

INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORTS FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS AND PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS⁴

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This study aims to examine the relationship between social support Physical Education and Sports School students perceived from their family and friends and problem-solving skills.

This research is a descriptive and analytical research, carried out from October 15 to November 16, 2007. Population of the study consisted of 190 students from 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Grade studying in Department of Physical Education and Sports at School of Physical Education in Atatürk University in the academic year 2007-2008. For data collection, the students' socio-demographic characteristics, determining the personal information form, " Perceived Social Support From Family (PSS-FA) and Friends (PSS-FR) Scale" which was developed by Pracidona and Heller (1983) and adapted in Turkish by Eskin (1993); and Problem Solving Scale (PSS) which was developed by Sava ır and Sahin (1997). Percentage, T-Test, Correlation and Variance Analysis of SPSS 11.5 Package Program were used to evaluate the data. Level of importance is accepted 0,05. It has been identified that there is a negative meaningful relationship between the scores of social support scale and problem solving scale perceived from families and friends. It has been determined that there is a positive meaningful relationship between the social support scale perceived from families and the social support scale perceived from friends.

Key Words: University student, social support, problem-solving skills.

ÜN VERS TE Ö RENC LER N N A LE VE ARKADA LARDAN ALGILADIKLARI SOSYAL DESTEK LE PROBLEM ÇÖZME BECER LER ARASINDAK İ L K N N NCELENMES

ÖZET

Bu çalı ma, Beden E itimi ve Spor Yüksekokulu ö retmenlik bölümü ö rencilerinin aile ve arkada lardan alınan sosyal destek ile problem çözme becerileri arasındaki ili kinin incelenmesi amacıyla yapılmı tır. Ara tırmanın evrenini 2007-2008 ö retim yılında Atatürk Üniversitesi Beden E itimi ve Spor Yüksekokulu Beden E itimi ve Spor Ö retmenli i Bölümünde 1., 2., 3. ve 4. sınıfta ö renim gören toplam 190 ö renci olu turmu tur. Verilerin toplanmasında, ö rencilerin sosyo-demografik özelliklerini belirleyen ki isel bilgi formu, Pracidona ve Heller (1983) tarafından geli tirilen, Eskin (1993) tarafından Türkçe'ye uyarlanan, "Aile (ASD – AL) ve Arkada lardan (ASD – AR) Algılanan Sosyal Destek Ölçe i" ve Sava ır ve ahin (1997) tarafından geli tirilen Problem Çözme Ölçe i (PÇÖ) kullanılmı tır. Verilerin de erlendirilmesi; SPSS 11.5 paket programında yüzdelik, t testi, korelasyon ve varyans analizi kullanılmı tır. Önem düzeyi, 05 olarak alınmı tır.

Aile ve arkada lardan algılanan sosyal destek ölçe i ile Problem çözme ölçe inin puanları arasında negatif yönde anlamlı bir ili kinin oldu u tespit edilmi tır ($\Gamma_{ASD/AL} = -0.304$, $\Gamma_{ASD/AR} = -0.379$, $P < 0.001$). Aileden algılanan sosyal destek ölçe i ile arkada lardan algılanan sosyal destek ölçe i arasında pozitif yönde anlamlı bir ili kinin oldu u belirlenmi tır ($P < 0.001$).

Anahtar Kelimeler: Üniversite ö rencisi, sosyal destek, problem çözme becerisi.

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INTRODUCT ON

Social support is defined as giving message to contact with the other person in a communication network in which the person is loved, accepted and respected (Kahriman and Polat,2003). The most important social support sources of students are their families and friends. It was observed that the students received adequate support from their families and friends are able to solve their problems before reaching very higher rates and are more successful in their courses (Okanlı and Ekinici,2002). To find a solution to any problem is difficult for the students who are not received adequate social support from their families and friends. A problem is basically a conflict in which individual encounters a detention to reach an aim. The detention is to make it difficult to reach the aim. In such a case, problem-solving is to find the best option to get rid of a problem (Morgan,1999). People, in their daily lives, encounter many situations related to problem-solving. How to solve these problems depends on personality characteristics of individuals (Barut and Yılmaz,2000). While we solve unconsciously a part of these problems, we can mistake in the solution of any other part. So, every problem appears as a new learning tool (Pehlivan and Konukman,2004). The person solving a problem not only uses his/her previous acquisitions, but also acquires new learnings (Altun,2000).

One of the greatest expectations of modern societies is to have individuals thinking,producing and solving their problems. The most important factor in problem-solving is individuals' perception of the situation. (Ittenbach and Harrison,1990) Coping with the problems, the individual's talent to solve the problematic situation depends largely on self-focusing and cognitive self-assessment. As you see, the individual must primarily have self-knowledge. The person analyzing himself and defining what is necessary and unnecessary for himself will endeavor to get

rid of the problematic situation (Heppner and Baumgardner, 1985). The method of assessment and perception of his own problem-solving skills is a very important pre-cognition component affecting how the individual approaches and copes with the challenges (Heppner, Reeder and Larson,1983), because the way of self-perception affects information-processing related to himself, his environment and also the encountered problems (Heppner and Charles,1987).

While problem-solving is defined as a process including a series of efforts having psychological and cognitive dimensions which are intended for eliminating the challenges in order to achieve specific purpose (Caglayan,2007; D'Zurilla and Nezu, 1990), problem-solving skills can be defined as psychological and cognitive behaviors that individuals set out for the purpose of adaptation to changes in their social lives. (Shewchuck, Johnson and Elliot,2000) In addition, problem-solving includes individual's metacognitive requirements arising from the changes in his social life and the interaction with other people (Lin, Schwart and Hatano,2005).When they encounter any problem, individuals engaged in sports try to solve their problems on the grounds of shame-based thinking occurring as depending on abstract-thinking(problem-solving thinking) and experiences. Thanks to problem-solving thinking, sportsman can use his current abilities and skills in order to achieve his aims (Baumann,1994).

This research is conducted for the purpose of investigate the relationship between perceived social support from family - friends and problem-solving skills of the students in the Department of Physical Education and Sports.

METHOD

This is a descriptive and analytical research conducted between October,15 and November,16, 2007. The research population consists of 190 (2007-2008) Sports- Teaching students studying in their first, second, third and fourth classes in the Department of Physical Education and Sports of Ataturk University. Any sampling method was not applied because it is planned to be included all the population in the research. Because of some reasons such as suspension of registration, not attendance to classes and not approving to be involved in this research during the research period, 30 students remained outside of the research. Therefore, only 160 students were included in it. In terms of sample group homogeneity, 40 students were selected from each group by using the method of Simple-Random Sample. Personal Information Form determining sociodemographic characteristics of students, Perceived Social Support from Family Scale (PSS-Fa) and friends scale (PSS-Fr) [developed by Pracidona and Heller(1983), transcribed to Turkish by Eskin(1993) and conducted the Validity and Reliability Test], and Problem-solving Scale (PSS) (developed by Savasir and Sahin (1997) and conducted the Validity and Reliability Test by Savasir and Sahin) were used while collecting the data.

Cronbach Alpha values of (PSS-Fr) and (PSS-Fa) are measured 0.85 and Cronbach Alpha value of scale is measured 0.88 in the research. Scale is in the form of two independent scales. There are 20 items for each scale answered by marking one of the options which are 'YES' 'NO' and 'I DO NOT KNOW'. The reaction showing Perceived Social Support are scored as +1 for each item. Scores vary between 0 and 20. The options of 'I DO NOT KNOW' is not scored.

Problem-Solving Scale's internal consistency coefficient with Cronbach Alpha is 0.88 and Cronbach Alpha reliable coefficient of scale is measured 0.82 in this research. In the Validity Test, the correlation coefficient between total score of the scale and Beck Depression Inventory is measured 0.33 and the correlation coefficient between it and total score of STAI-T is measured 0.45. After the factor analysis, it is discovered that scale consists of 6 factor as 'Hasty Approach' 'Minded Approach' 'Avoidance Approach' 'Evaluative Approach' 'Self-Esteem Approach' and 'Planned Approach'. Scores vary between 32 and 192. The highness of total scores obtained from the scale shows that the individual perceives himself inadequate about the Problem-Solving Skills (Savasir and Sahin,1997). Percentage, T-Test, Correlation and Variance Analysis of SPSS 11.5 Package Program were used to evaluate the data. Level of importance is accepted 05. Students' sociodemographic characteristics are independent variables of research. Perceived social support from family- friends and problem-solving skills scales are dependent variables of research. However, perceived social support from family-friends and problem-solving skills scales are independent variables against each other.

FINDINGS

The mean age of the students included in this research is 22.3 ± 2.4 , years. Girl population is 33.8% and boy population is 66.3%. 78.8% of them have nuclear family and 21.3% of them have extended family. 51.3% of them have 3 or 4 siblings and 51.3% of them live with their friends. 52.5% of them said they can manage with their monthly income. 94.4% of them said they chose this department willingly.

Chart 1. The mean scores of Perceived Social Support from Family and Friends Scale and Problem-Solving Scale

Scales	Upper and Lower Values	Marked Upper and Lower Values	X±SD	N=160
Perceived from family Social Support(PSS-Fa)	0-20	0-20	14.87±4.26	
Perceived from friends Social support(PSS-Fr)	0-20	4-20	15.27±4.19	
Problem-solving	32-192	42-123	86.36±19.28	

As you see in the chart, the upper and lower values merked on the perceived social support from family scale are between 0 and 20, from friend scale are between 4 and 20 and Problem solving Scale are between 42 and 123. When we look at the mean and standard deviation of scales, we will see that 14.87±4.26 is taken from perceived social support from family scale, 15.27±4.19 is taken from perceived social support from friends scale and 86.36±19.28 is taken from problem-solving scale.

In this research, it is observed that the averages of students' (PSS-Fa) scores and (PSS-Fr) scores get a high level value. This finding explains that the effect level of perceived social support from family and friends is positively high. In the literature

research (Oren and Gencdogan,1998; Okanlı and Ekinci,2002) similar finding is also appeared by determining the average of (PSS-Fa)score and (PSS-Fr) score is close to upper values. The mean score for perceived social support from family and friends of university students studying in America and Sweden is higher than Turkish students and it is consistent with the research results (Procidona and Heler 1983; Sarason and others, 1987; Eskin, 1993). By observing the scores of problem-solving scale, it is seen that the problem solving skills of students is at high levels. In another research conducted on University students, it is also observed that the (PSS)scores of students support the research results.(Barut and Yılmaz,2000)

Chart 2. According to students' class level , the distribution of the mean score of perceived social support from family- friends and problem-solving skills

Scales	Class Level				Sig. level
	1st class (N=40) X±SD	2nd class (N=40) X±SD	3rd class (N=40) X±SD	4th class (N=40) X±SD	
Perceived social support from family (PSS-Fa)	14.75±4.15	15.25±4.45	15.42±4.51	14.07±3.95	F= 0.801 P>0.05
Perceived social support from friends (PSS-Fr)	16.02±4.02	14.97±4.31	15.25±4.06	14.85±4.41	F= 0.627 P>0.05
Problem-solving	84.85±17.14	7.22±18.61	86.47±22.67	86.92±18.93	F= 0.118 P>0.05

A statistically significant relationship is determined between the third class which has the highest (PSS-Fa) average score (15.42±4.51) and the first class which has the highest (PSS-Fr) average score (16.02±4.02) (P>0.05) The problem-solving

average scores are the highest in the second class(87.22±18.61) and the lowest in the first (84.85±17.14). According to their class levels, the diffirance in problem-solving average scores is meaningless.(P>0.05)

According to their class levels, the mean scores of (PSS-Fa) is the highest in 3rd class and the mean scores of (PSS-Fr) is the highest in 1st class. The mean scores of problem-solving are highest in 2nd class and lowest in 1st class were determined and any statistically significant relationship in the groups were not determined. ($P > 0,05$) The results of conducted research demonstrate compliance with our results of research. (Taylan, 1990; Oren and Gecdogan, 1998; Yurttas, 2001) According to their class levels in the problem-solving skills of students were not determined a significant difference. Our findings are

similar. (Tekin and others, 2007) The first years of universities are the most challenging years for students. Because of so many negative factors such as living their families for the first time, being alone, adaptation to a new environment, not being adopted to their department or having difficulties and being the most intense period of transition from adolescence to adulthood, they are exposed to effects of stress. Their mental health develops positively with the increasing in the support sources, being more tolerant to incidents and being able to fight their problems while they are growing.

Chart 3. Findings evaluating the relationship between perceived social support from family-friends scale and problem-solving scale

Scales	Problem-solving scale		Perceived social support from family scale	
	r	p	r	p
Perceived social support from family scale	-0.304	$p < 0.001$	-	-
Perceived social support from friends	-0.379	$p < 0.001$	0.380	$p < 0.001$

As it is seen in the first chart, there are a negatively significant relationship between the scores of perceived social support from family and friends scale and problem-solving scale scores. ($\Gamma_{ASD/AL} = -0.304$, $\Gamma_{ASD/AR} = -0.379$, $P < 0.001$) There are positively significant relationship between perceived social support from family scale and friends scale. ($P > 0.001$)

There is a positively significant relationship between the scores of perceived social support from family-friends scale and problem solving scale. The people who are closely linked to the individual are involved actively in the solutions of

problems by providing him physical or mental support in his bad times. (Sorias 1988; Procidona and Heler, 1983) The results show similarity to the related literature findings. There is a positively significant relationship between perceived social support from family and friends ($P < 0.001$) In the research, the correlation value between (PSS-Fa) and (PSS-Fr) is measured 0.257 and there are positively significant relationship between them. (Oren and Gecdogan, 1998) In the other research, it was also emphasized that there is positively significant relationship between (PSS-Fa) and (PSS-Fr) (Eskin, 1993; Procidona and Heler, 1983; Okanlı and Ekinci, 2000)

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of this research, the mean score of (PSS-Fa) is measured 14.87 ± 4.26 and of (PSS-Fr) is measured 15.27 ± 4.19 . The mean score of problem-solving scale is measured 86.36 ± 19.28 and the lowest score is 42 and the highest score is 123. According to their class levels, the mean

score of (PSS-Fa) is the highest in the 3rd class and (PSS-Fr) is the lowest in 1st class and finally, it is defined that there are statistically significant relationship between groups. ($P > 0.05$)

There are negatively significant relationship between the scores of perceived social support from family and

friends scale and problem-solving scale ($\Gamma_{ASD/AL} = -0.304$, $\Gamma_{ASD/AR} = -0.379$, $P < 0.001$) There is positively significant relationship between perceived social support from family and friends scales. ($P < 0.001$)

According to this results, it is suggested that the social support sources of students must be increased, educators must provide

with the adequate support especially to the students who are not received adequate support from their environments, the students must not leave alone in the solutions of their social and psychological problems and students' family and close friends must be provided to play an active role in the consultancy services at the university by making them effective.

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