THE EFFECT OF ONLİNE GROUP WORK WHICH HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR ANGER MANAGEMENT TRAINING ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ANGER LEVELS
ÖFKE YÖNETİMİ EĞİTİMİNE YÖNELİK HAZIRLANMIŞ ÇEVRİMİÇİ GRUP ÇALIŞMASININ ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN ÖFKE DÜZEYLERİNE ETKİSİ

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study has been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of online group study of anger management training. The results of the study have been considered important in terms of revealing whether the online interventions in the form of group work provide benefits for individuals and groups.

Method: The experimental group of the study consists of 12 students studying at the Department of Social Work at Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa. Group sessions were held for 8 weeks, and in the first and last sessions, the effect of the online group work process on students' anger levels was examined by applying the "Trait Anger and Anger Expression Scale". The data obtained as a result of the study were analyzed with the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test. On the other hand, qualitative research methods were also used in order to reveal the opinions about the effectiveness and appreciation of online group work and qualitative data were analyzed descriptively by content analysis through inductive analysis.

Result: According to the findings of the research, it has been observed that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the students. According to the qualitative findings, it was observed that most of the group members benefited from the online group process, their ability to cope with difficult situations increased, and they found the studies for anger management efficient.

Keywords: Anger, Anger Management, Online Group Work

ÖZ

Amaç: Bu araştırma, online olarak yapılan öfke kontrol eğitimi grup çalışmasının etkililiğini değerlendirmek amacıyla yapılmıştır. Araştırmanın sonuçları, grup çalışması şeklinde yapılan online müdahalelerin bireyler ve gruplar üzerinde fayda sağlayıp sağlamadığının ortaya koyulması açısından önemli görülmektedir.

Yöntem: Araştırmanın deney grubunu İstanbul Üniversitesi-Cerrahpaşa'da Sosyal Hizmet Bölümü'nde okuyan 12 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Grup oturumları 8 haftalık süre ile gerçekleştirilmiş olup ilk ve son oturumlarda öğrencilere "Sürekli Öfke ve Öfke İfade Tarzı Ölçeği" uygulanarak online grup çalışması sürecinin öğrencilerin öfke düzeyleri üzerindeki etkisi incelenmiştir. Araştırmanın sonucunda elde edilen veriler Wilcoxon İşaretli Sıralar Testi ile analiz edilmiştir. Diğer yandan online grup çalışmasının etkililiği ve beğenilirliğine yönelik görüşlerin ortaya konulabilmesi amacıyla nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden de yararlanılmış ve nitel veriler tümevarımcı analiz yolu ile içerik analizine tabi tutularak betimsel olarak incelenmiştir.

Sonuç: Yapılan araştırmanın bulgularına göre, öğrencilerin ön test-son test puan ortalamaları arasında anlamlı bir fark olduğu görülmüştür. Nitel bulgulara göre ise, grup üyelerinin çoğunluğunun online grup sürecinden fayda sağladığı, zor durumlarla baş edebilirliklerinin arttığı ve öfke kontrolüne yönelik çalışmaları verimli buldukları görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Online Grup Çalışması, Öfke, Öfke kontrolü

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INTRODUCTION

Anger can be defined as a state of hostility towards a person or something perceived as the source of a deterrent event, a negative emotion that is usually caused by another person, but can also occur spontaneously (Kassinove and Tafrate, 2006). Anger is a natural and universal reaction to unsatisfied requests, unwanted consequences, unmet expectations, injustice and mistreatment (Spielberger and Reheiser, 2010; Soykan, 2003). In addition, anger is a condition that can be in various intensities from a mild state of anger to a severe state of anger, and also its duration and frequency vary (Kumar, 2017).

Anger is a process that takes place in stages. The first stage in the anger process is the stage where the triggering event occurs. This triggering event can be caused by an internal event or an environmental factor. Some of these triggering events include being subjected to injustice, disappointment, threats to self-esteem, being exposed to prejudice or discrimination, being verbally or physically attacked, being under stress, experiencing time pressure and a sense of frustration. On the other hand, the second stage of the anger process is the interpretation stage. In other words, this stage is about how a certain situation that triggers anger is evaluated or interpreted. For example, when a situation is interpreted negatively, we tend to have negative emotions such as resentment, anger, fear. The last stage of the anger process is the behavioral stage. Accordingly, the way each individual experiences and expresses anger differs and each individual can reflect this in ways such as being cool, using verbal violence, suppressing anger, passive aggression, physical aggression (Puff and Seghers, 2019; Elliot and Smith, 2019; Kayaoğlu, 2018).

Anger is actually a humanly and healthy emotion. What is unhealthy is that anger cannot be properly expressed and turns into aggression. In such a situation, anger becomes the underlying factor of all kinds of criminal acts or violence and creates negative effects on the physical, psychological and social functionality of the individual, it can bring many consequences such as deterioration of relations with family members, friends and colleagues, and cause substance use (Kassinove and Tafrate , 2002; Aydın, 2009). Studies have shown that anger and aggression are among the important factors leading to coronary heart disease, high blood pressure and hypertension (Spielberger and Reheiser, 2010). Again, some studies revealed that there is a relationship between anger and aggressive and antisocial actions (Lench, 2004). Likewise, in a study conducted by Lopez and Thurman (1993) with university students, it was determined that students with high levels of anger were less compatible in family relationships and experienced more conflict. On the other hand, in the study of Horesh et al. (1997), it was observed that anger was significantly associated with suicide risk and high anger increased the risk of suicide. Robbins and Tanck (1997), on the other hand, showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between anger and depressive emotions, while Whiteside and Abramowitz (2004) exhibited a significant relationship between anger and high-level obsessive-compulsive symptoms in their study with university students. Studies show clearly that anger harms individuals' physical and psychological health and social relations. In this context, anger, which cannot be expressed properly and can cause negative consequences, needs to be controlled.

Different methods can be used to control anger, such as problem solving and social skills training, individual therapy, family or couple therapy (Kassinove and Tafrate, 2002). On the other hand, it is stated that psychological counseling with a group is useful in recognizing, accepting and expressing emotions related to anger in a constructive way (Duran and Eldeleklioğlu, 2005). In the study of Deffenbacher et al. (1990), it was revealed that the group counseling process significantly reduced individuals' anger and anxiety. Likewise, in Zorlu's (2017) anger management group study conducted with high school students, it was determined that there was a significant change in trait anger and anger management score averages of students participating in the training program compared to students who did not participate in the program. As can be seen, studies have shown that group work is useful in anger management.

Thanks to the rapidly developing internet technologies, the increasing acceptance of the internet as a common social tool, and the continuous development of the online communication field, some applications in psychology have begun to be transferred to the internet environment, and the number of people who provide psychotherapy and psychological counseling services on the internet has reached substantial levels (Bozkurt, 2013; Huyut, 2019).

Research shows that internet-based therapy applications provide benefits in solving problems such as anxiety disorder, panic disorder, specific phobia (height, fear of animals, etc.) (Huyut, 2019).

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Andersson (2016) also stated that internet-based therapies accompanied by a leader can be as effective as face-to-face therapies and can provide permanent improvement. As an example, in the study of Titov et al. (2015) measuring the applicability of cognitive behavioral therapy online in the treatment of anxiety and depression, it was found that there were significant improvements in treatment participants, increased quality of life and decreased levels of general psychological distress. Likewise, in the study of Schröder et al. (2017) examining the effectiveness of online interventions in the treatment of panic disorder, agoraphobia, social anxiety disorder and specific phobias, it was determined that the anxiety levels and other conditions of the participants were significantly reduced. Studies conducted in this context reveal that online interventions are effective. According to Titov et al. (2015), such a service delivery is an innovative method that is accessible, low-cost, effective and acceptable for many people who cannot receive face-to-face treatment. On the other hand, with the spread of the Covid 19 epidemic, the negative effects on the mental health of individuals and inability of individuals to leave the home have increased the demand for online therapies. In this period, when online therapies started to become widespread, studies on this matter are considered important in terms of revealing whether online interventions in the form of individual or group work provide benefits for individuals and groups and lay the groundwork for new ideas about what can be done to provide better service.

Purpose of the Research

Within the scope of this study, it has been aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of online group study to control anger during the Covid-19 epidemic period on the participants in the research and to reveal whether the participants gained the skills to cope with anger. In line with the purpose determined in this study, the following questions were tried to be answered:

• Is there a statistically significant difference between pre-test and post-test scale total scores of participants who take online group work?

• Is there a statistically significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores of the participants who take online group work?

• To what extent did the participants benefit from the online anger management group work?

• How were the online applications for online anger management group work evaluated by the participants?

METHOD

In this section, information about the research type, group sessions, the population and sample of the research, data collection tools, the process followed in the analysis of the data and the techniques used are given.

Research   Design

This research is a mixed method research in which qualitative and quantitative research methods are used together. Mixed method research is a method that focuses on collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data in a study. In this method, a dataset functions as a complementary one by supporting the other dataset (Creswell, 2006).

In order to analyze the quantitative data within the scope of the research, the pre-test-post-test pattern of the experimental research, which is among the quantitative research types, without control group was used. In this method, the group or groups are given a pre-test before the experimental process begins. After the experimental process is over, the same test is given as a final test. The significance of the difference between the pre-test and post-test values of a single group in the pattern is tested. (Sönmez and Alacapınar, 2013; Büyüköztürk et al., 2018). In this context, the experimental process of this research is an online anger management study consisting of one session each week for a total of 8 weeks.

In order to obtain qualitative data within the scope of the research, the weekly group sessions held during the group work process were reported in a way to include the statements of the participants, the stages of development and the observations of the group leader, then the weekly reports were carefully read and analyzed. In addition, a semi-structured interview form, which is the data collection method of qualitative research, was used in order to reveal opinions on the effectiveness and efficiency of group work. The obtained data were analyzed by descriptive analysis technique.

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Place and Sampling

The place of the research consists of 3rd grade students studying at Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa Social Work Department. While determining the sample of the study, students were informed about group work and pre-interviews were conducted in line with the purpose of the group. As a result of individual interviews, 12 students from the Social Work Department who had an anger management problem were included in the group by using the method of sampling according to the purpose and on a voluntary basis. Information on sampling is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of the Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Gender	N
Female	11
Male	1
Age	
20	9
21	2
22	1

Data Collection Tools

In this study, "Personal Information Form", "Interview Form", "Trait Anger and Anger Expression Style Scale" were used as data collection tools.

Personal Information Form

Within the scope of this research, a personal information form was applied to the participants at the beginning of the group process in order to obtain demographic information about the age and gender of the participants in the group work process.

Interview form

In this study, semi-structured interview form, which is the data collection method of qualitative research, was used in order to reveal the opinions about the effectiveness and efficiency of group work. Accordingly, answers to the following questions were sought:
 (1) To what extent did the participants benefit from the online anger management group work?

(2) How were the online applications for online anger management group work evaluated by the participants?

(3) How are the participants' ability to cope with difficult situations compared to before the online anger management group work?

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Trait Anger and Anger Expression Scale

"Trait Anger and Anger Expression Scale" was developed by Spielberger et al. (1988), and its validity and reliability studies were carried out by adapting it to Turkish by Özer (1994). In the 34-item scale assessed with a four-point Likert type such as "Almost Never", "Sometimes", "Most of the Time", "Almost Always", the first 10 questions measure trait anger, and next 24 questions measure how anger is expressed. One of the three subscales formed in the Anger Expression Style Scale was developed to measure the suppression of felt anger inside (anger-inside), the other to measure its expression (anger-outside), and the last one to measure anger management (anger-control). The scale includes eight items for each of the subscales. By adding the scores of items 11, 14, 18, 21, 25, 28, 30 and 34 in the scale, anger management; with the addition of the scores of the items numbered 12, 17, 19, 22, 24, 29, 32 and 33, anger outside; by adding the scores of the 13, 15, 16, 20, 23, 26, 27 and 31 items, scores anger-inside in sub-dimension are obtained. On the other hand, each item in the scale is flat and the total score in the scale is obtained by summing the scale interval scores obtained in each item (Özer, 1994).

Analysis of Data

SPSS 23 package program was used to analyze the quantitative data obtained in this study. The non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test, which is used to test whether the difference between the means of the measurements obtained over two related samples is significant (Ekiz, 2013), was used to examine whether there was a significant difference between the participants' pre-test and post-test scores. In group studies, the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test is suitable for these studies, as it usually works with a small group and the number of participants is low.

On the other hand, qualitative data were analyzed descriptively by subjecting them to content analysis through inductive analysis. The data collected within the scope of the study were analyzed and certain categories were revealed through the inductive analysis as a result of the analysis of the data, and then the responses of the participants were associated with the categories. Finally, the categories were supported by direct quotations. The code 'K' was given for direct quotations of the participants and starting from the first interviewed participant, each was given numbers in the form of "K1, K2, K3 ...".

Summary of Group Sessions

The 8-week group sessions, which were established to provide training for anger management, were held online once a week over the ZOOM application and for 90 minutes, and the current situation, development and changes of the group members were observed and reported. According to this;

In the first session, the activity "I introduce myself with my feelings" was carried out in order to enable group members to get to know each other and interact, members were informed about the group rules, purpose, subject and function of the group, and an introduction was made on the importance of human emotions and the concept of anger. A pre-test was conducted with the "Constant Anger and Anger Style Scale".

In the second session, group members were informed about the anger triggers and the ways of expressing anger. Then, "Story Telling" and "Situation-Thought-Response" activities were carried out, respectively. With the information given, it was realized that the group members had information about the subject, and with the activities, it was shown that they could turn their thoughts that caused them anger towards the group members in a positive direction by ensuring the adoption of the idea that "when we change our thoughts, there will be a difference in the sense we attribute to the events".

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In the third session, group members were informed about the distortions in the way of thinking and the methods of eliminating the distortions in the way of thinking. Afterwards, "My Silent Tongue" and "Creative Drama-Role Playing" activities were carried out, respectively. With the information given, it was ensured that the group members were informed about the subject, and with the activities, they were able to discover positive internal speeches that they could tell themselves in the moment of anger, at the same time, they were able to realize something by seeing themselves angry and their anger under control, they were able to evaluate events better, and to improve their observations about the situations.

In the fourth session, information was given about the reasons for not wanting to change anger. Then, "Cost-Benefit Analysis" and "Empty Chair" activities developed by Gestalt were carried out, respectively. With the information given, it was ensured that the group members were informed about the subject, and with the activities, they were able to realize the harms of their anger, gain insight, face some events and experience catharsis.

In the fifth session, group members were informed about how assertive communication should be. Later, the "You-I Language" and the "Mirror" activities were held respectively. With the information given, it was ensured that the group members were informed about the subject, and with the activities, they were able to observe how the communication developed at the end of the messages conveyed using "you and I language" and to realize what they felt in these situations, and finally to develop a sense of empathy. In the sixth session, information was given on problem solving skills, since one of the reasons why anger has negative consequences is the inability to use problem solving skills effectively. Later, "Using Objects" and "Cracked Wall" activities were carried out, respectively. With the information given, it was ensured that the group members had information about how to deal with the problem and how to solve it, they were provided with brainstorming with the activities, they were thought about how to solve a problem and discovered that they could solve their problems with their own methods. In the seventh session, what can be done to control anger was discussed, and the correct breathing techniques and relaxation movements were shown practically as a method of coping with tension. It was ensured that group members had information about what they could do to control anger, and they learned breathing techniques and relaxation movements, which are methods of coping with tension. In the eighth session, firstly, with the activity "Find a Slogan", a poster about anti-anger with a slogan that will make them feel positive was prepared and discussed. Then, feedback was received from the leader and all group members concerning about how they felt about the group in the process up to now and what remained in mind for the group. Finally, for the leader and all group members to have a memory from the group process, a shared poem was written and the poem was thrown to each group member. The session was ended with the final test by applying the "Constant Anger and Anger Style Scale" again.

Ethical Issues

For the permission of the ethics committee of this research, the relevant ethics committee unit of Uşak University was applied for. In accordance with the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive, with the decision of the Uşak University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee, it has been decided that the methods to be applied within the scope of the research are ethically appropriate.

FINDINGS

Table 2. Findings Regarding the Significance of the Difference Between the Scale Pre-test and Post-test Scores of the Participants

Whole Scale	Test	n	Median	p
	Pre Test	12	79	,041*
	Post Test	12	74,5	

*P<.05

ANALYSIS OF THE LEVEL OF RESPECT FOR DIFFERENCES OF SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT STUDENTS

Tablo 3. Findings Regarding the Significance of the Differences Between the Scores Obtained in the Pre-test and Post-tests of the Scale Sub-Dimensions of the Participants

Sub-scales	Test	n	median	p
Constant Anger	Pre Test	12	21	,722
	Post Test	12	21	
Anger-inside	Pre Test	12	17	,265
	Post Test	12	18	
Anger-outside	Pre Test	12	17	,574
	Post Test	12	16,5	
Anger Control	Pre Test	12	23	,722
	Post Test	12	21	

*P<.05

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that there is no significant difference between the scores of the participants in the trait anger, anger inside, anger outside, and anger control subscales before the online group work and the mean scores they got after the group work. (p > ,05).

After this stage, the distribution of qualitatively collected data in terms of categories was determined and the findings obtained were interpreted below, respectively.

A question was asked to the participants whether they benefited from the training group created for anger management, and it was observed that the majority of the students participating in the online group study stated that the group process was beneficial for them. On the other hand, there were no participants who stated that the online group work process did not benefit them. Accordingly, some students' views are as follows:

 "It was very good to join the group once a week, spend time together, share things, think for ourselves. Every week I waited for the group session to come. I feel better when I'm here. I think the activities in which we focused on the group and ourselves were very effective and efficient. I had the opportunity to review myself. I thought about things that would keep me out of anger. I think I have improved myself in order to reflect my anger in a coordinated way and to feel less anger. The process turned out very well. It was comforting to know that others have similar problems." (K1)

 "Being here with a group rather than on my own ensured me to meet you and my friends again even though the group members were already my classmates. I felt like meeting myself again. This was very important to me. I learned that I was beautiful with my stretch marks and that I could live with them too. The things this place contributes to me are so much. It will end and we will not be here again and I am upset about this fact. I will miss you all. " (K2)

"Before the group, I usually kept it inside when I was angry. Activities we did after the group, the words of our friends, etc. I can calmly convey what I think, what I feel, without getting angry. This group has earned me this. " (K5)

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"*I realized that the things I get angry with are actually not that important. I learned that I don't need to make myself miserable. I learned new things.* " It can be stated that the participants benefited from group work reveals that the anger management training process was successful and the group work achieved its purpose. Likewise, when the participants were asked a question about how they evaluated the training group created for anger management, all participants stated that they were satisfied with the online group work. Accordingly, some students' views are as follows:

"*Spending time with the group was valuable to me. I think I am very lucky. I was looking forward to the group, I was touched. Thank you very much everyone.* "(K3)

"*I found that most of the group members had personal characteristics such as being impatient, stubborn and having anger similar to mine and again almost everyone was experiencing similar points with me. I found the things I experienced myself. Thanks to the group, I felt that I was not alone. I felt intimacy with the group members. I also liked being able to get advice and give advice in the group. Satisfied.* "(K4)

Finally, a question was asked to the participants about whether their ability to cope with difficult situations has changed in comparison to the group work before which we conducted about anger management, and the majority of the participants stated that their coping skills increased. Accordingly, some students' views are as follows:

"*After last week's session, something happened to me. I experienced something very bad. I was going to get so angry, but I couldn't. I felt like I had found a way not to get angry. We did some relaxation movements. I also discovered what the were the things th comforted me. I thought that that frustrating moment would be temporary, and as I discovered myself, I better controlled myself, easily overcame what I was experiencing. This 8-week process has an effect on this. In fact, the only thing that contributes to me is not discovering what gives me peace of mind. The sentences I received from all of you during this 8-week period are what you all contributed to me. It has given me a lot. Thank you very much, especially you.* " (K7)

"*When I was angry outside, I was exploding at home. With the group, this started to happen less and I started to behave particularly better towards my brother and family. I got better with them now. Thank you very much to you and my friends.*" (K9)
"*Our work in the group was nice, I think everyone added something to each other. I see the subjects I am angry about as simple and I can easily approach him. I understand that I should not be angry.* " (K12)

DISCUSSION

Increasing our connection with technology day by day has brought the interest in online therapies. It would not be wrong to say that the demand for online therapies is likely to increase even more in the near future. In this respect, this study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of an online anger management training group study. According to the results obtained by the quantitative analysis of the study, it was observed that there was a statistically significant difference between the anger levels of the students who participated in the online group study before and after the group work, and this situation revealed that the online group work achieved its purpose and was effective. Cuijpers et al. (2009) also found that online psychotherapy was effective on the anxiety level of the participants, and partially on the depression level and quality of life. Likewise, Bergström et al. (2010) concluded in their study that cognitive behavioral therapy which is performed in the online environment provides improvement in patients with panic disorder and is as effective as face-to-face cognitive behavioral therapy. Finally, in the study by Kiropoulos et al. (2008) to compare the effectiveness of online therapy and face-to-face therapy on individuals, they found that both interventions provided improvement in the quality of life of individuals and that the participants evaluated both treatment methods as equally reliable and satisfactory. In this context, it is also supported by studies that online therapies are effective like as face-to-face therapies in the treatment of psychological based disorders. These results are promising in terms of increasing the number of online individual or group therapies and the spread of studies evaluating the effectiveness of these studies.

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On the other hand, it was found that there was no significant difference between the scores obtained from the trait anger, anger inside, anger outside, and anger management subscales before the online group work and the mean scores they got after the group work. However, there was a decrease in anger inside and anger outside subscales.

According to the qualitative findings, it was observed that most of the group members benefited from the online group process, their ability to cope with difficult situations increased, and all participants found the group process positive. It was observed that the members were in the minimal depression score range after the group therapy with the university students who were also diagnosed with depression by Artan and Alsancak (2018) and all of the participants stated that the process was beneficial for them. Likewise, as a result of the group work conducted by Cebeci et al. (2020) with university students, it was revealed that some of the group members had a decrease in their levels of anxiety and hopelessness. Finally, as a result of the group work that Karaman et al. (2020) conducted with university students studying in the Social Work department, it was observed that there was a positive increase in the personal development skills of the group members. As seen in the studies conducted, working with groups is extremely important and necessary in social work interventions as well as working with individuals.

CONCLUSİON AND RECOMMENDATİONS

This study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of an online anger management training group study. According to the results obtained by quantitative analysis of the study, it was observed that there was a statistically significant difference between the anger levels of the students who participated in the online group study before and after the group work, and this situation revealed that the online group work was successful. According to the qualitative findings, it was observed that most of the group members benefited from the online group process, their ability to cope with difficult situations increased, and all participants found the group process good.

The group work on anger management applied in this study is for 3rd grade students of the Social Work department studying at Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa. In order to reveal the level of productivity obtained from online group studies, it is recommended to conduct online group studies with other sample groups. The study is an experimental study with pre-test and post-test without control group. It is recommended that similar studies be conducted with the control group in order to obtain better results. Finally, in this period when online therapies are becoming widespread, studies on this will be valuable. In this context, it is recommended to increase online therapies by psychologists, social workers, therapists, etc. in different subjects and analyze their results by those who work in different fields.

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