

Eryalçın, M. ve Duyan, V. (2020). Perceived Social Support of Juvenile Delinquents and Young Offenders on Probation, *Toplum ve Sosyal Hizmet*, 31(1), s.1-21.

*Araştırma*

*Makale Geliş Tarihi: 17.06.2019*

*Makale Kabul Tarihi: 12.09.2019*

## **PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS AND YOUNG OFFENDERS ON PROBATION**

### **Denetimli Serbestlik Sistemindeki Suça Sürüklenen Çocuk ve Gençlerin Sosyal Destek Algısı**

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### **ÖZET**

*Denetimli serbestlik sistemi, suça sürüklenen çocuk ve gençlerin sosyal destek sisteminin güçlenmesi, prososyal davranış geliştirmeleri ve sosyal kaynaklara ulaşmalarının sağlanması adına önemli bir süreç sunmaktadır. Nicel araştırma olarak tasarlanan bu araştırma 2 aylık (Mayıs-Haziran 2014) bir sürede gerçekleştirilmiş ve veriler anket ve Sosyal İlişki Unsurları Ölçeği kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Bu araştırma, Ankara Denetimli Serbestlik Müdürlüğü'nde bulunan suça sürüklenen çocuk ve gençlerin sosyal destek algısını ve bu algıyı şekillendiren faktörleri tartışmaktadır. Ankara Denetimli Serbestlik Müdürlüğü'nde denetimli serbestlik sistemine dahil olan 150 çocuk ve gencin sosyodemografik özellikler, aile, suçlu davranış ve denetimli serbestlik sürecine ilişkin faktörler hakkında bir dizi bilgi edinilmiştir.*

*Araştırmaya dahil olan 150 çocuk ve gencin sosyal destek algısının eğitim düzeyi, doğum veya evlat edinme durumu, ebeveynlerin eğitim düzeyi, aile türü, iş durumu, suç türü, ailenin ve ailenin cezai durumu, ailede şiddet, madde kullanım sıklığı, denetimli serbestlik sürecinde destek alma ve denetimli serbestlik sürecine ailenin katılımına göre anlamlı düzeyde farklılık gösterdiği belirlenmiştir. Bu araştırmanın amacı, denetimli serbestlik sistemine dahil olan çocuk ve gençlerin sosyal destek algılarını belirlemek ve gençlerin sosyal destek kaynaklarının geliştirilmesi için önerilerde bulunmaktır.*

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Algılanan sosyal destek, suça sürüklenen çocuk, genç suçluluğu, denetimli serbestlik

## ABSTRACT

*Probation system provides an important process to strengthen the juveniles and youngsters' social support system, development of prosocial behaviours and enable them to reach social resources. This research which was designed as a quantitative research had been carried out for 2-month-period (May-June 2014) and data were gathered by using questionnaire and Provision of Social Relations (PSR) Scale. The research discusses the perception of social support provided by the juvenile delinquents and young offenders on probation at the Directorate of Probation in Ankara, as well as the factors shaping these perceptions. A series of information about the socio-demographic characteristics, families, delinquent behavior and factors related to the probation process was received from 150 juveniles and youngsters involved in the probation system at the Directorate of Probation in Ankara. It was determined that 150 juveniles' perception of social support varies in terms of their education level, birth or adopted parent status, education level of parents, type of family, employment status, type of committed crimes, criminal situation of friends and family, violence in the family, the frequency of substance use, taking support in the process of probation and meeting with the family during probation process. The aim of this research is to determine the perception of social support of the juveniles/youngsters on probation process and to put forward proposals for the development of social support resources of young people involved in the probation system.*

**Keywords:** *Perceived social support, juvenile delinquency, youth offending, probation*

## INTRODUCTION

The study begins with literature review about juvenile delinquency, youth offending, probation, social support and then go forward with discussion about juveniles/youngsters' perceived social support during probation process. This research is important for theoretical source information for probation practices and professional interventions that can be developed for children and youths under probation. In Turkey, children with a court decision for probation who are in the process of investigation or prosecution with allegations about an act identified as crime by law are defined as 'children drifted into crime (Child Protection Law, 2005, Article 3). Juvenile delinquent is a person under 18 years of age in Turkish law system (Uluğtekin, 1991). Sociological perspective argues that juveniles and youngsters being drifted to crime is a psycho-pedagogical and social phenomenon (Martin, 2005). Children's individual characteristics such as age, gender, personality, lack of cultural and social control mechanisms; the type of families where children grow up, migration experience, lost family functionality, had parents with low level of education, had low socio-economic and cultural conditions, social environment and the adopted norms and values are regarded as factors paving the way for crime (Uluğtekin 2004; Shoemaker, 2009; Yavuzer, 2009; Baykara, 2004; Erdoğan, 2010; Kunt, 2003; Freire, 2003) Crime emerges as an unfavorable combination of these

factors (Van Ness, 2001). In this study, the main risk factors of juvenile delinquency and youth offending, namely; family, socio-economic status, peer group and school will be discussed.

Non-institutional and rehabilitative services are favored over detention and imprisonment and probation model is one of them. Probation is a preferred model especially in rehabilitation of young people, who require complex needs in criminal justice system and increasing their learning capacities and develop their power of self-determination (Rose, 2000). Yet, perceived social support is a significant component of this rehabilitation process. This paper seeks to understand how the youth on probation perceive their social support network. According to McCormack (1955, p.5), probation is a service that does more than strengthening and preserving "social values". It is not only the most practical process of crime prevention (Heinz, 2006) but also a noble humanitarian service.

Probation officers have important roles in the probation process to strengthen the juveniles and youngsters' social support system, enable them to reach social resources and shape the process according to their personal needs (Nijnatten & Stevens, 2011, Farrall, 2002; Dowden & Andrew, 2004). Identifying the social support systems of the juvenile delinquents and young offenders on probation process has great importance to determine its efficiency. In order for the juveniles/youngsters to attain expected harmony with the community in reorientation process, the social support systems such as family members, teachers, peers, probation officer and other adults (Schwalbe, 2012; Rimkus, 2008) should be empowered.

### **The Aim of the Research**

The aim of this research is to determine the perception of social support by the juveniles/youngsters on probation process at the Directorate of Probation in Ankara.

The sub-objectives are under the general purpose are as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of the juveniles/youngsters in terms of socio-demographic status; families of juveniles/youngsters; type of committed crime and the situation of exposure to violence; substance use; probation process and the social support systems?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the level of perceived social support of the juveniles/youngsters with their socio-demographic characteristics; juveniles/youngsters' family characteristics, their characteristics related to crime, violence and substance use and their probation process?

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study was conducted to determine the relationship between the level of social support of juveniles/youngsters under probation and some variables as age, socio-economic structure, type of crime and family structure using correlational survey model.

### **Participants and Procedures**

The population of the study are 150 juveniles and youngsters on probation between the ages of 16 and 25 who were involved in probation at Ankara Directorate of Probation. Approximately two-fifths (38%) of the individuals included in the study consisted of children between the ages of 16-18 and three-fifths (62%) of them consisted of young people between the ages of 19-25. They were all male; their average age was 21.69. The majority of juveniles/youngsters (68.7%) are included in the probation system due to drug offenses, some of them (13.3%) violent crimes and other crimes (18.0%) (sexual, crimes against property, etc.). No sample was selected from this population and all juveniles and youngsters on probation at Ankara Directorate of Probation under Treatment Probation articles 191/2, 191/3 of Turkish Penal Code and Law on the Execution of Sentences and Security Measures 105/A - The Article on the Execution of Probation Enforcement are included in this study.

### **Instruments**

Two basic data collection tools were used. The first was the questionnaire (34 items) for retrieving the socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the juveniles/youngsters who voluntarily participated in the research. This questionnaire was prepared by the researchers. The second was the Provision of Social Relations (PSR) Scale including 15 items that were developed in order to measure the level of perceived social support by Turner, Frankel and Levin in 1983. Its reliability and validity study in Turkish language was conducted by Duyan, Gelbal and Var in 2013.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Survey participation rate was 56.8%. The list of the numbers and names of juveniles/youngsters were reached via UYAP (Ministry of Justice, the National Judicial Network Information System). From this list, the number of juveniles and

youngsters ranged in age from 16 to 25 were retrieved. The study was conducted with the voluntary juveniles/youngsters who were in the list and who were coming to the Ankara Probation Directorate for individual interviews, group works and other activities at predefined times every month under guidance services for the juveniles/youngsters in probation. The study had been carried out for 2-month-period (May-June 2014) as per the authorization obtained from the General Directorate of Prisons and Detention Houses of Ministry of Justice. The interview form and the scale were applied to the juvenile/youngster probationers with the help of probation officers doing individual interviews and group sessions and data was collected during individual interviews and group sessions.

### **Statistical Analyses**

The Interview Form and Provision of Social Relations Scale were processed with SPSS 16 program and a data base was prepared. Percentages, means and standard deviations were calculated. Correlation analysis was undertaken. Significance level was analyzed by using t, F and r statistical analyses. To equalize the difference between social support levels derived from friends and family, scores from each subscale were divided by the number of items in that subscale. Multiple regression analysis is neglected due to the limited size of the sample.

### **FINDINGS**

#### **Identifying Characteristics of the Juveniles/Youngsters and Their Families and Perceived Social Support Status**

When the socio-demographic characteristics of the juveniles/youngsters participated the study were examined, it was seen that they were all male; their average age was 21.69; Three out of four juveniles/youngsters were single (74.7%) and most of them were studying at high school (43.3%). It was seen that the relation between education level and social support from family and friends was statistically significant ( $F = 2.872, P < 0.05$ ). That is, as the level of education increases, the level of social support received from family and friends increases. Studies have found that students who do not perform well academically are more likely to be delinquent. In a study conducted with 114 adolescents, as the education level of the adolescents got higher they were involved in less crime (Akduman et al, 2007). Anderson (2012) stated that school attendance decreases the time available for criminal activity. It was seen that most of their parents were their biological parents (78.7%), 65.3 % of

the parents were living together, mothers' (54.7%) and fathers' (the 50%) education levels were concentrated at secondary school; almost all of the juveniles/youngsters had (81.3%) siblings; 42,2 % of young people have siblings between 1 and 2; 26,9% of them have siblings between 3 and 4; 12,7% of them have 5 or more siblings. In recent research emphasized that a large of number siblings, growing up in large families, the division of interests, parenting the little siblings may be triggering factors in participation in delinquent activities (Farrington, 2003, Ögel, 2014, Şahinli 2012). Juveniles/youngsters had core family structure (63.3%) and most of them (66.7%) grew up with their parents. Similar researches stated that majority of adolescents arrested or convicted were living with their biological families (Gürler, 2005; Aksoy and Ögel (2007).

**Table 1. Juveniles/Youngsters' Families**

<b>Status of parents</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Parents biological	118	78,7
Biological mother-step father	20	13,3
Biological father-step mother	10	6,7
Adoptive parent	2	1,3
Total	150	100

  

<b>Parents' living status</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Living together with both parents	98	65,3
Parents deceased	4	2,7
Mother alive-father deceased	17	11,3
Father alive-mother deceased	6	4,0
Parents divorced	14	9,3
Parents married with others	11	7,3
Total	150	100

  

<b>Education Level</b>	<b>Mother's Education Level</b>		<b>Father's Education Level</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not Literate	19	12,7	10	6,7
Literate	14	9,3	11	7,3
Primary school	40	26,7	40	26,7
Secondary school	42	28,0	35	23,3
High school	22	14,7	33	22,0
University	13	8,7	21	14,0
Total	150	100	150	100

  

<b>Siblings in the household</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	122	81,3
No	28	18,7
Total	150	100

<b>The number of siblings</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1- 2 siblings	63	42,2
3-4 siblings	40	26,6
5 and more siblings	19	12,7
Missing	28	18,7
Total	150	100

  

<b>Family Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Nuclear family	95	63,3
Extended family	23	15,3
Broken family	32	21,3
Total	150	100

  

<b>With whom they grew up</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Mother and father	100	66,7
Institution	4	2,6
Other *	46	30,7
Total	150	100

\*Mother or father, grandmother/grandfather, relatives, sister/brother, children's home/ institution

It is obvious that family integrity is a protective factor for juveniles/youngsters but it is not possible to claim that every juvenile/youngster in a broken family will engage in criminal activities. Although growing up with parents has a protective function in terms of juveniles/youngsters' committing crime, some domestic dynamics like weakness in communication, negative role modeling, and inappropriate parenting attitudes can be considered as triggering factors for criminal behaviors. There was no statistically significant difference between having biological or adoptive parents and social support received from family but there was a significant difference between social support from friends and overall social support. The family structure is usually the nuclear and biological, the number of adoptive families is fewer. Although we assume that two biological parent families provide more support, involvement and monitoring for an adolescent, non-functional family practices in these families may influence crime and delinquency. It was determined that there was no statistically significant difference between mothers' level of education and social support status. As mothers' level of education increased, social support received from friends and family decreased. There was a statistically significant difference between fathers' level of education and social support received from friends and overall social support. According to the findings of the study, the fact that the juveniles/youngsters see their families as a social support system despite their low level of education can be explained with domestic dynamics, having a wide social support network, parents' discipline and parental involvement.

There was a negative relation between the number of siblings and social support from family, friends and overall social support. Siblings might not be perceived as a social support source by the juveniles/youngsters due to certain reasons which were defined as risks in terms of drifting to crime. Most of the studies in literature showed that family size, having multiple siblings, parents' attention focusing on other siblings impacted the delinquency (Ögel, 2014; Kierkus and Hewitt, 2009). The finding that there was no statistically significant difference between the juveniles/youngsters' family type and received social support can be explained with the fact that most of the families being core did not mean they had integrity or appropriate domestic relations besides the negative factors affecting family functionality. There was a statistically significant difference between growing up with parents and perceived social support. Parental involvement has a vital role to play in social support system of juveniles/youngsters. When findings on the juveniles/youngsters' economic status were examined, it was found out that more than half of them (58%) were working, and majority of them (56.7%) defined their income level as average. Robins (1979) stated that juveniles/youngsters' early participation to work force was risky and led them to face with criminal areas and criminogenic risks earlier. It was seen that the juveniles/youngsters generally defined their economic status as average (56.7%). The juveniles/youngsters' economic status was at middle or low socio-economic level according to the studies in the literature (Aslan 2012; Ögel 2014). High-poverty neighborhoods also have lower availability of high-quality public and private services such as parks, child care centers and preschools, community centers, and health care providers, as well as fewer social supports and less effective social networks (McLoyd 1998).

**Table 2. Juveniles/Youngsters' Identifying Characteristics and Perceived Level of Social Support**

Social Support Source	Juveniles/ youngsters Educational Status	Number	Mean	Sd	Statistics	p
Family	Primary school	23	3,36	,73	F=2,872	,038
	Middle School	33	3,61	,74		
	High school	65	3,20	,94		
	College	29	3,64	,68		
Friend	Elementary school	23	3,27	,71	F=,346	,792
	Middle School	33	3,33	,75		
	High school	65	3,32	,72		
	College	29	3,46	,63		



Total	Elementary school	23	3,31	,64	F=1,512	,214
	Secondary school	33	3,44	,56		
	High school	65	3,27	,63		
	College	29	3,53	,51		
<b>Social Support Source</b>	<b>Income Level Definition</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Statistics</b>	<b>p</b>
Family	Low	30	3,28	,73	F=0,566	0,56
	Middle	85	3,40	,85		
	High	35	3,50	,89		
Friend	Low	30	3,23	,78	F= 1,611	0,20
	Middle	85	3,31	,61		
	High	35	3,52	,83		
Total	Low	30	3,25	,65	F=1,670	0,19
	Middle	85	3,34	,56		
	High	35	3,51	,64		
<b>Social Support Source</b>	<b>Juveniles/youngsters Grew With</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Statistics</b>	<b>p</b>
Family	Mother and father	100	3,56	0,85	t=3,414	0,001
	Other	50	3,08	0,73		
Friend	Mother and father	100	3,43	0,69	t=2,310	0,022
	Other	50	3,16	0,72		
Total	Mother and father	100	3,48	0,56	t=3,571	0,000
	Other	50	3,13	0,63		

### **The Juveniles/Youngsters' History of Crime and Exposure to Violence and Perceived Social Support**

When the juveniles/youngsters' history of criminal activity was examined, it was seen that majority of them (68.7%) were on probation due to drug related crimes (drug sale and drug use); most of them did not previously tried (66.7%) and executed (72%); they were mostly convicted between 18 and 21 years of age; their average duration of being on probation was 6.99 months; almost half of their friends (45.3%) had criminal records while the majority of the families (78.7%) had no criminal records. It was seen that two out of five juveniles/youngsters (42.0%) were exposed to domestic violence in their families, three out of five (58.0%) were not subjected to domestic violence. The juveniles/youngsters who had been subjected to violence in family had lower average scores of family, friend and overall social support. There was a statistically significant difference in social support according to exposure violence in family. It can be said that parents' disciplining style based on physical punishment and rationalization of violence harms the juveniles/youngsters'

trust, sense of belonging and relations with their close support system. The juveniles/youngsters, committed drug related crimes, had higher average scores of family, friend and overall social support than the ones who had committed violence or other type of crimes. There was a positive relation between the juveniles/youngsters' age of conviction and the average of perceived social support score however, this relation was not statistically significant. Because adolescence is a challenging developmental process, they experienced major changes during this process. Participating in crime at an early age can be explained by dysfunctional coping strategies and lack of social support sources.

The juveniles who were tried and convicted of another crime had lower social support scores. As the juveniles/youngsters' age of conviction and probation duration increased, the level of perceived social support received from friends also increased. It can be explained with the fact that they had been together in the Directorate of Probation sharing the same experience and they had been providing support to each other during the process. It was seen that the juveniles/youngsters, whose family and friends did not have any criminal record, had higher social support level. There was no statistically significant difference in social support received from family and friends according to the juveniles/youngsters' criminal record status. Schwalbe and Marshi's (2010, p. 399-405)'s study focusing on the relation between having a criminal individual in the family and social support received from the family, found that the juveniles/youngsters, whose family had a member with criminal record, had a lower level of support from their families.

**Table 3. The Juveniles/Youngsters' Perceived Social Support Status According to Characteristics of Their Criminal History and Exposure to Violence in the Family**

Social Support Source	Number	Mean	Sd	Statistics	p
Age of Conviction	150	19,44	2,25		
Family	150	3,39	,84	r= 0,79	0,335
Friend	150	3,34	,71	r= 0,159	0,053
Total	150	3,36	,61	r= 0,156	0,057

<b>Social Support Source</b>	<b>Conviction of another crime</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Statistics</b>	<b>p</b>
Family	Yes	50	3,44	0,83	t= 0,390	0,697
	No	100	3,38	0,84		
Friend	Yes	50	3,24	0,71	t= -1,190	0,236
	No	100	3,39	0,70		
Total	Yes	50	3,32	0,59	t= -,619	0,537
	No	100	3,39	0,61		
<b>Social Support Source</b>		<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Statistics</b>	<b>p</b>
Probation period		150	6,99	7,7		
Family		150	3,39	,84	r= 0,780	0,780
Friend		150	3,34	,71	r=0,023	0,023
Total		150	3,36	,61	r= 0,079	0,079
<b>Social Support Source</b>	<b>Friends' Criminal status</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Statistics</b>	<b>p</b>
Family	Yes	68	3,26	0,89	t= -1,800	0,074
	No	82	3,51	0,78		
Friend	Yes	68	3,22	0,74	t= -1,950	0,053
	No	82	3,44	0,67		
Total	Yes	68	3,24	0,61	t= -2,392	0,018
<b>Social Support Source</b>	<b>Family's Criminal status</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Statistics</b>	<b>p</b>
Family	Yes	32	3,20	0,68	t= -1,538	0,126
	No	118	3,45	0,87		
Friend	Yes	32	3,17	0,75	t= -1,585	0,115
	No	118	3,39	0,69		
Total	Yes	32	3,18	0,62	t= -1,981	0,049
	No	118	3,41	0,59		
<b>Social Support Source</b>	<b>Exposure to Violence in the Family</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Statistics</b>	<b>p</b>
Family	Yes	63	3,20	0,69	t= -2,470	0,015
	No	87	3,54	0,91		
Friend	Yes	63	3,14	0,71	t= -3,033	0,003
	No	87	3,49	0,67		
Total	Yes	63	3,17	0,61	t= -3,563	0,000
	No	87	3,51	0,55		

### **The Juveniles/Youngsters' Substance Use Characteristics and Perceived Social Support Status**

When the findings about the juveniles/youngsters' use of drugs were examined, it was seen that they generally (56.6%) used cannabis; the drug was used at least three times (55.3%); great majority of them (68%) did not use other substances; the most frequently used as alternative was (32%) a synthetic drug called bonsai. It can be said that the majority (56%) of juveniles/youngsters began using substances due to their circle of friends, which was followed by personal reasons (30.3%) and familial reasons (13.8%).

**Table 4. Juveniles/Youngsters' Substance Abuse**

<b>Substance Types</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Cannabis	107	56,6
Ecstasy	44	23,3
Volatile Substances	13	6,9
Other*	25	13,2
Total	189	100,0

\*Bonsai, Jamaica, lcd, salvia

<b>Prevalence of Substance Abuse</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Never	41	27,3
At least once	26	17,3
More Than Three Times	83	55,3

<b>Reason of Substance Abuse</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Personal Reasons*	33	30,3
Familial Reasons	15	13,8
Circle of Friends	61	56,0
Total	109	100,0

Peer groups with their specific dynamics affect juveniles/youngsters' socialization and behavioral patterns, rationalize crime and lead them towards criminal behavior via having a pivotal role in their process of identity achievement, self-realization and belonging (Danış, 2014; Paterson & Dim, 1993; Ögel, 2014). Perceived social support, which is a key social network function has been significantly and negatively correlated with the severity of substance use and criminal involvement (Rhodes, 2014; Valente, 2003). Spending greater amounts of time with substance abusers has been associated with a greater risk of criminal engagement (Best et al. 2003). The increase of friend support according to the increase in drug use can be explained with the perception of friends as a social support system due to the

factors like acceptance into a group of friend and values, accessing and sharing the substance.

The most widely used substance among the juveniles/youngsters was cannabis and they used the substances more than three times a day. It can be said that cannabis is more common than other substances since it is cheaper and much easier to obtain. Many juveniles/youngsters believe that cannabis is natural, does not cause addiction and is less harmful than cigarette. It was seen that most of the juveniles/youngsters used no other substances other than synthetic proactive substances that became widespread in Turkey during recent years (Bonsai, Jamaican, etc.). Bonsai, a synthetic drug, became widespread especially due to its relatively low price compared to other drugs (heroin, cocaine etc.), easy accessibility and its ability to be shared among friends. The juveniles/youngsters' drug use vary between seven months to three years. The first months of drug use is when juveniles/youngsters get used to, enjoy and develop addiction to the substance.

**Table 5. The Juveniles/Youngsters' Perceived Social Support Scores by Their Substance Use Characteristics**

<b>Social Support Source</b>	<b>Substance Use Reason</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Statistics</b>	<b>p</b>
Family	Personal	33	3,54	,89	F=0,900	0,410
	Familial	15	3,17	,89		
	Friend	61	3,41	,88		
	Total	109	3,41	,88		
Friend	Personal	33	3,65	,53	F=2,782	0,066
	Familial	15	3,21	,82		
	Friend	61	3,36	,71		
	Total	109	3,43	,69		
Total	Personal	33	3,60	,44	F=3,078	0,050
	Familial	15	3,19	,68		
	Friend	61	3,38	,60		
	Total	109	3,42	,58		
<b>Social Support Source</b>		<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>p</b>	
Duration of substance use		109	20,86	21,2		
Family		109	3,39	,84	0,367	
Friend		109	3,34	,71	0,094	
Total		109	3,36	,61	0,078	

The juveniles/youngsters, whose reasons for using drugs were personal, had higher social support scores compared to the ones having familial reasons and reasons

related to friends. There was no statistically significant relation between substance use prevalence and social support from families ( $F = 0.141$ ,  $P > 0.05$ ), and overall social support ( $F = 1.942$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), while there was a statistically significant difference between social support from friends ( $F = 3.055$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) and substance use prevalence. As the juveniles/youngsters' substance use prevalence increased, social support scores from friends also increased. There was no statistically significant difference between the juveniles/youngsters' duration of substance use and social support received from friends and family, and overall social support. The increase of friend support according to the increase in drug use can be explained with the perception of friends as a social support system due to the factors like acceptance into a group of friend and values, accessing and sharing the substance.

### **The Juveniles/Youngsters' Probation Process and Their Perceived Social Support Status**

When the findings about the juveniles/youngsters' probation process are considered, it was seen that most of them (62%) reported that they received support in the probation process; they received mostly (79.6%) psycho-social support and were informed about substance use and addiction issues; the juveniles/youngsters, who stated providing no benefit from probation (39.3%), also stated that the activities were not necessary. The majority of the juveniles/youngsters (57.3%) participated in group activities, while no interviews took place with the majority of their families (80.7%). A significant portion of the juveniles (60.7%) thought that probation was a successful practice.

Most of the juveniles/youngsters perceived the probation process as a means of receiving social support while some of them did not. This result can lead to an interpretation that juveniles/youngsters perceive probation liabilities as a burden and hence, they perceive no support. Most of juveniles/youngsters, who claimed to gain no benefit from the guidance services (individual interview; group sessions, seminars etc.) turned out to have negative views and beliefs about activities. It can be argued that the juveniles/youngsters' freedom on fulfillment of certain liabilities causes them to have dilemmas and causes them to define probation as a preferable option compared to prison. Most of juveniles/youngsters participated in group sessions. It was found out that most of juveniles/youngsters' family members were not interviewed while only few family members were interviewed. This may be

explained with the possibilities that juveniles/youngsters did not want their parents to be interviewed or family members did not want to be involved in interviews.

**Table 6. The Juveniles/Youngsters Perceived Social Support by Probation Process Characteristics**

<b>Social Support Source</b>	<b>Support Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Statistics</b>	<b>p</b>
Family	Financial support	2	2,75	,59	F=1,039	0,358
	Psycho-social support	74	3,19	,85		
	Emotional support	17	3,47	,94		
	Total	93	3,23	,87		
Friend	Financial support	2	2,83	,08	F=1,082	0,343
	Psycho-social support	74	3,39	,73		
	Emotional support	17	3,16	,84		
	Total	93	3,34	,75		
Total	Financial support	2	2,80	,28	F=0,620	0,54
	Psycho-social support	74	3,31	,62		
	Emotional support	17	3,29	,74		
	Total	93	3,29	,64		

<b>Social Support Resource</b>	<b>Guidance Utilization Status</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Statistics</b>	<b>p</b>
Family	Yes	108	3,41	0,87	t=0,344	0,732
	No	42	3,36	0,75		
Friend	Yes	108	3,34	0,76	t= -,140	0,889
	No	42	3,35	0,55		
Total	Yes	108	3,37	0,62	t= 0,092	0,927
	No	42	3,36	0,55		

<b>Social Support Resource</b>	<b>Interview with Family</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Statistics</b>	<b>p</b>
Family	Yes	29	3,26	0,81	t= -,963	0,337
	No	121	3,43	0,84		
Friend	Yes	29	2,94	0,82	t= -3,545	0,001
	No	121	3,44	0,64		
Total	Yes	29	3,07	0,68	t= - 3,02	0,003
	No	121	3,44	0,56		

It was seen that the juveniles/youngsters receiving psycho-social support had higher scores for social support from friends than the ones receiving economic and emotional support. The juveniles/youngsters utilizing guidance activities had higher average score for social support from their families; the juveniles/youngsters, whose

families had not been interviewed, had higher average scores received from family, friend and overall social support sub-scales than the ones whose families had been interviewed. Due to the implication of therapeutic services on the basis of compulsory participation, both the juveniles/youngsters and their families' anxiety level could increase. Therefore, despite the interviews with few family members, desired support might not be provided to the juveniles/youngsters.

**Table 7. Juveniles/Youngsters' Social Support**

<b>Family*</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1,00-1,99	8	5,3
2,00-2,99	36	24,0
3,00-3,99	51	34,0
4,00-5,00	55	36,7
<b>Friend**</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1,00-1,99	4	2,7
2,00-2,99	40	26,7
3,00-3,99	72	48,0
4,00-5,00	34	22,7
<b>Total SS***</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1,00-1,99	2	1,3
2,00-2,99	36	24,0
3,00-3,99	82	54,7
4,00-5,00	30	20,0
Total	150	100

Majority of juveniles/youngsters had moderate level of social support from families and friends and overall social support while social support from families and friend did not differ. Table 7 presents that most of the juveniles/youngsters see their friends as social support (48%) and it was seen that the social support from family and friends did not appear to differ from each other. It can be said that the juveniles did not benefit from the guidance activities sufficiently although they claimed that they benefited from them. And also, being in a legal process may have prevented them from openly disclose their experiences.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Social contexts, including families, school, education, work opportunities and prosocial peer groups provide critical supports to promote healthy development (Steinberg, Chung, and Little 2004). Social support has critical for rehabilitation and social inclusion of most youth who become involved in the juvenile justice system. This paper evaluated the juveniles/youngsters' perceived social support which is



conceptualized as a protective factor that buffers against criminality. According to the findings of our research, education level is a strong predictor of perceived social support. Convicts under the age of 18 are encouraged to continue their formal education in line with the decision to continue their education in Article 94 of the Regulation on Probation. Due to socio-economic reasons, it is seen that most of the young people do not continue their undergraduate education and work in a job. Low socio-economic status has a profound influence on the educational opportunities available to adolescents and on their chances of educational success. The obligation to continue education should be provided by a protocol with the Ministry of National Education, including the young people aged 19-25 with financial support and scholarship opportunities. In the research findings, it is seen that almost half of the youth have friends who have criminal records. There is also a significant relationship between substance use and the support of young people from friends. Probation intervention programs may be able to reduce substance use and criminogenic risks in juveniles/youngsters by strengthening the social support networks. However, psycho-education programs that are given in a didactic way will not be enough for them. Probation system should develop pro-social peer model intervention programs for young people to be able to replace the old group of friends and to meet new positive peer groups.

Due to the nature of the probation system, the client group can be defined as juveniles/youngsters carry some risks. Although juveniles/youngsters are free, they are restricted with various liabilities, causing anxiety, stress, resistance to change and unwillingness to participate the intervention programs. There is need for creating new intervention methods and programs that will break the resistance, provide motivation and ensure the wellbeing of juveniles/youngsters in line with objectives of the probation system. Strong relation or affective bond between juvenile probation officers and juvenile/youngster enables the probation to influence youth compliance through role modeling, persuasion, problem solving, or other necessary interpersonal means (Schwalbe & Maschi, 2011). Probation officers should practice to provide appropriate services for juveniles/youngsters' best interest in accordance with planned change process through multiple interventions (Uluğtekin, 2012).

As suggested by Bronfenbrenner (1986), a youth's development is largely influenced by many interrelated environmental systems including the family, peer

groups and community; thus, intervention must occur within and between these multiple systems. But, probation intervention programs do not have a structure that takes into account the social environment and social contexts of young people. With the person-in-environment perspective, the juveniles/youngsters' individual, personal and psycho-social characteristics, differences, family and close social circle structure and socio-economic status should be analyzed and risk factors and influence of social environment should be considered.

Probation programs are specific to children and adolescents and are not open to the participation of the family and social environment. Article 16 of the Regulation on Probation, working with families, schools and workplaces is among the duties of probation officers. Family interviews can be conducted three times in order to provide counseling and information about the juveniles' probation process but these interviews may be very limited and inadequate. This is due to the fact that young people are reached lawful age and there is no legal obligation to involve families in the process. The decision on planning and conducting structured education and improvement programs for the families of juveniles and youngsters should be added to the regulation on probation.

There is no family-specific intervention program on probation system in Turkey. Effective intervention programs in probation system have in common such as being community based, multidimensional and ensuring family participation. It is necessary to develop intervention programs that cover all family members with a systematic perspective. Group and parent counseling program is an important to assist family to gain awareness about their children's criminogenic risks and needs and facilitate the full potential of probation to effect positive changes among offending youth.

Considering that most of juveniles/youngsters' family unity was continuing, probation officers should include the families in the process and ensure the development of separate intervention programs for the families. Parental support and involvement (mechanism of change) in probation are vital resources that could promote youth participation and success in probation (Vidal and Woolard, 2017). Trainings should be carried out with the families about communicating, monitoring, supervising to their children, demonstrating motivation inspiring attitudes, coping skills and problem solving skills. Education, recreation and institutional programs should be developed to help young people learn how to engage in positive self appraisal, deal with conflict and control aggression. In order to prevent criminogenic risks, it is important

to ensure to juvenile/youngstres to continue the school with financial support, assist them to restructure their free time and to attend alternative sports and artistic activity programs.

However, not only probation system, local governments, police forces, narcotic police units and non-governmental organizations also should act in coordination against criminal activities, substance sale and use while developing comprehensive policies and projects. It is quite important to build network of volunteers from young individuals with drug use or criminal history, students interested in the area and social workers who can be role models for juveniles/youngsters. Master's and doctoral programs about probation field should be founded in related departments and academic studies should be carried out in coordination with the studies in the field. Considering the developing structure of probation services and social needs, foundation of General Directorate of Probation Services is necessary for systematizing, developing, coordinating and integrally submitting probation services. This analysis will be beneficial for developing theory and policy which enhance social support system of juveniles/youngsters on probation. There are much research and work to be done to better understand some outcomes of probation process for juveniles/youngsters. Future research can extend these findings through alternative research designs.

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