# Analysis of General Personality Characteristics of High School Students Who Take and Do not Take Vocational Music Training according to Personality Inventory

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Abstract – The authorities claim that music training helps children and young people gain insight and actualize themselves and it contributes to their self-expression, self-confidence and socialization process. As known, music education that children and adolescences get varies for several reasons, and particularly the aims, the ways, and the intensity of courses differ according to the school types. From this context, the students of the high schools of fine arts getting vocational musical training and the students of general high schools not getting the vocational training were investigated by means of a general personality inventory, and a research was conducted to examine whether or not music education supports the personality development of the high school students. In the study, 140 students attending the last grade of high schools of fine arts, 140 students attending last grade of general high schools with total amount of 280 were randomly selected. The students were administered a 168 item personality inventory to determine their characteristics of 'social, personal and general adaptation' levels. Following findings were obtained as a result of the survey: When the total scales "general adaptation", "social adaptation" and "personal adaptation" levels, including the sub-scales of 'family affairs, social affairs, social norms, anti-social tendencies', 'self-actualization, emotional decisiveness, neurotic tendencies and psychotic symptoms', were examined, the scores of students who get vocational music training were found significantly higher than the students who do not get it. The results of the study show that music training supports the personality development of adolescences positively.

Key words: Vocational music training, personality, adolescence.

Özet – Mesleki Müzik Eğitimi Alan ve Almayan Lise Öğrencilerinin Genel Kişilik Özelliklerinin Kişilik Envanterlerine Göre İncelenmesi – Uzmanlar, müzik eğitiminin, çocuklara ve gençlere kendilerini fark etmeleri ve tanımalarında yardımcı olduğunu, kendilerini ifade etmelerine, kendilerine güvenlerine ve sosyalleşme süreçlerine katkıda bulunduğunu belirtmektedir. Bilindiği üzere, çocuklar ve gençlerin aldıkları müzik eğitimi, birçok nedenden ötürü çeşitlilik göstermektedir ve özellikle de amaçlar, yollar ve derslerin yoğunluğu okul türlerine göre değişiklik göstermektedir. Bu bağlamdan yola çıkarak, mesleki müzik eğitimi alan ve almayan liselerin güzel sanatlar bölümü

Nihan Yağışan, Assoc.Prof., Selcuk University, Education Faculty, Fine Arts Department, Konya, Turkey, <nihanyagisan@yahoo.com>; Şehriban Koca, Dr., Adana Anatolian Fine Arts High School, Adana, Turkey, <sehriban.koca@hotmail.com>.This paper was presented in Second European Conference on Developmental Psychology of Music as a spoken paper (Roehampton University, England, 2008), and the abstract of the paper was published in Conference Handbook, but copyright of full paper remained with authors.

Mersin Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, Cilt 6, Sayı 1, Haziran 2010, ss. 15-24. Mersin University Journal of the Faculty of Education, Vol. 6, Issue 1, June 2010, pp. 15-24. öğrencileri genel bir kişilik envanteri yoluyla araştırılmıştır ve bu öğrencilerin gençlik dönemi'nde kişilik gelişimlerine müziğin katkısını tespit etmek için bir araştırma yürütülmüştür. Bu çalışmada, güzel sanatlar liselerinin son sınıfına giden 140 öğrenci ile genel liselerin son sınıfına giden 140 öğrenci olmak üzere toplam 280 öğrenci rastgele seçilerek öğrencilere, "sosyal, kişisel ve genel uyum" düzeyleri konusunda karakteristiklerini tespit etmek üzere 168 soruluk bir kişilik envanteri uygulanmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda aşağıdaki bulgular elde edilmiştir: "aile ilişkileri, sosyal ilişkiler, sosyal normlar, anti-sosyal eğilimler", "kendini gerçekleştirme, duygusal kararlılık, nörotik eğilimler ve psikotik belirtiler" alt ölçekleri dahil olmak üzere, "genel uyum, sosyal uyum ve kişisel uyum" düzeyleri incelendiğinde, mesleki müzik eğitimi alan öğrencilerin puanları, mesleki müzik eğitimi almayan öğrencilerden anlamlı ölçüde yüksek bulunmuştur. Çalışma sonuçları, müzik eğitiminin, gençlerin kişiliğini olumlu ölçüde desteklendiğini göstermiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Mesleki müzik eğitimi, kişilik, ergenlik.

## Introduction

In the formation of the man's personality, which is the combination of social, moral, mental and physical features, education and schooling have a significant role as well as many other factors like heredity, culture and psychology.

Music, like the other branches of fine arts, takes up undeniable place in the integration of schooling education. Music is sometimes a tool and sometimes a field in this process. As a hobby or a profession, no matter what the aim is, music enables individuals to recognize, confide, prove and realize themselves, to develop their personality and enrich their lives (Uçan, 1996).

A great amount of research (Çoban, 2005; Gifford and Dean, 1990; Kulaksızoğlu, 2000) supports the idea that the young who have music education and take part in many activities by developing social skills will become more joyful, affectionate, self-confident and outgoing individuals with the feelings of positive self- definition and self-assertion. It is also claimed that music has an impact on the development of individual characteristics such as discipline, responsibility, personal thought (Eskioğlu, 2003), as well as it helps to reduce some negative feelings like aggressiveness and lack of self-confidence (Güngörmüş, 1988). It is also argued that playing and singing music together develops the feelings of unity and friendship (Kulaksızoğlu, 2000).

Apart from all these arguments, the facts that many new methods and applications contribute to the personal development of all ages -children, adolescents and adults, provide them self- confidence, clear up their behavioral problems and help them cope with their communication problems reveal the social and psychological aspects of music. Besides all these, it is maintained that the intelligence and social development of children, who include music into their life during their schooling years, is also quite healthy. Especially during adolescence, the problematic period full of identity problems, this contribution is more critical for individuals who have music in their life. Moreover, music education becomes more important for adolescents who choose music as a career and make it apart of their lives, because music fulfills most of the desires

that shape their character; to grow up, to develop, to mature, to change, to construct positive social relationships and to gain some peculiarities like independence, success, self-confidence and approval, etc. (Kulaksızoğlu, 2000).

The fact that music education contributes to the personality development and socialization of individuals has increasingly been accepted as a result of many studies. The research conducted by Stern has shown that children attending music-based secondary schools have developed perceptions of unity and community and become more independent and self confident individuals as a consequence of making music together (Tanriverdi, 1996).

Similarly, in a study carried out at Keele University in England by Lamont (2001) presented that music education had a positive impact on the mental and social development of children. Duke, Flowers and Wolf found out that piano education affected some personal characteristics like 'discipline, self-confidence, responsibility, individual thought' and increased the pleasure children derive from life (Eskioğlu, 2003). In another study conducted on music student teachers, Teachout (2001) concluded that significant within-group differences were found to exist among the personality types of music student teachers. Subjects' three highest mean scores were on the Artistic, Social and Investigative personality scores respectively.

It was also pointed out that professional self-respect increased when the music education was maintained (Froehlich and L'Roy, 1985). In a study by Köksal (2000), it was revealed that having music education made a significant difference on the personal and general adaptation scores while gender made only on personal adaptation ones. Another study revealed that music education brought about significant difference in self-conceptualization scores (Barış, 2002).

Based on these assumptions, it is aimed to investigate whether music education makes any impact on adolescence personality by comparing the general characteristics of adolescents who have vocational music education with the ones who do not by means of personality inventory.

## **Purpose**

In this study it is aimed to compare the general personal characteristics of the students who get vocational music education in Anatolian Fine Arts High Schools (AFAHS) and the students in General High Schools (GHS) by means of personality inventory.

It is aimed to find answers to the following questions:

- Is there any significant difference between Anatolian Fine Arts High Schools (AFAHS) students and General High Schools (GHS) students in terms of their personality characteristics?
- Is there any significant difference between female and male students in terms of their personality characteristics?

#### Method

The research is a survey model. The participants composed of 280 randomly selected high school students (aged between 16 and 18 years old) who attend two different types of High Schools in three cities in Turkey.140 of whom (97 females, 43 males) had vocational music education (AFAHS) and the other 140 (GHS) (82 females, 58 males) who did not.

## **Participants**

The participants comprised randomly selected 280 students, aged between 16 and 18 years old, 140 of whom (97 females, 43 males) had vocational music education and the other 140 (82 females, 58 males) who did not. The participants who had vocational music education were students at the last grade of Anatolian Fine Arts High Schools like conservatories, these are educational institutions which students prefer to specialize in music or art after elementary school education. In these schools, students get the training of branch instruments (violin, piano, flute, etc.), school instruments (blockflute, orff instruments), traditional instruments, music theory and music history along with the other subjects taught at general high schools. The students who graduate from these schools prefer to study music at conservatories or music teaching departments at the faculties of education in universities.

## Measure

In this study, Hacettepe Personality Inventory (HPI) was used in order to gather data related with the personality characteristics of the participants who attend General and Fine Arts High Schools.

HPI is a 168-item questionnare developed by Özgüven (1992) to measure personality characteristic of individuals along with their social and individual adaptation levels, to detect the clinical and ordinary cases, and to scan the psychological health of people. HPI is consisted of two main parts, Personal Adaptation (PA) and Social Adaptation (SA), both of which include 4 subscales: Personal Adaptation sub scales: Self-Realization (SR), Emotional Decisiveness (ED), Neurotic Tendencies (NT), Psychotic Symptoms (PS). Social Adaptation sub scales: Family Affairs (FAf), Social Affairs (SAf), Social Norms (SN), Anti-Social Tendencies (AST)

General Adaptation (GA) scores are obtained from the addition of the PA and SA scores. Scoring was done from left to right and all the scores are provided by using only one "key". "personal adaptation", social adaptation" and "general adaptation" scores were gained by adding sub-scale scores. If total validity (v) score was 5 and lower according to 8, that person's test would be invalid.

In the researches applied on "opposite groups" which are known as "normal" and "dissonant", it is understood that all the sub-scales of the inventory could differentiate these groups at a significant level. The study results related to "misleading" on the person's intential responding attitude showed that different from normal responding, the person was unsuccessful in showing himself/herself "adaptable" or "inadaptable" at a significant level. The reliability of HPI was tested on various groups and the reliability scores were found to be 0.85 for PA, 0.80 for SA and 0.82 for GA.

## **Results**

In this study, the personal, general and social adaptation levels of vocational music education students and general high school students were compared according to gender and school type. Independent groups 't test' was used in the analysis of the data and the following results were obtained.

**Table 1:** The comparison of the personality inventory scores of Anatolian Fine Arts High School students and the General High School students according to the 'gender'.

	Gender	N	$\overline{X}$	σ	t	p
GA	Female	179	84,41	20,89	0,11	0,91
	Male	101	84,12	22,13		
SA	Female	179	46,95	11,27	2,07	0,04*
	Male	101	44,05	11,19		
PA	Female	179	37,41	11,11	-1,83	0,07
	Male	101	40,07	12,64		
SR	Female	179	12,16	3,22	-0,63	0,53
	Male	101	12,42	3,52		
ED	Female	179	7,78	3,11	-5,16	0,00*
ED	Male	101	9,83	3,32		
NIT	Female	178	8,88	3,68	0.08	0,94
NT	Male	101	8,92	4,15	0,08	
PS	Female	179	8,52	3,43	-0,76	0,45
	Male	101	8,84	3,42		
FAf	Female	178	12,24	3,97	0,07	0,92
	Male	101	12,20	4,09		
SAf	Female	179	12,79	3,81	3,91	0,00*
	Male	101	10,93	3,85		
SN	Female	179	11,43	3,06	1,02	0,31
	Male	101	11,03	3,33		
AST	Female	179	10,55	3,38	4.00	0,07
	Male	101	9,79	3,30	1,83	

p\*<0.05

As is seen in the Table 1, t-test analysis showed a significant gender difference on the 'SA', 'ED'and 'SA' scales scores. No significant difference was observed on PA and GA subscale scores. Females scored higher than males in SA and SAf subscales. On the other hand males scored higher on ED subscale.

**Table 2:** The comparison of the personality inventory scores of Anatolian Fine Arts High School students and the General High School students according to the 'school type'.

	High School	N	$\overline{X}$	σ	t	p
GA	AFAHS	140	100,12	17,57	18,55*	0,00
	GHS	140	68,49	9,92		
SA	AFAHS	140	54,64	8,36	20,37*	0,00
5A	GHS	140	37,17	5,75		
PA	AFAHS	140	45,49	10,98	12,77*	0,00
ra	GHS	140	31,25	7,32		
CIP.	AFAHS	140	13,44	3,42	6,41*	0, 00
SR	GHS	140	11,06	2,77		
	AFAHS	140	9,79	3,38	6,85*	0,00
ED	GHS	140	7,26	2,76		
	AFAHS	140	11,47	3,36	15,16*	0,00
NT	GHS	140	6,29	2,22		
	AFAHS	140	10,57	3,10	11,46*	0,00
PS	AF AFIS GHS	140	6,70	2,53		
		140	15,01	2,87	15,90*	0,00
FAf	AFAHS		-			
	GHS	140 140	9,47 14,43	2,93 3,28	12,16*	0,00
SAf	AFAHS					
	GHS	140	9,81	3,07		
SN	AFAHS	140	12,90	2,63	9,93*	0,00
,	GHS	140	9,67	2,80		
AST	AFAHS	140	12,36	2,90	13,14*	0,00
AD1	GHS	140	8,20	2,36		

p\*<0.05

As is shown in the Table 2, t test analysis showed a significant difference on the 'PA', 'SA' and 'GA' scales and sub scales scores (SR, ED, NT, PS, FAf, SAf, SN, AST). The students at AFAHS scored higher at all the scales of the personality inventory than the other students at general high schools.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

In this study, it was aimed to compare the general personality characteristics of the vocational music education students and general high school students by means of Hacettepe Personality Inventory. As a result, it was found that Anatolian Fine Arts High School (AFAHS) students got higher adaptation scores at all the subscales in general, while those scores varied according to gender.

As a result of the evaluation of the findings according to gender difference; significant differences were found among the Social Adaptation, Social Affair and Emotional Decisiveness scores, while no difference was found at the scores of the other subscales.

At Social Adaptation and Social Affair scales, all the girls from both school types got higher scores than all the males (see Table 1). The finding that females had higher SA scores points out that females are more sociable and more communicative than their male peers, and that they can express themselves much better.

Social Affair subscale shows the quality of the relationship with other people. The finding that females had higher SAf scores shows that females are more successful at social affairs than their male peers.

Upon the evaluation of Emotional Decisiveness subscale scores, all the boys were found to have had higher scores than the females. Higher ED scores signify that those people have emotionally-determined, self-confident, tolerant, calm and peaceful personality while the ones with lower scores are usually nervous and anxious.

These findings are not compatible with the result of another similar study which used the same personality inventory and found that gender made a significant difference on merely personal adaptation (with higher scores of males), while it made no significant difference on social and general adaptation scores (Köksal, 2000). However the finding in the present study that males had higher ED scores than females is compatible with that research.

As a result of the evaluation of the findings according to high school type variance; at all of the main (PA, SA, GA) and sub scales (SR, ED, NT, PS, FAf, SAf, SN, AST) of the personality inventory, the students at AFAHS got higher scores than the other students a general high schools (see Table 2).

One of the subscales of Personal Adaptation, Self-Realization (SR) score is related with some peculiarities such as self-confidence, self-determination and self-awareness as well as feeling of utility. The finding that Anatolian Fine Arts High School (AFAHS) students got higher SR scores supports the similar findings showing that music education helps people know and prove themselves, construct self-confidence and improve their personality (Çoban, 2005; Gifford & Dean, 1990; Köksal, 2000; Kulaksızoğlu, 2000; Uçan, 1996). In a similar study, Hietolahti-Anstein & Kalliopuska (1990) showed that the adolescents who actively took part in music had high level of self-respect.

If the Emotional Decisiveness scores of people are high, it means that they are emotionally decisive. Those people are usually self-confident, tolerant, calm and peaceful characters while the ones with lower ED scoresare nervous and anxious. At this point, the finding that Anatolian Fine Arts High School (AFAHS) students had higher ED scores suggests that having music education may contribute to developing emotional decisiveness. In contrast to the findings of this study, a study conducted in Australia found that musicians are much more sensitive, nervous and conservative than the others (Buttsworth & Glen, 1995).

Neurotic tendencies indicate some attitudes like denying identity, being perfectionist and disregarding criticism along with psychopathic symptoms such as chronic tiredness and lack of appetite. The low scores show multitude of these symptoms while the high ones do the just opposite. In the present study, the average Neurotic Tendency scores of AFAHS students were found to be higher. This result are compatible with the assumptions that music reveals the negative feelings of the individual and reconstructs them into the desired level (Çoban, 2005), and that it helps to reduce the feelings of aggressiveness and insecurity (Güngörmüş, 1988).

Psychotic Symptoms scores of AFAHS students were found to be higher. According to the criteria of the inventory, the individuals with low scores in this scale tend to isolate themselves from the society, have difficulty in concentrating on a subject and enjoy daydreaming. These individuals are usually oversensitive and sentimental. The result of our study that AFAHS students had higher scores suggests that they did not have these peculiarities, which is contrary to a study by Kemp (1981), who found that the characteristic peculiarities of the musicians are 'introversion, sensitivity and imagination'.

Family Affairs scores of Anatolian Fine Arts High School (AFAHS) students, which show the relationships of people with other family members, were found to be higher than the ones of the students in the other school type. Low scores suggest that the individual has disharmony and disorder in the relationships with the other family members. The higher scores of the AFAHS students in the present study suggest that they have healthy relations with the other family members. The parallelism between FAf scores and Saf scores of AFAHS students, given above, suggests the impact of music on the communicative skills of the individual within his family and social circle.

Like Family Affairs scores, Social Affairs scores of AFAHS students were found to be higher than the ones of the students in the other school type. This finding may lead to conclude that the students who have vocational education have better social affairs than general high school students. These findings are parallel with those of another study which point out a positive relationship between the social and individual adaptation levels of university students (Soyer, 1992). However, in a similar study which investigated the social adaptation levels of 15-17 year-old adolescents getting or not getting art education by Leman & Baran, (2006), it was found that there was no meaningful difference between the adolescents getting and not getting art education in

terms of social adaptation (Leman & Baran, 2006). On the other hand, in another study, Kalliopuska & Titinen (1991) found that the socialization of the children whom they included in an education program consisting of music facilities had improved at the end of the program.

In the evaluation of the Social Norms scores, it was found that AFAHS students had higher scores than the other school type students. SN scores signify feeling respect for social rules, moral values and others' rights. Many musical rules such as obeying the technical and musical rules of the piece or the instrument, observing the musical balances in a group or orchestra and following the conductor are similar to social rules. In another point of view, it could be said that music education helps people obey the rules, and that the order of successive melodies and rhythms develop self-discipline in people.

When the Anti-Social Tendency scores were examined, the general high school students were found to have lower AST scores than AFAHS students. According to the inventory, low AST scores mean that the individual has harsh, outrageous and aggressive personality with conscious tendencies to contradict the social norms of the society. On the other hand, high AST scores signify that the individual does not have any anti-social tendencies at certain extents. Based on these points, it could be said that the higher scores of AFAHS students in the present study support the studies suggesting that music helps people reduce the feelings of aggressiveness and insecurity (Güngörmüş, 1988) and brings about positive feelings (Burger, 2006).

The results obtained from the study shows that AFAHS students got higher scores than the other students attending general high schools at all the scales of the personality inventory personal adaptation (PA), social adaptation (SA), and general adaptation (GA), which is the addition of PA and SA. This finding supports the assumptions that vocational music education improves the personal characteristics of the students, that is, it contributes to personality development positively. As a result, it can be concluded that throughout all ages, particularly during childhood and adolescence when the personality development gains importance, music education should be given a special place in schooling period. Taking all these findings into consideration, we could say that further studies as to the impact of music on the personality development of individuals from different age groups, particularly children, teenagers and university students, are needed especially in the present world of alienation, violence, lack of communication, and etc.

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