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Article Name	Examination of the Social Competence and Types of Competition of Preschool Children in terms of Different Early Childhood Education Programs

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#### Abstract

This research aims to examine the correlations between different early childhood education programs (Montessori, Waldorf, and Ministry of National Education (MNE)) with preschool children's social competence and types of competition. Beside this, the social competence, and types of competition of children in early childhood examined in terms of demographic variables. Also, the relation between the social competence and types of competition of children investigated. The sample of the study consists of 287 children, 48-72 months of age, who attend pre-primary education institutions. In the study, correlational survey models used. The data collection tools for the research were Personal Information Form, Social Competency and Behaviour Assessment-30 Scale-Teacher Form, and Preschool Competition Questionnaire. At the end of the research, it was seen that there is a significant correlation between different early childhood education programs (Montessori, Waldorf, and MNE) and the social competence and types of competition of preschool children. In the study, it was also determined that the social competence and types of competition of children differ depending on some demographic features of the children.

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**Research Article****Examination of the Social Competence and Types of Competition of Preschool Children in terms of Different Early Childhood Education Programs\***Merve ÖZÇELİK<sup>1</sup>  Özkan SAPSAĞLAM<sup>2</sup> **Abstract**

This research aims to examine the correlations between different early childhood education programs (Montessori, Waldorf, and Ministry of National Education (MNE)) with preschool children's social competence and types of competition. Beside this, the social competence, and types of competition of children in early childhood examined in terms of demographic variables. Also, the relation between the social competence and types of competition of children investigated. The sample of the study consists of 287 children, 48-72 months of age, who attend pre-primary education institutions. In the study, correlational survey models used. The data collection tools for the research were Personal Information Form, Social Competency and Behaviour Assessment-30 Scale-Teacher Form, and Preschool Competition Questionnaire. At the end of the research, it was seen that there is a significant correlation between different early childhood education programs (Montessori, Waldorf, and MNE) and the social competence and types of competition of preschool children. In the study, it was also determined that the social competence and types of competition of children differ depending on some demographic features of the children.

**Keywords:** Competition, Ministry of National Education Program, Montessori, social competence, Waldorf

**1. INTRODUCTION**

In the preschool period, the intellect, linguistic, physical, psychomotor, and socio-emotional development that will play an essential role in the child's later life are mainly completed during the preschool years, and the child's personality is shaped (Gerber, Wilks & Erdie-Lalena, 2010). Interactions, especially in early life, have a profound impact on a child's development. Children learn a lot between 0-72 months and during this period, the child's skills and abilities develop rapidly (Sevinç, 2005). Socio-emotional development shows a great progress, between the ages of 3-6. In this period, they show great improvement in terms of understanding their surroundings and establishing social relationships. Children are open to all kinds of learning and begin to explore their environment thanks to their curiosity (Kandır, Aral & Can, 2002).

The concept of socialization is the first step of social development. It includes a tendency to regulate one's behaviour to maintain relationships and get along with people (Damon, 2006). The socialization process of child starts in the family, and it continues to develop during preschool period (Moore et al., 2015). The preschool period is a process, in which the child interacts with those around him/her and begins to acquire social skills such as taking responsibility, sharing and self-control (Claessens, 2012). During this period, the child also develops his/her social competence through

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communication with his teachers and peers. Competencies such as initiating and maintaining communication, being popular among friends, considering others while getting something for themselves and empathy are evaluated within the concept of social competence (Rubin, Bukowski & Parker, 2006). Studies show that many factors are effective on children's social competence. These factors are individual's personality and temperament, family relations and social environment (school), cognitive skills, gender, peers, teacher attitude, and preschool education affecting children's social competence (Bakkaloğlu, Eryılmaz & Sapsağlam, 2019).

The socialization process includes processes such as the acquisition and development of social skills, adapting to society and making friends, as well as problem situations and conflicts between individuals (Uyanık-Balat, Akman & Arslan-Çiftçi, 2017). In addition to positive experiences such as friendship, sympathy, sharing and helping each other; rivalries, fights, and conflicts become inevitable for the child with starting school (Beyazkürk, Anliak & Dinçer, 2007). When the competitive situations children experience in the socialization process were examined, it was seen that the child was exposed conflict situations, first at home and then in other social environments like school (Özensel, 2004). Tsiakara and Digelidis (2014) defined competitive behaviours as behaviours aimed at outperforming others and doing something better than others.

Although competition and competitive behaviours are thought to be seen mostly in older ages, it is determined that they are also common in preschool children (Tsiakara & Digelidis, 2014). While some researchers (Sheridan & Williams, 2011) see competition as a detrimental factor to the learning environment, some researchers, on the contrary, have revealed that competition is an important factor that increases learning motivation and motivates learning (Bulut, 2020; Sheridan & Williams, 2011). When the studies conducted in the following years are examined, it has been determined that competition seen in early childhood can be seen in three forms; "other-referenced competition", "task-oriented competition" and "maintenance of dominance hierarchy" (Paquette et al., 2013; Tsiakara & Digelidis, 2014). The impact of competition on children is determined by the style and scope of competition in early life. While constructive and adequate competition is important to a child's development and is required for him to focus on and complete a task, destructive and overly competitive behaviour can harm a child's social relationships (Sönmez, 2016). It seems that there is relation between social relations and competitiveness. Considering the studies and research on the competitive behaviour of children in the preschool period, it can be said that the child's age, gender, relationship with peers, and education is effective on the child's competitive behaviour (Watanabe & Yuzawa, 2013).

It is obvious that early childhood education (ECE) is crucial for both social competence and competitive behaviours of children (Fettig et al., 2022). However, early childhood education is not provided within a single program or curriculum. There are different perspectives on early childhood education and different philosophical foundations in this field (Saracho & Evans, 2021). Different ideas and approaches put forward by the needs, development and priorities of the child have brought along different early childhood education programs (Tepeli & Yılmaz, 2012). When all of these are considered, it is thought that there is an effect of different early childhood education programs on children's social competence and competitive behaviours.

In this study, the social competence, and types of competition of children attending pre-school education institutions where the Montessori Program, the Waldorf Program and the MNE Preschool Education Programs are applied are compared. The Montessori Program is based on academic knowledge and is a program in which the academic progress of children is important (Lillard & Else-Quest, 2006). Waldorf Program does not include any activities based on academic knowledge (Astley & Jacson, 2000). In the Montessori Program, it is thought that academic progress of children encourages children's competitiveness. MNE Program is the official program of Turkey, and this program is applied in all state preschools, for this reason it took place in our study. Beside this, there

are some studies about children' social skills and social competence who take education at the Montessori Program (Aral et al., 2015) and the Waldorf Program (Oberman, 2007). Considering all these, these three programs were selected for the study.

Montessori education is a type of education in which mixed-age children interact with the Montessori materials individually or in groups (Kayılı & Arı, 2011). This program is based on real-life experiences as well as age-related traits. Individual children's interests play a significant role in its ideology (Sarıkaya, 2018). Individual interests of children occupy an important place in its philosophy. In Montessori classrooms, there is only one material from each, and in this way the child learns to wait and be patient. By doing some work with one or more friends, he develops the skills of communication, helping, and working in cooperation with his friends (Cosgrove & Ballou, 2006).

Waldorf education is a method in which children understand themselves and the world and recognize different cultures instead of being a member of a certain culture or nation and grow up as "citizens of the world". Children play games by establishing social relationships with their friends and they receive education with mixed age groups in an atmosphere like the family environment without being exposed to any competitive pressure (Astley & Jacson, 2000; Darga, 2021). Tales and plays belonging to different cultures used in the activities also contribute to the growth of children as world citizens (Schmitt-Stegman, 1997).

The Ministry of National Education early childhood program (2013) was developed to improve the social, emotional, motor, language, and cognitive skills of preschool children, to enable them to speak Turkish correctly and beautifully, to give children self-care skills and to prepare the child for primary school. There are learning centers such as science, book, block, art, and music centers MNE classrooms. During free play times, children turn to the learning center they are interested in and play games with the materials there, helping in small groups and interacting with each other. At these classes, children take education with children of the same age group (MNE, 2013).

The world in which children exist tells them to be more competitive than in past decades. However, it is very important what type of competition it is. It may affect them positively or there may be a competition that negatively affects their social relations. On the other hand, problems such as the ever-increasing screen use, urbanization and security concerns cause children to be more isolated from society and social areas. Schools are important institutions that can provide children with social skills development and positive competitive environments. The limited number of studies comparing different preschool education programs and the fact that the social competence and type of competition of children of different age groups who were educated in these three pre-school education programs (Montessori, Waldorf, MNE) in our country and abroad were not investigated before. Considering all these factors together, it is thought that this research is important and provides important data on children's competitiveness styles-levels and social competencies in the context of early childhood education programs.

### **1.1. Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of the research was to examine the social competence and types of competition of children in terms of early childhood education programs. It is important to examine these issues in the context of different early childhood education programs in a world where competition is increasing, and children are becoming increasingly lonely. In this age when children are lonely, determining their social skills and competitiveness is very valuable in terms of producing solutions. Because early childhood education provides children with the opportunity to develop their social skills. At the same time, children can compete with their friends in different ways in classroom. In this sense, this research attempts to examines children's social competencies and types of competition in different early childhood programs. It also reveals the relationship between children's social competencies and types of competition.

According to the objective of the research the following research questions were tested:

1. Is there a correlation between different early childhood education programs (Montessori, Waldorf, MNE) with social competence of 48-72 months old preschool children?
2. Is there a correlation between different early childhood education programs (Montessori, Waldorf, MNE) with type of competition of 48-72 months old preschool children?
3. Is there a correlation between social competence with demographic characteristics (gender and age) of preschool children?
4. Is there a correlation between the types of competition with demographic characteristics (gender and age) of preschool children?
5. Is there a correlation between the types of competition with social competence of 48-72 months old preschool children?

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Research Design

The research was carried out with a correlational survey model, one of the quantitative research methods. The correlational survey model used in research that aims to determine the relationship between two or more variables or the existence and degree of change (Creswell & Garret, 2008). The relationship between the children's social competence and types of competition and the early childhood education program they received education was examined. Quantitative data collected with scales filled by preschool teachers.

### 2.2. Participants

The population of this research consists of 48-72-month-old preschool children attending different preschool education institutions in İstanbul. In this study, the sample of the research was determined by the criteria sampling method, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods (Creswell & Garret, 2008; Tanrıöğen, 2012). The sample group was formed by taking the criterion that the children to be included in the sample group had received education in one of the Montessori, MNE and Waldorf early childhood education programs during at least one education period. There were also other criteria while choosing schools. Schools that implement the Montessori Program, whose data was collected within the scope of the research, are needed to be accredited by AMS (American Montessori Society) and the teachers in these schools are required to have AMS Montessori education. The schools that implement the Waldorf Program are accredited by the Friends of the Art of Education Association, implementing the International Waldorf early childhood education program. The schools where the MNE pre-school education program is applied are the schools that operate under the Ministry of National Education and where the official pre-school education program is applied.

In study, 300 data collection tools were distributed to collect research data, but 13 of them were not included in the study because they were filled in incorrectly or incompletely. Therefore, the research was conducted with 287 children aged 48-72 months who were educated in early childhood education classes in 8 different preschools during the 2018-2019 academic year.

In the study, the number of children receiving education in the Montessori Program, Waldorf Program and Ministry of National Education is shown in Table 1. Table 2 shows the gender distribution of children.

**Table 1. Distribution of preschool education programs of children participating in the study**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Total Percentage
<b>Montessori</b>	115	40,1	40,1	40,1
<b>Waldorf</b>	81	28,2	28,2	68,3
<b>MNE</b>	91	31,7	31,7	100,0
<b>Toplam</b>	287	100,0	100,0	

**Table 2. The demographic characteristics of the children**

	Gender			Age		
	Girls	Boys	Total	48-60 months old	60-72 months old	Total
N	145	142	287	144	143	287
%	50,5	49,5	100	50,2	49,8	100

### 2.3. Instruments

#### 2.3.1. Personal Information Form

This form developed by researchers to determine the personal characteristics of children (age, gender, and preschool education period).

#### 2.3.2. The Preschool Competition Questionnaire

The scale was developed by [Paquette Gagnon, Bouchard, Bigras and Schneider \(2013\)](#) to evaluate the competitive styles of 3-6 years old preschool children. On the scale, there are 17 items expressing the observable competitive behaviours of preschool children. The scale consists of three sub-dimensions which are other-referenced competition, task-oriented competition, and maintenance of dominance hierarchy. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients of the original scale for each dimension are .89, .75 and .74, respectively. The test-retest reliability coefficient was found as .92, .80 and .69 ( $p < .001$ ) ([Paquette Gagnon, Bouchard, Bigras & Schneider, 2013](#)). The Turkish adaptation of the Preschool Competition Questionnaire (PCQ) was made by [Uyanık-Balat, Akman and Arslan Çiftçi](#) in 2017. Also in this study, same sub-dimensions were found. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the sub-dimensions vary between 0.91 and 0.96, test-retest reliability coefficients vary between 0.85 and 0.95 ([Uyanık Balat, Akman & Arslan Çiftçi, 2017](#)). The scale is filled in by the teacher separately for each child, according to the grading method (1 = never, 2 = almost never, 3 = sometimes, 4 = generally, 5 = most of the time, 6 = always) by observing the child's behaviours.

#### 2.3.3. Social Competence and Behaviour Evaluation Teacher Form Scale

Social Competence and Behaviour Evaluation-30 (SCBE-30) Scale was developed by [La Freniere and Dumas](#) in 1996. The scale evaluates THE social competence and behaviour of 3–6-years-old children. This scale has two forms which are the parent form and the teacher form. In this study researchers used to teacher form and teachers filled in scales based on their observations. Cronbach alpha coefficient of the scale is between .79 and .91 and the inter-rater reliability coefficient is between .72 and .89. The correlation coefficient for test–retest reliability assessment applied two weeks apart is between .78 and .86 and correlation coefficient for test–retest reliability assessment applied six months apart is between .59 and .70 ([LaFreniere, 1996](#)). The Turkish adaptation of the SCBE-30 Scale was conducted by [Çorapçı, Aksan, Arslan Yalçın and Yağmurlu](#) in 2010. The scale has three sub-dimensions which are social competence, anger-aggression, and anxiety-withdrawal. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficients for social competence, anger-aggression, and anxiety-withdrawal subscales were found as .88, .87, and .84, respectively. Item-total correlation coefficients for each subscale were found to be .41 and above ([Çorapçı et al., 2010](#)).

### 2.4. Procedure

Firstly, ethical approval was sought both from the university that the researchers are associated and İstanbul provincial directorate of national education. The schools that fit the criteria were contacted and their permission was obtained for the research. Teachers volunteered and were given instructions on how to fill out the scales. Teachers filled Personal Information Form, The Preschool Competition Questionnaire, and Social Competence and Behaviour Evaluation Teacher Form Scale for each child based on their observations and children's personal development files.

While research data was collected, families were informed about the study and their permission was taken. The scales were kept anonymous for ethical reasons and given numbers for each student. Teachers also informed that they could not respond and opt out of the data collection process when they wanted to. Ethical approval was sought both from the university that the researchers are associated with and the İstanbul provincial directorate of national education.

## 2.5. Data Analysis

Data acquired from the study were analysed using SPSS 22.0 (The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software. When the sample size is larger than 50, Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) Test is applied (Büyüköztürk, 2013: 41). In this study, Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z-test was used as the sample group was larger than 50, and it was seen that the data did not normally distribute. Kruskal Wallis Variance-test was conducted to compare the types of competition and social competence of children who were trained in different early childhood education programs. Spearman Correlation-test was used to examine the relationship between the sub-dimensions of the Preschool Competition Questionnaire and the Social Competence and Behaviour Evaluation-30 (SCBE-30) Scale. In addition, the Mann Witney-*U*-test was applied to examine the social competence and types of competition of children in terms of demographic variables.

## 3. FINDINGS

Firstly, Kruskal Wallis Variance-test was performed to understand whether the scores of the children from the subdimensions of study differ according to the type of preschool education program they received. Then, Mann Whitney-*U* test, which was preferred in paired comparisons, was used to determine which groups had a significant difference.

Table 3 shows that depending on the preschool education program the children receive, it has been observed that the scores differed significantly in the subscales of social competence ( $\chi^2 = 23,017$ ;  $sd = 2$ ;  $p < .05$ ), and anxiety-withdrawal ( $\chi^2 = 8,426$ ;  $sd = 2$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Also, it was found that the anxiety-introversion scores of the children who were educated according to the MNE Preschool Education Program were significantly higher than the children who were educated according to the Waldorf Program ( $U=2758,000$ ;  $z=-2,849$ ;  $p = ,004$ ).

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**Table 3. Kruskal Wallis test results regarding the examination of children's scores from social competency and behaviour evaluation-30 (SCBE) sub-dimensions according to the variable of preschool education program**

Sub-dimensions	Programmes	n	Mean	sd	$\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	Difference between groups
Social competence	Montessori	115	167,11	2	23,017	,000	1-3
	Waldorf	81	147,65				
	MNE	91	111,54				
Anger-aggression	Montessori	115	140,63	2	5,020	,081	
	Waldorf	81	160,78				
	MNE	91	133,31				
Anxiety-withdrawal	Montessori	115	142,26	2	8,426	,015	2-3
	Waldorf	81	125,81				
	MNE	91	162,38				

1-Montessori Program 2-Waldorf Program 3- MNE Program

Among the children participating in the study, the level of other-referenced competition of the children who received education according to the Montessori Education Program is significantly higher than the children who received education according to the Waldorf Education Program ( $U = 3596.500$ ;  $z = -2.716$ ;  $p = ,007$ ). In the maintenance of dominance hierarchy sub-dimension scores, the

children who received education according to the Montessori Education Program ( $U = 3756,000$ ;  $z = -2,316$ ;  $p = ,021$ ), was found to be significantly higher than the children who received education according to Waldorf and MNE Preschool Program ( $U = 4116,500$ ;  $z = -2,643$ ;  $p = ,008$ ) (Table 4).

**Table 4. Kruskal Wallis test results regarding the examination of children's scores from preschool competitiveness scale (PCQ) sub-dimensions according to the variable of preschool education program**

Sub-dimensions	Programmes	n	Mean	sd	$\chi^2$	p	Difference between groups
Other-referenced competition	Montessori	115	158,04	2	7,104	,029	1-2
	Waldorf	81	126,14				
	MNE	91	142,15				
Task-oriented competition	Montessori	115	146,92	2	1,200	,549	
	Waldorf	81	148,62				
	MNE	91	136,20				
Maintenance of dominance Hierarchy	Montessori	115	161,54	2	8,657	,013	1-2
	Waldorf	81	132,02				
	MNE	91	132,49				1-3

1-Montessori Program 2-Waldorf Program 3- MNE Program

As can be seen Table 5, it was determined that the scores obtained by children in the sub-dimensions of other-referenced competition ( $U = 8618,000$ ;  $p < .05$ ), maintenance of dominance hierarchy ( $U = 7540,500$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and anger-aggression ( $U = 8825,000$ ;  $p < .05$ ) differ significantly in favour of boys.

**Table 5. Mann Witney-U test results on examination of children scores from preschool competitiveness scale and social competency and behaviour evaluation-30 depending on gender variable.**

Sub-dimensions	Gender	n	Mean ranks	Sum of ranks	U	p
Other-referenced Competition	Girl	145	132,43	19203,00	8618,000	,017
	Boy	142	155,81	22125,00		
Task-oriented Competition	Girl	145	137,13	19884,50	9299,500	,156
	Boy	142	151,01	21443,50		
Maintenance of dominance Hierarchy	Girl	145	125,00	18125,50	7540,500	,000
	Boy	142	163,40	23202,50		
Social Competence	Girl	145	141,69	20545,50	9960,500	,634
	Boy	142	146,36	20782,50		
Anger-aggression	Girl	145	133,86	19410,00	8825,000	,036
	Boy	142	154,35	21918,00		
Anxiety-withdrawal	Girl	145	150,82	21869,00	9306,000	,159
	Boy	142	137,04	19459,00		

According to Table 6, there are significant differences between the subscale scores of 60-72 months old children and 48-60 months old children. 60-72 months old children have higher score on competition focused on others ( $U = 8440,000$ ;  $p < .05$ ) task-oriented competition ( $U = 7168,000$ ;  $p < .05$ ), maintenance of dominance hierarchy ( $U = 6773,000$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and social competence ( $U = 6279,500$ ;  $p < .05$ ) sub-dimensions than 48-60 months old children. In the anxiety- withdrawal sub-dimension, it was observed that 48-60-month-old children have higher scores than 60-72-month-old children.

**Table 6. Mann Witney-U test results on examination of children scores from preschool Competitiveness Scale and Social Competency and Behaviour Evaluation-30 depending on age variable.**

Sub-dimensions	Age	n	Mean ranks	Sum of ranks	U	p
Other-referenced Competition	48-60 months	144	131,11	18880,00	8440,000	,008
	60-72 months	143	156,98	22448,00		
Task-oriented Competition	48-60 months	144	122,28	17608,00	7168,000	,000
	60-72 months	143	165,87	23720,00		
Maintenance of Dominance Hierarchy	48-60 months	144	119,53	17213,00	6773,000	,000
	60-72 months	143	168,64	24115,00		
Social Competence	48-60 months	144	141,69	20545,50	6279,500	,000
	60-72 months	143	146,36	20782,50		
Anger-aggression	48-60 months	144	133,86	19410,00	10001,500	,675
	60-72 months	143	154,35	21918,00		
Anxiety-withdrawal	48-60 months	144	150,82	21869,00	7995,500	,001
	60-72 months	143	137,04	19459,00		

As can be seen in Table 7, there was no significant relationship between other-referenced competition and task-oriented competition. A positive and significant relationship was found between other-referenced competition and maintenance of dominance hierarchy ( $r= 0,495$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). No significant relationship was found between other-referenced competition and social competence. A positive and significant relationship was found between other-referenced competition and anger-aggression. ( $r= 0,582$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). A positive and significant relationship was found between task-oriented competition and maintenance of dominance hierarchy ( $r= 0,495$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). There was positive and significant relationship between task-oriented competition and social competence ( $r= 0,719$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). A negative and significant relationship was found between task-oriented competition and anger-aggression ( $r=-0,372$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). A negative and significant relationship was found between task-oriented competition and anxiety-withdrawal ( $r=-0,359$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). A positive and meaningful relationship was found between the maintenance of dominance hierarchy and social competence ( $r= 0,359$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). A positive and meaningful relationship was found between the maintenance of dominance hierarchy and anger-aggression ( $r=0,145$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). A negative and meaningful relationship was found between the maintenance of dominance hierarchy and anxiety-withdrawal ( $r=-0,319$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). A negative and meaningful relationship was found between social competence and anger-aggression ( $r=-0,372$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). A negative and meaningful relationship was found between social competence and "anxiety-withdrawal and ( $r=-0,348$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). A positive and meaningful relationship was found between anger-aggression and anxiety-withdrawal ( $r=-0,297$ ;  $p<0.01$ ).

**Table 7. Spearman correlation analysis results on the relationship between children's scores from the sub-dimensions of the Preschool Competitiveness Scale and Social Competency and Behaviour Evaluation-30s.**

Sub-dimensions	1	2	3	4	5	6
Other-referenced Competition	1					
Task-oriented Competition	-,035	1				
Maintenance of Dominance Hierarchy	,495**	,430**	1			
Social Competence	-,084	,719**	,359**	1		
Anger-aggression	,582**	-,372**	,145*	-,372**	1	
Anxiety-withdrawal	,000	-,359**	-,319**	-,348**	,297**	1

1. Other-referenced Competition 2. Task-oriented Competition 3. Maintenance of Dominance Hierarchy  
4. Social Competence 5. Anger-aggression 6. Anxiety-withdrawal

#### 4. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to examine the correlations between different early childhood education programs with preschool children's social competence and types of competition. It has been observed that the type of preschool education that children receive influences their social competence and competitiveness. Study findings showed that the Montessori Program supports social competence more than other programs. In Montessori preschool classes, children between the ages of 3-6 get education together and older age group children teach what they know by guiding their young friends. This situation provides the opportunity to strengthen communication between children and to develop their social skills for both children in the older age group and younger age group (Edwards, Blaise & Hammer, 2009). The existence of a circle time in the Montessori Program, supports children in terms of social competence in expressing their own feelings and thoughts. They try to solve their problems by going to the "Peace Table" and being a guide by the teacher. The Montessori Program allows children to share their ideas and explore social roles and skills and it improves children's social competence and behaviour (Aral et al., 2015).

According to the research findings, it can be said that the children who are educated in the MNE Program experience more anxiety withdrawal than the children educated in other programs. The reason for this may be that children do not engage in activities in mixed age groups and with their peers in small groups, or that activities that encourage them to express themselves and develop their social skills through practices such as circle time are not carried out sufficiently.

The Montessori Program has a philosophy that takes care of children individually and is based on the progress of children at an individual pace without entering the race and competition environment (Durakoğlu, 2010). However, according to the results of the research, it was seen that the competition style focused on others, which the child showed with the desire to be better, was higher in children who received the Montessori education. Otherwise, it seems that the Waldorf Program do not support competition between children. When the literature is examined, it is thought that the Montessori Program having more academic activities than the Waldorf Program. In Montessori classes, new materials are introduced in a certain order. Children may be competing to be able to do the work of their friends. There is some research that shows academical process and desire to excel support competitiveness of children (Malkoç & Erginsoy, 2008). Also, the variables not included in the study, such as the parental attitudes, may be effective in the emergence of this situation. Even though this study does not include parents, parental attitude may have also been effective in this result (Özensel, 2004).

In this study, while there was no gender-related change in terms of social competence, it was observed that boys have been found to be more competitive than girls. Boys displayed more aggressive behaviour than girls. Gender roles and cultural parenting styles have been influential on this (Tsiakara & Digelidis, 2014). In the competition sub-dimensions, it was discovered that children aged 60-72 months have a higher average than children aged 48-60 months. It is reasonable to conclude that older children are more competitive than younger children based on this knowledge. This may stem from the reason that very young children have difficulty understanding and focusing on multiple things. Children in the younger age group may not only focus on playing the game, but also cannot develop strategies to compete with them by thinking about their opponents. Students in the age group of 5 can focus on playing and defeating their opponents at the same time (Priewasser, Roessler & Perner, 2013).

It has been determined that older children have higher social competence and less introverted behaviours than younger children. As children get older in the preschool period, their language skills develop, and they can communicate better with the people around them. Children's communication

with other people and establishing good relationships also positively affects their social competence. The fact that family members communicate and share more with the child as the child grows also positively affects the social competence of the child (Rispoli et al, 2013).

Study shows that children with high social competence are also high task-oriented competition and maintenance of dominance hierarchy. When children who have developed social skills and have good relationships with others can be leader and maintain his/her dominance in a group (Stichter et al., 2007). Also, children who have improved social competence are responsible and they complete their task and jobs carefully (Denham et al., 2011). Therefore, it is an expected result that there is a significant relationship between social competence and these types of competitions. In particular, it is desirable that children have the task-oriented competition style. This competition will move the child forward both socially and academically.

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