OF 5 YEAR OLD CHILDREN

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between social skills and self-management behaviors of 5 year-old preschool children. The sample of the study is composed of 250 children who were 5 year-old and attended a preschool located in the central region of Samsun such as İlkadım and Atakum. A survey form to collect two sub-tests were used in the study. One is Self-Management Scale developed by Balık (2011) and the other is Social Skills Assessment Scale developed by the Avciođlu (2007). The results of the study showed that there is a positively meaningful relationship between children's social skills and self-management behaviors. Also, child gender did not cause any meaningful difference on children's social skills and self-management behaviors. The results are discussed within the scope of the relevant literature.

Key Words: Social Skills, Self-Management, Preschool, 5 year-old children

INTRODUCTION

In the most general definition, social skills are defined as the center of the necessary social communication to realize an individual's behavioral elements to succeed in social interactions without psychologically or physically hurting other people, to understand the feelings, thoughts and behaviors of others including himself in interpersonal situations and to act according to this understanding, and to realize activities such as learning, working and sharing in various situations as an individual (Elliott, Malecki, and Demaray, 2001; Marlowe, 1986; Spence, 1983). Many factors affecting social skills in preschool period children are increasingly being studied today. When the studies are analyzed, it is observed that factors such as child's age, gender, number of siblings, status of continuation to preschool, peer relations, parents' ages and levels of education, family's socio-economic level, academic success etc. positively or negatively affect children's social skills (Elibol Gltekin, 2008; Filerman, 2011; Karaca, Gndz and Aral, 2011; Liu, 2011; Mavi Derviřođlu, 2007; McClelland and



Morrison, 2003; Mendez, Fantuzzo and Cicchetti, 2002; Olcay, 2008; Sari, 2007, Şahin and Baç Karaaslan, 2006; Winsler and Wallace, 2002). It has been expressed by Avcıoğlu (2005) that social skills are skills realizing social integration and facilitating social survival; and that they play an important role in the formation of interpersonal relations and the realization of social purposes. It is important to gain and develop social skills in the early childhood years since they affect people's success in different areas in the following years (Uzbaş, 2003).

Self-management is defined by Heward (1987) as "the individual or systematic application of behavioral modification techniques that ensure an individual's behaviors to conclude with the desired alterations". The importance of socialization is mentioned in an individual's acquisition of self-management behavior (Çağdaş and Seçer, 2002). Additionally, researchers argued that self-management strategies may help children gain more control on their lives and more behavioral management. They stated that, in this way, these will ensure an increase in behaviors such as independence, sufficiency, and self-acceptance in the following years of these individuals' lives (Agran, Blanchard, Wehmeyer and Hughes, 2001).

Hence, it can be asserted that it is important to study the relationship between social skills and self-management behaviors of 5 year old children attending the preschool education. As mentioned above, the purpose of this study is to study the relationship between social skills and self-management behaviors of 5 year old children. Answers to the following questions are searched in scope of this general purpose:

1. Is there a meaningful differentiation by gender in social skills of 5 year old children attending the preschool education?
2. Is there a meaningful differentiation by self-management behaviors in social skills of 5 year old children attending the preschool education?
3. Is there a meaningful relationship between social skills and self-management behaviors of 5 year old children attending the preschool education?

METHOD

Survey model is used in this study.

The Population and The Sample

The population is formed by children of 5 year old group attending the preschool education in independent preschools under The Ministry of Education, and that are located in Atakum and İlkadım districts of the city of Samsun. The sample of this study is formed by a total of 250 children in 5 year old group assigned randomly from five different preschools which are chosen with the sample method. 131 of the children participating to the study are girls, while 119 are boys. Additionally, the mean age of children is 51 months.

Data Collection Tools

Two different measuring tools, "Social Skills Assessment Scale (SSAS 4-6 year old)" and "Self-Management Behavior Scale" are used in the study. Detailed information on the measuring tools are presented below.

Social Skills Assessment Scale (SSAS 4-6 year old): Designed by Avcıoğlu (2007), this scale consists of 9 subscales. The Cronbach Alpha values obtained for the subscales of the scale are; .95 for the 1st factor, .94 for the 2nd factor, .92 for the 3rd factor, .91 for the 4th factor, .85 for the 5th factor, .95 for the 6th factor, .87 for the 7th factor, .78 for the 8th factor, .88 for the 9th factor, and .98 for the total.

The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient is found .98, Split-Half reliability coefficient is found .89, and the test-retest reliability is found .83 for the internal coherence test that is performed to determine the internal coherence of the 62 item scale which is prepared to measure social skills. The subscales of the scale are named as follows:

- Interpersonal Skills (IS)
- Anger Management and Accommodation Skills (AMAS)
- Coping With Peer Pressure Skills (CWPPS)
- Self-Control Skills (SS)

- Verbal Explanation Skills (VES)
- Outcome Accepting Skills (OAS)
- Listening Skills (LS)
- Purpose Forming Skills (PFS)
- Task Completing Skills (TCS)

In SSAS, reactions are given to the totality of positively prepared items by choosing one of the following choices: Always does (5), often does (4), usually does (3), slightly does (2), never does (1). Aside from subscales, the test can also be assessed by the total score obtained from the totality of the scale. Getting a low score from the scale indicates having insufficient social skills, while getting a high score indicates having social skills. While the lowest score obtainable is 62 – also the number of items-, the highest score obtainable is 310 (Avcioglu, 2007).

Self-Management Behavior Scale (SMBS): Designed by Balçık (2011), this scale consists of 7 subscales. There is a total of 40 items in the scale. Given that the test is a Likert-type scale, the highest score obtainable is 200, and the lowest is 40. A child who obtains the lowest score of the questionnaire shows that he gained self-management behavior. And a child who obtains the highest score is in need of support to be able to gain self-management behavior. Reliability coefficients are examined by checking the Cronbach Alpha, Split-Half and Gutman coefficients. Above 80% is highly reliable by APA criteria. The Pearson moment coefficient and Spearman's rho correlation coefficients of the relationship between tests are calculated in order to calculate the consistency between the test-retest analysis and the tests. Obtained results show the existence of a test-retest reliability of 98%. It is understood with this result that the test has a near perfect reliability. The subscales of the scale are named as follows:

- Taking Care of Self and of The Environment
- Self-care/Dressing Up
- Self Expression
- Interpersonal Communication
- Self-care/Cleaning
- Separation From Adults and Coping With Emergencies
- Protecting Yourself and Your Belongings

Data Analysis

Data entries of information obtained in the study with the data collection tools are realized. Proper software packages are used for data analysis and statistics.

FINDINGS

Findings in accordance with the main purpose of the study are included in this chapter. Subscales of the research are respectively addressed in the presentation of findings.

Findings On The Study of Social Skills By Children's Gender

The findings obtained as the result of the study on social skills by children's gender are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: T-Test Results of Social Skills Assessment Scale Subscale Scores By Children's Gender

Social Skills	Gender	N	X	Ss	Sd	t	p
IS	Girl	131	52,89	8,74	248	,033	,974
	Boy	119	52,85	8,55			
AMAS	Girl	131	36,93	6,33	248	-,629	,530
	Boy	119	37,47	7,17			

CWPPS	Girl	131	32,66	7,19	248	-,157	,875
	Boy	119	32,79	6,27			
SCS	Girl	131	23,58	5,17	248	-,193	,847
	Boy	119	23,70	5,09			
VES	Girl	131	11,54	2,89	248	,283	,778
	Boy	119	11,43	2,97			
OAS	Girl	131	10,74	2,86	248	-1,055	,293
	Boy	119	11,13	2,91			
LS	Girl	131	18,13	4,58	248	-,612	,541
	Boy	119	18,47	4,23			
PFS	Girl	131	11,44	3,20	248	,939	,348
	Boy	119	11,10	2,53			
TCS	Girl	131	11,21	3,52	248	-1,096	,274
	Boy	119	11,70	3,56			
OVERALL TOTAL	Girl	131	209,16	33,17	248	-,373	,710
	Boy	119	210,69	32,04			

When Table 1 is studied, no meaningful difference ($p > .05$) is found for Interpersonal Skills, Anger Management and Accommodation Skills, Coping With Peer Pressure Skills, Self-Control Skills, Verbal Explanation Skills, Outcome Accepting Skills, Listening Skills, Purpose Forming Skills, and Task Completing Skills subscales scores of Social Skills Assessment Scale by children's gender. Additionally, no meaningful difference is found ($p > .05$) for children's Social Skills Assessment Scale total scores.

Findings On The Study of Self-Management Behaviors By Children's Gender

The findings obtained as the result of the study on self-management behaviors by children's gender are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: T-Test Results of Self-Management Behavior Scale Subscale Scores By Children's Gender

Self-Management	Gender	N	X	Ss	Sd	t	p
TCSE	Kız	131	54,32	8,45	248	,059	,953
	Erkek	119	54,26	9,59			
SC/DU	Kız	131	19,41	4,88	248	-,393	,695
	Erkek	119	19,66	4,92			
SE	Kız	131	24,86	3,37	248	-1,258	,210
	Erkek	119	25,34	2,66			
IC	Kız	131	25,40	3,47	248	-,987	,325
	Erkek	119	25,80	2,96			
SC/C	Kız	131	13,00	2,43	248	-,181	,856
	Erkek	119	13,05	1,95			
SFACWE	Kız	131	8,13	3,22	248	-,159	,874
	Erkek	119	8,20	3,17			
PYYB	Kız	131	12,38	2,17	248	-,615	,540

	Erkek	119	12,56	2,28			
OVERALL TOTAL	Kiz	131	157,54	20,98	248	-,525	,600
	Erkek	119	158,89	19,64			

When Table 2 is studied, no meaningful difference ($p > .05$) is found for Taking Care of Self and of The Environment, Self-care/Dressing Up, Self Expression, Interpersonal Communication, Self-care/Cleaning, Separation From Adults and Coping With Emergencies, Protecting Yourself and Your Belongings subscale scores of Self-Management Scale by children's gender and for Self-Management total scores.

Findings On The Study of The Relationship Between Children's Social Skills and Self-Management Behaviors

The findings obtained as the result of the study on the relationship between children's social skills and self-management behaviors are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Results of Social Skills Assessment Scale and Self-Management Behavior Scale Subscale Scores

		TCSE	SC/DU	SE	IC	SC/C	SFACWE	PYB	OVERALL TOTAL
IS	r	,485**	,228**	,421**	,465**	,453**	,182**	,428**	,532**
	p	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,004	,000	,000
	n	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
AMAS	r	,320**	,174**	,428**	,453**	,168**	,183**	,320**	,403**
	p	,000	,006	,000	,000	,008	,004	,000	,000
	n	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
CWPPS	r	,209**	,146*	,375**	,368**	,272**	,160*	,206**	,320**
	p	,001	,021	,000	,000	,000	,011	,001	,000
	n	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
SCS	r	,270**	,086	,429**	,492**	,265**	,252**	,234**	,378**
	p	,000	,174	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000
	n	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
VES	r	,314**	,176**	,112	,147*	,231**	,181**	,300**	,308**
	p	,000	,005	,078	,020	,000	,004	,000	,000
	n	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
OAS	r	,189**	,194**	,403**	,281**	,042	,213**	,210**	,297**
	p	,003	,002	,000	,000	,506	,001	,001	,000
	n	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
LS	r	,408**	,296**	,514**	,436**	,245**	,263**	,398**	,511**
	p	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000
	n	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
PFS	r	,472**	,278**	,502**	,439**	,405**	,336**	,384**	,560**
	p	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000
	n	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
TCS	r	,335**	,186**	,198**	,169**	,242**	,200**	,308**	,341**
	p	,000	,003	,002	,007	,000	,001	,000	,000
	n	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
OVERALL TOTAL	r	,460**	,259**	,527**	,526**	,373**	,281**	,427**	,561**
	p	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000
	n	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250

When Table 3 is studied, a positively meaningful correlation between Interpersonal Skills and Taking Care of Self and of The Environment ($r=.485$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Interpersonal Skills and Self-Care/Dressing Up ($r=.228$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Interpersonal Skills and Self Expression ($r=.421$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Interpersonal Skills and Interpersonal Communication ($r=.465$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Interpersonal Skills and Self-Care/Cleaning ($r=.453$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Interpersonal Skills and Separation From Adults and Coping With Emergencies ($r=.182$, $p < .05$) is found. A positively meaningful correlation between Interpersonal Skills and Protecting Yourself and Your Belongings ($r=.428$, $p < .05$) is found.

A positively meaningful correlation between Anger Management and Accomodation Skills and Taking Care of Self and of The Environment ($r=.320$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Anger Management and Accomodation Skills and Self-Care/Dressing Up ($r=.174$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Anger Management and Accomodation Skills and Self Expression ($r=.428$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Anger Management and Accomodation Skills and Interpersonal Communication ($r=.453$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Anger Management and Accomodation Skills and Self-Care/Cleaning ($r=.168$, $p < .05$) a positively meaningful correlation between Anger Management and Accomodation Skills and Separation From Adults and Coping With Emergencies ($r=.183$, $p < .05$) is found., A positively meaningful correlation between Anger Management and Accomodation Skills and Protecting Yourself and Your Belongings ($r=.320$, $p < .05$) is found.

A positively meaningful correlation between Coping With Peer Pressure Skills and Taking Care of Self and of The Environment ($r=.209$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Coping With Peer Pressure Skills and Self-Care/Dressing Up ($r=.146$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Coping With Peer Pressure Skills and Self Expression ($r=.375$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Coping With Peer Pressure Skills and Interpersonal Communication ($r=.368$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Coping With Peer Pressure Skills and Self-Care/Cleaning ($r=.272$, $p < .05$) a positively meaningful correlation between Coping With Peer Pressure Skills and Separation From Adults and Coping With Emergencies ($r=.160$, $p < .05$) is found. A positively meaningful correlation between Coping With Peer Pressure Skills and Protecting Yourself and Your Belongings ($r=.206$, $p < .05$) is found.

A positively meaningful correlation between Verbal Explanation Skills and Taking Care of Self and of The Environment ($r=.270$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Verbal Explanation Skills and Self Expression ($r=.429$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Verbal Explanation Skills and Interpersonal Communication ($r=.492$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Verbal Explanation Skills and Self-Care/Cleaning ($r=.265$, $p < .05$) a positively meaningful correlation between Verbal Explanation Skills and Separation From Adults and Coping With Emergencies ($r=.252$, $p < .05$) is found. A positively meaningful correlation between Verbal Explanation Skills and Protecting Yourself and Your Belongings ($r=.234$, $p < .05$) is found. Also, no meaningful correlation is found between Verbal Explanation Skills and Self-Care/Dressing Up ($r=.086$, $p > .05$).

A positively meaningful correlation between Self-Control Skills and Taking Care of Self and of The Environment ($r=.314$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Verbal Explanation Skills and Self-Care/Dressing Up ($r=.176$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Self-Control Skills and Interpersonal Communication ($r=.147$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Self-Control Skills and Self-Care/Cleaning ($r=.231$, $p < .05$) a positively meaningful correlation between Self-Control Skills and Separation From Adults and Coping With Emergencies ($r=.181$, $p < .05$) is found. A positively meaningful correlation between Verbal Explanation Skills and Protecting Yourself and Your Belongings ($r=.300$, $p < .05$) is found. Also, no meaningful correlation is found between Self-Control Skills and Self-Expression ($r=.112$, $p > .05$).

A positively meaningful correlation between Purpose Forming Skills and Taking Care of Self and of The Environment ($r=.189$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Purpose Forming Skills and Self-Care/Dressing Up ($r=.194$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Self-Control Skills and Self-Expression ($r=.403$, $p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Purpose Forming Skills and

Interpersonal Communication ($r=,281, p < .05$) a positively meaningful correlation between Purpose Forming Skills and Separation From Adults and Coping With Emergencies ($r=,213, p < .05$) is found. A positively meaningful correlation between Purpose Forming Skills and Protecting Yourself and Your Belongings ($r=,210, p < .05$) is found. Also, no meaningful correlation is found between Purpose Forming Skills and Self-Care/Cleaning ($r=,042, p > .05$).

A positively meaningful correlation between Listening Skills and Taking Care of Self and of The Environment ($r=,408, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Listening Skills and Self-Care/Dressing Up ($r=,296, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Listening Skills and Self Expression ($r=,514, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Listening Skills and Interpersonal Communication ($r=,436, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Interpersonal Skills and Self-Care/Cleaning ($r=,245, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Listening Skills and Separation From Adults and Coping With Emergencies ($r=,263, p < .05$) is found. A positively meaningful correlation between Listening Skills and Protecting Yourself and Your Belongings ($r=,398, p < .05$) is found.

A positively meaningful correlation between Task Completing Skills and Taking Care of Self and of The Environment ($r=,472, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Task Completing Skills and Self-Care/Dressing Up ($r=,278, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Task Completing Skills and Self Expression ($r=,502, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Task Completing Skills and Interpersonal Communication ($r=,439, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Task Completing Skills and Self-Care/Cleaning ($r=,405, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Task Completing Skills and Separation From Adults and Coping With Emergencies ($r=,336, p < .05$) is found. A positively meaningful correlation between Task Completing Skills and Protecting Yourself and Your Belongings ($r=,384, p < .05$) is found.

A positively meaningful correlation between Outcome Accepting Skills and Taking Care of Self and of The Environment ($r=,335, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Outcome Accepting Skills and Self-Care/Dressing Up ($r=,186, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Outcome Accepting Skills and Self Expression ($r=,198, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Outcome Accepting Skills and Interpersonal Communication ($r=,169, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Outcome Accepting Skills and Self-Care/Cleaning ($r=,242, p < .05$), a positively meaningful correlation between Outcome Accepting Skills and Separation From Adults and Coping With Emergencies ($r=,200, p < .05$) is found. A positively meaningful correlation between Outcome Accepting Skills and Protecting Yourself and Your Belongings ($r=,308, p < .05$) is found.

In addition to the findings above, positively meaningful relationships ($p < .05$) are found between Social Skills Assessment Scale and Self-Management Behavior Scale total scores, and the subscales of these scales and total scores.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

When the findings are studied, it is observed that there is no meaningful difference for 5 year old children's social skills by their genders. It is possible to find researches that support this finding. In their study, Akman and others (2011), Kılıç (2012), Seven (2006), Baran (2005), Orçan (2004) concluded that gender has no effect on social skills in preschool period children.

No meaningful difference is found for self-management behaviors of girls and boys by gender. Different from the finding of this research, in his study with 5 year old children, Balçık (2011) concluded that girls are more successful in self-management behaviors than boys. On the other hand, in her study with 7 year olds, Güleş (2004) concluded that boys are more successful in self-management behaviors than girls. In other studies the conclusion of boys having higher accommodation skills than girls is attained (Anderson, Carnegie ve Eubanks, 2003; Huesman, Moise-Titus, Podolski ve Eron, 2003). The difference in results may be interpreted as, aside gender, various factors are also effective on children's self-management behaviors.



According to the results of our findings, positively meaningful relationships are found between children's total scores on social skills assessment scale and self-management behavior scale, and the subscales of these scales and the total scores of these scales. It can be said that children who are successful in self-management behaviors also have high social skills. Likewise, it can be said that children who are weak in self-management behaviors also have low social skills. Studies show that individuals can generalize their self-assessment behaviors to different situations or events (Bambara and Gomez, 2001; Brooks, Tood, Tofflemoyer and Horner, 2003). In this manner, individuals reflect these behaviors also to their social relations. Additionally, in the study done by Hughes, Copeland, Agran, Wehmeyer, Rodi and Presley (2002), the conclusion of students being more accepted by being more positively perceived by their peers after using self-management strategies is attained. It can be thought that this finding is in support of the finding of our research.

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