



# Effect of Expression-Based Group Counseling Through Art Activities on Adolescents' Self-Efficacy

*Sanat Etkinliklerine Dayalı Dışavurum Temelli Grupla Psikolojik Danışmanın Ergenlerin Öz-Yeterliklerine Etkisi*

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to examine the effect of expression-based group counseling through art activities on adolescents' self-efficacy. A total of 16 male students aged 14-15 years, 8 in the experimental group and 8 in the control group, participated in the study. A partially mixed simultaneous equal-status design, one of the mixed design models, was used in the study. In the quantitative dimension of the study, the Self-Efficacy Scale for Children was administered to collect data. In the qualitative dimension of the study, the researcher's observations were utilized. According to the results of the study, it was concluded that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group in favor of the post-test and that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups. Therefore, expression-based group counseling can be considered to be effective in increasing adolescents' self-efficacy.

**Keywords:** Expression, art activities, group counseling, adolescence, self-efficacy

## ÖZ

Bu araştırmada sanat etkinliklerine dayalı dışavurum temelli grupla psikolojik danışmanın ergenlerin öz-yeterliklerine etkisinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Çalışmaya 8 kişi deney 8 kişi kontrol grubu olmak üzere yaşları 14-15 yaşlar olarak değişen toplam 16 erkek öğrenci katılmıştır. Araştırmada karma desen modellerinden kısmen karma eşzamanlı eşit statülü tasarım kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın nicel boyutunda verilerin toplanmasında Çocuklar İçin Öz-yeterlik Ölçeği'nden yararlanılmıştır. Araştırmanın nitel boyutunda ise araştırmacının gözlemlerinden yararlanılmıştır. Araştırmanın sonucunda deney grubunun ön test ve son test puanları arasında son test lehine anlamlı fark olduğu ve deney ile kontrol grupları arasında da anlamlı fark olduğunu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Dolayısıyla dışavurum temelli grupla psikolojik danışmanın ergenlerin öz-yeterliklerini arttırmada etkili olduğu ifade edilebilir.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Dışavurum, sanat etkinlikleri, grupla psikolojik danışma, ergenlik, öz-yeterlik

## Introduction

Self-efficacy is defined as a person's belief in their ability to accomplish a task while doing so (Ermiş 2019).. Four sources enable the development of self-efficacy beliefs: verbal persuasion, physiological-emotional states, and past and indirect experiences (Bandura 1978). The beliefs of self-efficacy affect individuals' feelings, thoughts, and ways of believing in themselves, and the ability of an individual to take appropriate steps to perform a job and their belief in themselves to do that job is viewed as a sign of self-efficacy (Ermiş 2019). Self-efficacy helps to create conditions in the form of investing time in the work that individuals will do with great motivation and effort to accomplish the work they are to perform (Akkoyunlu and Orhan 2003). Similarly, people with firm self-efficacy beliefs express their thoughts about successfully achieving the results (Çetinkaya 2019). Supporting this finding, Zimmerman et al. (1992) concluded in a study that students' perceived self-efficacy regarding their academic achievement affects their academic goals and achievements.

Individuals' self-efficacy beliefs constitute an important part of their motivation and behavior and shape actions that can change their lives (Arseven 2016). Likewise, art is also used as a motivational tool for success. Art is reported to help individuals see life from different perspectives and transform their moods positively by increasing the inner power of the individual in the expression phase with its expressive side that meets the needs of individuals, such as self-expression, and in the application phase with its actional side (Bostancıoğlu and

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Kahraman 2017). Aydemir (2011) states that art is a need for people and is expressed as a process that nourishes and replenishes people psychologically, mentally, and emotionally.

Art therapy is a form of expression-based therapy using artistic materials (Demir 2018). Visual art therapy can utilize techniques such as drawing, coloring, painting, collage, masks, and puppetry (Kar 2011). Degges-White (2019) indicates that the main expressive methods used in counseling are visual arts, music, dance/movement, drama, and creative writing, and the intermodal method, in which various art activities in these methods are used together. Art therapy can be used in people of all age groups and implemented in fields such as education, rehabilitation, and treatment (Aydemir 2011). Art therapy is stated to have two primary purposes: uncovering feelings and thoughts driven into the subconscious and providing clients with insight into maladaptive behavior patterns that arise from the subconscious (Kar and Toros 2015). According to Çelikbaş (2019), art therapy helps clients express their inner experiences, whereas Demir and Yıldırım (2017) state that art therapy can help individuals improve their self-awareness and conflict resolution skills. Similarly, according to Bal and Tuna (2021), art therapy directs communication to provide self-awareness.

Art therapy sessions consist of three stages in individual and group counseling practices: warm-up exercises, art-related practice, and sharing in a circle (Göktepe 2015). In the first stage, infrastructure is prepared for artistic creation by using warm-up exercises, and an inward turn is anticipated. In the second stage, art-related practices are carried out by giving instructions. In the last stage, meaning, interpretation, and internalization of the art product that emerged in the second stage are carried out by gathering in a circle. In the present study, group counseling sessions based on art practices were created to improve self-efficacy in adolescents by utilizing art practices.

Creative art therapy processes can occur in the context of the therapeutic relationship to support individuals in all age groups in all aspects, such as physical, cognitive, psychosocial, and mental health, and to help them recover (Bostancıoğlu and Kahraman 2017). In the same way, art therapy enables the expression and realization of emotions through art. Paints replace words, and adolescents can express themselves in a better way by replacing words with art materials and realizing emotions through clay, painting, dance, and stories (Genç and Aslan 2019). The related literature studied the effects of art therapy on various psychiatric and physical patient groups and adolescents. For example, in some studies, the effects of art therapy on symptom profile, insight, and social functioning, positive and negative symptoms and alexithymia level, and personal and social skills in patients with schizophrenia (Sarandöl et al. 2013, Günay 2017, Ataseven 2018), the effect on the quality of life of children with cancer (Özcan 2012), the effect of art therapy method applied to older people with dementia on cognitive status (Bulduk et al. 2017) and the effect on body perception, happiness levels, the tendency to express emotions, difficulty in regulating emotions, and psychiatric symptoms in adolescents (Tunç 2007, Karataş 2016) have been searched. Since the number of studies based on artistic activities for adolescents is limited, this study aims to conduct a study based on artistic practices in adolescents.

Given the studies on the concept of self-efficacy with adolescents, these researches are predominantly correlational studies. In this scope, there are studies on the relationship between self-efficacy and the concepts of psychological resilience (Arslan and Balkıs 2016), psychological symptoms (Telef and Karaca 2011), self-concept (Altun and Yazıcı 2012), problem-solving skills (Gürten 2011), subjective well-being (Telef and Ergün 2013), self-perception (Koçer 2014), perfectionist self-presentation (Bingöl 2018), irrational beliefs (Alçay 2015) and social support (Chang et al. 2018). As for experimental studies, there is research on the effect of solution-focused therapy on adolescents' self-efficacy (Bingöl 2015, Cepukiene et al. 2018). According to another experimental study, the effect of group work based on social cognitive learning theory on the career exploration self-efficacy of university students was investigated (Sarı 2014). Therefore, owing to the limited number of experimental studies on increasing adolescents' self-efficacy, this study aimed to investigate the effect of expression-based group counseling with art activities on adolescents' self-efficacy. The hypotheses of this study are "after the implementation of the program, there will be a significant difference between the posttest self-efficacy scores of the members in the experimental group and the posttest self-efficacy scores of the members in the control group in favor of the experimental group," and "after the implementation of the program, there will be a significant difference between the pretest self-efficacy scores and posttest self-efficacy scores of the members in the experimental group in favor of the posttest."

## Method

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### Research Model

The research model is a partially mixed simultaneous equal-status design, and this design includes

simultaneously applied research in which quantitative and qualitative components consisting of two stages have equal weight (Baki and Gökçek 2012). Since qualitative and quantitative data were used simultaneously but independently to examine the same event in this research, the rationale of this research can be stated as "Triangulation" (Greene et al. 1989, Giannakaki 2005, cited in Baki and Gökçek 2012). While the "Self-Efficacy Scale for Children" was used in the quantitative dimension of this study, "observation" technique was utilized in the qualitative dimension. The pretest-posttest control group experimental design used in the quantitative part of the study is shown in Table 1.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Pre test</b>	<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Post-test</b>
Study	SESC	Expression-based group counseling program through art activities	SESC
Control	SESC	----	SESC

SESC: Self-efficacy Scale for Children

## Study Group

The study group of the research consists of students studying in the 9th grade in 2018-2019 in a public high school in Adapazarı district of Sakarya province. A total of 16 male students aged 14-15 years, 8 of whom were in the experimental group and 8 in the control group, participated in the study. An informed consent form was obtained from the participants and permission was obtained from the relevant institutions for the study. Since the school where the study was conducted is predominantly composed of male students (male=1200, female=1212) and there are only male students in the 9th grade, the participants consisted of male students. Since the participants were in the transition period from middle school to high school in the 9th grade, there would be a greater need to develop students' self-efficacy, and as a result of taking into account the opinions of the teachers and the school administration, it was decided to select students studying in the 9th grade. While determining the participants, 8 participants each were included in the experimental and control groups through randomization among the individuals who scored below the arithmetic mean (mean= 65.88, SD= 11.31) as a result of the Self-Efficacy Scale for Children scores and participated in the study voluntarily. The exclusion criteria of the research group were individuals with special needs and individuals receiving psychiatric treatment, and the inclusion criteria were determined as individuals who were at normal level, needed to develop self-efficacy skills, and volunteered to participate in the study.

## Experimental Procedure

### *Expression-Based Group Counseling Program Through Art Activities*

The practice was implemented in a secondary education institution in Adapazarı district of Sakarya in March, April and May in the 2018-2019 academic year. The expression-based group counseling sessions using artistic practices as a tool to facilitate expression with the participants in the experimental group were held by the first author, who is a doctoral student, under the supervision of the second author within the scope of the "Advanced Group Counseling Practice" course. During the implementation process of the program, tools such as paints, paper-pencil, drawing paper, fairy tales, and puppets were used. The expression-based group counseling program using art activities consisted of 10 sessions and the sessions were held once a week. Each session was structured for 90 minutes. All sessions comprised of warm-up exercise, art practice and assessment stages. Session outlines are briefly described as follows:

Session 1: The group rules are explained and the group and individual goals of the warm-up game are presented in order for the group members to get acquainted with each other. Information about the concept of self-efficacy is given.

Session 2: A fairy tale and puppet activity is performed to help members recognize themselves and find their strengths. Accordingly, the members are encouraged to find their own strengths by reading the tale of "the waterman and the crack test" (Lieberman 2015) and asked to talk about their strengths through puppets. In this sense, after reading the tale, the leader asks the members the question "what could this tale be telling?". After the exchange of the members, the leader emphasizes that the strengths and weaknesses should be considered as a whole based on the crack test metaphor in the tale and asks the members to think of a personality trait through which they see themselves as weak and strong. Then, they are asked to talk about their strengths and weaknesses through finger puppets, with the puppet on one finger representing the strengths and the other the weaknesses. Then, the members share what parts of the story and puppet works they were influenced by and the session ends.

Session 3: " Writing emotion names game" and "ceremony of emotions" activities to recognize and express emotions are carried out. Accordingly, in the " Writing emotion names game", a blank A4 paper is distributed to the participants and the members are asked to write the names of the emotions that come to their minds within two minutes on the paper, and when the time is over, each member reads the names of the emotions they have written. The leader determines which emotion is written the most and which is written the least, and the emotions are divided into positive and negative with the participants. In the "Ceremony of Emotions" activity, the members are asked to close their eyes and remember the moments when they experienced the emotions of "happiness, sadness, feeling strong, and anger" and express them with their gesture-mimics, one positive and one negative emotion. The members experience each emotion for 2-3 minutes and between each emotion, they are allowed to purify themselves from those emotions through breathing exercises (Acar 2010). In the assessment phase, participants' feelings and thoughts about the session are taken and the session is finalized.

Session 4: After the "emotion basket" game as a warm-up game, "best emotion expression" and "emotion dance" activities are carried out to improve the skills of recognizing and coping with negative emotions, and "emotion expression thermometer" is used for session assessment. Accordingly, in the emotion basket activity, the group forms a circle with a midwife in the center. Each group member is given emotion names, at least two of each emotion. The midwife is required to say an emotion name or say "emotion basket". If the midwife says an emotion, the participants with the emotion names should switch places, and if she says "emotion basket", the participants with all the emotion names should switch places. The midwife's task in this order is to get a place for herself (Çoban 2007). In the "best expression of emotion" activity, the leader asks the members to close their eyes and think of a moment when they experienced negative emotions (anger, fear, sadness). After finding that moment and everyone opens their eyes, the members are asked to walk around freely and experience that emotion. Then, the members act out these emotions silently in front of the other members respectively, and the other members try to identify this emotion (Altınay 2016). Finally, in the "emotion dance" activity, group members are asked to go to a moment when they feel anxious and fearful, where they can control these emotions and calm themselves, and find a body movement for this moment. Then, as the members move freely around the environment, they are asked to look for a memory they want to work with and when they find it, they are asked to stop by giving a movement that will show that memory. They are asked to think about what might happen before and after this movement and add these movements. After discovering the movements, they are told to set a rhythm to these movements and repeat these movements for a certain period of time (Yurtsever 2014). In the session assessment phase, the members are asked to express their feelings about this session by grading their feelings through the "emotion expression thermometer" form distributed to them and the session is ended.

Session 5: The "hay-he-hoy" warm-up game was used as a warm-up activity. "Reenactment" and "poetry" activities were implemented for the skills of initiating and maintaining communication in social relations. Accordingly, in the hay-he-hoy activity, members form a circle and members are told that they have a sword held in both hands. There are three basic positions in the game, and in the first position, a person shouts "hay" by hitting the sword vertically from top to bottom to the person with whom they make eye contact. In the second position, the person with whom eye contact is made swings his/her sword from bottom to top and shouts "ho" and in the last position, people to the left and right of this person slash their swords horizontally towards this person and shout "hey". After the warm-up game, the participants are asked the question "How do you see yourself in making friends with other individuals around you, chatting with an individual you do not know and maintaining your friendship?" (Tarhan 2013). As part of the enactment practice after the participants' answers, the participants are asked to act out the moments when they first met someone and when they had a conversation with someone they did not know. Finally, in the poetry activity, participants are asked to write a poem about their own strengths in social environments. In the assessment phase, the session is completed by receiving the feelings and thoughts of the participants.

Session 6: "Role playing" was used to maintain the relationship, cope with the anger and mockery of others, and protect one's rights. "Emotion balloons" were used for session assessment. Accordingly, the scenarios prepared for the specified topics were written on separate cards and the members were asked to pick these cards. The selected scenarios are acted out by the group members in pairs in order. The scenarios on the cards are as follows:

Relationship maintenance scenario: You encountered the person you met at the bus stop at the school cafeteria and you want to keep your friendship with this person because you enjoyed chatting with him/her.

Dealing with other people's anger scenario: You accidentally spilled tea on your friend's homework and your friend has to submit it by tomorrow.

Dealing with ridicule scenario: You weigh a little more or less than your ideal weight and your classmates tease you about it.

Defending your rights scenario: Your history exam went quite well, but you think your teacher might have made a mistake because your score was 20 points lower than you anticipated. Therefore, you want your exam paper to be rechecked (Şimşek 2011).

After the role-plays, the participants were asked to draw emotion balloons to evaluate the session and write the emotions with which they left the session.

Session 7: Questions for increasing academic awareness are asked and then the "be your own advocate" activity is organized. Accordingly, the participants are asked questions to increase their academic awareness, such as "how well they study even though there are other things that attract their attention, how well they prepare for the units they need to study for the exams, how much they can concentrate in the lessons, how successful they are in passing the exams". After the participants' answers to the questions are received, within the scope of the "be a supporter of yourself" activity, participants are told that they will design a form by thinking about their strengths, positive characteristics and skills, and that they can benefit from writing or painting while doing this, and the participants are given papers with blank form pictures, paints and pencils and asked to create a form especially for the aspects of themselves that they feel academically strong (Demircioğlu 2016). In the assessment phase, the participants' feelings and thoughts about the session are taken and the session is finalized.

Session 8: "Imagination" and "picture" activities are carried out for the members to plan their future. Accordingly, participants are asked to close their eyes and imagine where they see themselves in 10 years. They are asked questions such as what their occupation is, where they live, what kind of life they have. Then, when they are ready, they are asked to open their eyes and draw a picture of their imagined life. After the completion of the activities, the session ends by asking the participants to express their feelings and thoughts about the session.

Session 9: "Imagination", "letter writing" and "determine your slogan" activities are conducted to help members set goals. Session assessment is done with "emotion graphs". Accordingly, in the imagination activity, participants are asked to close their eyes and imagine themselves in the future. Then, participants are given instructions to write a letter to their future selves in line with their imaginations. In the slogan identification activity, participants are instructed to write a slogan for the goals they want to realize in the future. Participants are asked to create a pie chart to represent their feelings for the session assessment.

Session 10: As a finalization activity, "love bombardment" and general assessments about the members' achievement of their goals are made. Accordingly, in the love bombardment activity, a group member takes a chair in the center and the other group members express the positive aspects of this member. Meanwhile, the member in the middle does not speak about the feedback, and after all the feedback is over, they share how it feels to hear nice expressions about themselves. This process continues for all group members (Acar 2010). Then, in order for the participants to assess the whole process, questions about "which topic or session is the most useful for them in the whole process, what kind of changes and awareness they gained during the process, and what they learned during the sessions" are asked. The session is ended after the answers to the questions are received.

## **Measures**

### ***Self-Efficacy Scale for Children***

The Turkish adaptation of the scale developed by Muris (2001) was conducted by Telef and Karaca (2012) and the scale was developed to measure the academic, social and emotional self-efficacy of individuals aged between 12-19. The confirmatory factor analysis of the scale yielded fit index values of RMSEA=.049, NFI=.95, CFI=.96, GFI=.94 and SRMR=.066. The internal consistency coefficients of the scale were calculated as .86 for the overall scale, .84 for the academic self-efficacy subscale, .64 for the social self-efficacy subscale, and .78 for the emotional self-efficacy subscale. The test-retest reliability coefficients of the Self-Efficacy Scale for Children were between .75 and .89. The scale is a five-point Likert-type scale (not at all: 1, very good: 5) and total self-efficacy sub-factor scores are scored by totaling the relevant items. A maximum score of 105 and a minimum score of 21 can be obtained from the scale, and a high score on the scale indicates that children's self-efficacy levels are high and a low score on the scale indicates that children's self-efficacy levels are low.

### ***Unstructured Observation***

During the group counseling sessions, the researcher collected data about the participants' self-efficacy through

unstructured observation. Field notes on self-efficacy were kept by utilizing the participants' verbal and non-verbal expressions, their interactions with each other, and their feedback to the session and themselves during the process.

## Statistical Analysis

SPSS 25.00 is used to analyze the pre-test and post-test data gathered from the experimental and control groups using the Self-Efficacy Scale for Children. As the sample size was less than 30 (N: 16) and the data were not normally distributed, non-parametric methods were used. Therefore, Wilcoxon Ranked Signs test was applied to determine the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants in the experimental group who participated in the expression-based group counseling program based on art activities through the self-efficacy scale for children. After the implementation of the program, Mann-Whitney U Test was used to determine whether the total scale scores of the experimental and control groups were significantly different between the groups.

## Results

### Testing Hypothesis

Before the implementation of the program, Mann-Whitney U Test was used to examine the self-efficacy levels of the experimental and control groups. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2.

According to the results of the Mann-Whitney U Test in Table 2, there was no significant difference between the mean total scores of the scale of the experimental and control groups ( $U=28.000$ ,  $p>.05$ ). Given these results, both groups did not show a statistical difference in terms of self-efficacy scale scores for children.

Variables	Groups	N	X rank	rank U	Z	p
Self-efficacy Scale for Children total score	Study	8	9.00	72.00		
	Control			28.000	-.424	.672
		8	8.00	64.00		

The first hypothesis of the study was stated as; 'After the implementation of the program, there will be a significant difference between the post-test self-efficacy scores of the members in the experimental group and the post-test self-efficacy scores of the members in the control group in favor of the experimental group'. Mann-Whitney U Test analyses conducted to test these hypotheses are given.

According to the results of the Mann-Whitney U Test in Table 3, there was a significant difference between the total scale scores of the experimental and control groups after the implementation ( $U=,000$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The total self-efficacy score of the experimental group was significantly higher than the control group in the final assessment.

Variables	Groups	N	X rank	rank U	z	P
Self-efficacy Scale for Children	Study	8	12.50	100.00		
	Control			.000	-3.336	.001
		8	4.50	36.00		

Study group	Rank signs	N	$\bar{x}$ rank	sira	Z	p
Pre/Post test	Negative rank	0	0	0	-2,527	,012*
	Positive rank	8	4,5	36		
Self-efficacy Scale for Children	Equal	0				
	Total	8				

\* $p<.005$

The second hypothesis of the study was stated as; 'After the implementation of the program, there will be a significant difference between the pretest self-efficacy scores and posttest self-efficacy scores of the members in the experimental group in favor of the posttest'.

In order to determine the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the students who participated in the expression-based group counseling program based on art activities, the Wilcoxon Ranked Signs test was applied and the results are given in Table 4. The results of this test (Table 4) revealed that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group ( $z = -2,527, p < .05$ ).

## Qualitative Results

At the initial stage of the group, group members had problems with self-disclosure and trust. Members were also observed to have problems in identifying their individual goals. The members generally used statements such as "I want my brother, sister or friend to behave in this way" and attempted to set goals to transform others. Upon this situation, the members were encouraged to consider only the issues that they wanted to change in themselves and the aspects that they had problems with, and to set their goals on this basis. The goals of the members are presented in Table 5. At the initial stage of the group, problems related to inability to express oneself, initiating and maintaining relationships, recognizing and expressing emotions, low academic achievement, goal setting and planning for the future were reported by the clients. Especially in the first sessions, the members set goals for what they wanted to achieve as "*I have difficulty in expressing myself*", "*I have difficulty in working in a planned manner and being successful*", "*I cannot defend my rights*". Members were not aware of their own potential and had low self-confidence thoughts such as "*I can't do it*". Even during the role-playing activity during the practices, there were hesitations such as "*I cannot do it, I cannot succeed*".

At the initial stage of the group, an "hand mirror" activity was performed in the warm-up phase in order for the group members to get to know each other and get along with each other, which was found to be effective. In the "hand mirror" activity, the participants were assigned in pairs and one of the pairs was asked to perform the same movements in the same way as the mirror, and then the same process was carried out with the other participant. In the "name activity", which was held as an introductory activity, the participants were requested to express their names and their strengths starting with the initial letter of their names. Three members had difficulty in finding their strengths during this activity. Despite the fact that it was the first session, members were open to sharing, with the exception of a few members. Two members who reported having difficulty in expressing themselves also experienced this problem in the group setting. The sharing of another member who has a similar problem to the problem experienced by one of the group members ensures that the members do not feel alone. This may indicate that the "universality" therapeutic factor of group counseling is experienced. When leaving the group, they expressed their relief after sharing their problems. One member used the term "being reborn" to assess the session. Some members also remarked that they lost track of time and had fun. One member stated that they discovered their own and other members' strengths and hobbies during the group session. The silence anticipated in the first sessions did not occur very often in this group and some members exhibited a strong desire to express themselves.

During the transition stage of the group, members also found it challenging to disclose themselves. For a member who was silent since the first session, another member who knew him commented that his silence was due to his nature and that he could actually be a witty and funny person if he was in an environment with familiar and trusted people. When asked what he thought about this feedback, the member responded that his friend had accurately monitored him, that he had not yet overcome his shyness as he did not personally know the people in the group, and that he could become more talkative after a few sessions. A member became excited when asked to share and had difficulties in expressing himself/herself. This member exhibited similar behaviors in the initial session. Therefore, self-disclosure was encouraged on a voluntary basis.

In the transition stage of the group, activities to overcome the resistance of the members were prioritized. As an example of these practices, in order to improve the members' skills of establishing and maintaining friendships with others, initiating conversations, and expressing unpleasant situations to the other person, the members were given two instructions as "act out the moment when you first met someone" and "act out the moment when you chatted with a person you did not know" and asked to act out these moments respectively. When the members were asked to act out their first meeting moments, the themes that came up were "playing foosball, playing long donkey, asking for an eraser", where they met mostly through games or sharing items. Two members both stated that they met directly as "*I'm X, what's your name?*" and "*I've seen you before, shall we meet?*". Another member claimed that she had no difficulty in meeting and communicating with people because she was already an extroverted, energetic and smiling individual. In the role-play of starting a conversation with a

stranger, similar to the first meeting, the members indicated that the conversation developed naturally through the game or as a requirement of being in the same class. Especially the timid students did not directly initiate the acquaintance themselves, but rather through the games.

**Table 5. Participants' objectives and post-study assessment statements**

Participant #	Objective	Assessment
1	Improving communication skills and expressing emotions	While the initial individual goal of the member was to overcome distraction, meet someone and maintain communication, following the feedback received from the member in the last session, the member made progress in terms of paying attention, recognizing and expressing her feelings, and strengthening her communication with people. This member was a successful member who was internally motivated to succeed in her studies. She showed more progress in communicating and expressing herself than the other members. When the reflections in the termination session are analyzed, the member had positive experiences about trusting people and feeling of belonging.
2	Communicating with people and anger management	While the member's initial individual goal was to communicate better with people and control his/her anger, the feedback received from the member in the last session indicated that he/she made progress in communicating with others and calming himself/herself down when angry. The member improved in terms of self-expression, recognizing and experiencing emotions.
3	Developing communication skills, Expressing emotions	While the initial individual goal of the member was to meet people and maintain communication, according to the feedback received from the member in the last session, the member made progress in these areas. Similarly, he stated that he has made progress in expressing his emotions.
4	Anger management	While the initial individual goal of the member was to improve anger control and communication skills, after the feedback received from the member in the last session, the member reported that his/her self-expression skills improved as he/she shared in the sessions. While this member was bored during verbal exchanges, he was more engaged during activities (such as painting, role-playing, reenactment, poetry) and performed these activities diligently. While he had difficulties in expressing himself in the first sessions, he eventually became better at articulating himself towards the end of the sessions.
5	Improving communication skills	While this member was timid in the first sessions and was embarrassed and excited while sharing, he became more talkative and active towards the end of the sessions.
6	Improving communication skills	While the initial individual goal of the member was to improve communication skills, the feedback received from the member in the last session revealed that the member made progress in listening to the problems of others and helping them. Similarly, the member also improved in self-knowledge according to the feedback received from the member.
7	Increasing academic achievement	While the member's initial individual goal was to increase academic success, as a result of the feedback received from the member in the last session, the member made progress in the direction that setting goals contributed to him to devote himself more to his lessons. Considering his/her comments in the last session, the member experienced changes especially in goal setting and future planning.
8	Improving communication skills	While the initial individual goal of the member was to improve his/her communication skills, the member made progress in terms of empathizing, communicating more comfortably with people he/she did not know and increasing self-confidence based on his/her feedback in the last session. This member, who did not want the sessions to end, was very active and enthusiastic in the activities. This member is believed to have benefited more from the sessions than the other members and experienced changes especially in planning for the future and communicating.



Group cohesion occurred during the action stage of the group. At this stage, the members' behaviors of giving and receiving help from each other increased and they began to give feedback to each other. As an example of this situation, the members were asked to write poems about how they see themselves in their social relationships and the aspects they find particularly strong. After the completion of the poems, the members were asked what they wanted to express in the poems. Since the member who wrote the poem "Friend" replied that he did not know what he wanted to express in his poem, another member indicated that he understood that in this poem the member was trying to express that he "values friendship and can be close to them like a brother or sister". When the member was asked "how did that sound to you?", the answer was "yes, I value my friendships".

In the action stage of the group, members started to look at their goals in a more positive way. As an example of this situation, in the activity of writing a letter to their future selves, some members motivated themselves positively in their letters and some members wrote in plain text about what they wished to do in the future. The letter of the member who motivated herself positively and sketched a picture of "a two-storey house in the forest close to the city, with a dog and a car" in the drawing activity is as follows:

*"Dear X, I am sure that you have reached the destination you wanted. I am sure that many people will be helping you and saying positive things to you as you realize your dream. If anyone tries to stop you from your dream, do not pay attention to them. It does not matter if your hands are greasy or your work is a bit dirty, this is your life, this is your dream and you are doing this job to be happy. I hope everything will be the way you want it to be. I am sure you have a lovely large house. I hope you have pets and a shiny car next to your house".*

At the termination stage of the group, whether the members achieved their behavioral goals was examined and observed that the members generally achieved their goals. For example, the assessment statements of some participants are as follows:

*P1: I started to be able to express my feelings, I pay more attention to my lessons, I started to make new friends. I had a friend I didn't talk to and after these sessions I made peace with him. I started not talking to anyone after I had an incident in my past, but when everyone started talking about themselves here, I started to share. My self-confidence increased, I used to have a distraction problem and after coming here I started to concentrate more.*

*P2: My aim was to improve my communication. After the sessions here, my perspective on life has changed. I used to look at it more simply, now I started to try to see the motives underlying people's behaviors and to empathize. My self-confidence increased, I started to talk more easily with people I do not know, I used to not raise my finger in class in case they would make fun of me, but I do not mind that anymore.*

*P3: My purpose of coming was to communicate better with people and I succeeded. I opened up as I listened to everyone's problems. Thanks to the puppet activity, I got to know myself better and saw my strengths.*

*P4: I was unable to express my emotions, at first it was around 10 percent, but now it is up to 90 percent. I learned to live my feelings through emotion activities.*

*P5: I had goals to increase my course success, but after the activities we did here, I saw my way ahead and started to see my future, which motivated me.*

Table 5 summarizes the observations regarding the initial individual goals and improvement of the members.

When Table 5 is analyzed, overall, the members made progress in their individual goals compared to the initial session. Similarly, when the messages shared by the members are analyzed, they expressed an increase in their academic, emotional and social self-efficacy. The participants reported to have achieved goals such as recognizing and expressing their emotions, communicating, getting to know themselves, recognizing their strengths, and setting goals for the future. The qualitative data of the study revealed that there was a progress in the participants' self-efficacy levels.

## DISCUSSION

In the literature review, as mentioned in the introduction, experimental studies aiming to increase adolescents' self-efficacy are scarce. Among these studies, Cepukiene et al. (2018) conducted a solution-focused group intervention to develop self-efficacy in adolescents and concluded that there was a significant increase in the general self-efficacy levels of the participants in the experimental group with a large effect size compared to the control group. Similarly, Bingöl (2015) examined the effect of group guidance based on solution-focused therapy on the self-efficacy belief of 8th grade students and came to the conclusion that the self-efficacy levels of the program's participants improved and this was maintained in the follow-up test results. In another practical study, the effect of group work based on social cognitive learning theory on the career research self-efficacy of university students was explored resulting in a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores

of the individuals in the experimental group (Sarı 2014). These studies show that group-based research improves self-efficacy and that experimental research methods are effective, which is consistent with the findings of this study.

When the qualitative section of the study was analyzed, some members appeared to have achieved other gains in addition to the goals they had set. For instance, one of the members stated, "My purpose was to communicate better with people, and I succeeded." I opened up as I listened to everyone's problems. Thanks to the puppet activity, I got to know myself better; I saw my strengths." This statement indicates that besides improving their communication skills, which was the study's primary purpose, the members also achieved additional gains in discovering their strengths and getting to know themselves. Voltan-Acar (2015) states that during the action phase of group counseling, members interact with each other without the mediation of the leader. This interaction was also observed during the action stage of this group counseling. When the feedback from the group members is reviewed, the therapeutic factor of "learning interpersonal interaction" (Demir and Koydemir 2012) may also be realized by the members giving feedback to each other.

Studies show that art therapy-oriented studies based on artistic activities have a positive effect on psychological well-being, general well-being, expressing emotions and strengthening verbal expression (Kaya 2014, Duran and Tezer 2016, Alaca 2019). Bostancıoğlu and Kahraman (2017) argue that art therapy has an important place in the history of humanity and its use for treatment has been beneficial for clients in the historical process, while Coşkun (2018) asserts that art therapy improves the physical, mental and emotional development of people of all ages by using the creative aspect of art and enables clients to solve their problems, realize their talents, control stress and develop insight. Likewise, the client develops insight by gaining awareness through art therapy and creating a new product strengthens their self-confidence (Coşkun 2018, Konyalıoğlu 2019). When we evaluate the effects of art therapy on individuals in the context of this information, the findings related to the increase in self-efficacy of adolescents in this study are anticipated.

In one of the few group studies focused on art activities to increase self-efficacy, the effects of a structured group counseling program focused on art therapy on the happiness levels, tendency to express emotions, and difficulties in regulating emotions of adolescents aged 15-18 were examined. The results of the study revealed that the impulse subscale decreased in the emotion regulation difficulties of the individuals in the experimental group, the positive emotion subscale increased in the happiness variable, and the positive and closeness dimension increased in the tendency to express emotions (Karataş and Güler 2020). In another study, the effect of structured art therapy group work applied to clients with bipolar disorder on self-esteem was examined. The program was reported to create a positive and significant difference in the self-esteem levels of the clients (Yılmaz 2019). Hence, the positive effects of art therapy-oriented studies on happiness, expressing emotions, difficulty in emotion regulation and self-esteem in these research results can be considered to overlap with the effectiveness of this study based on art activities in increasing self-efficacy.

Art therapy has four healing mechanisms as creativity, sublimation, creation and engagement (Halmatov 2020) and art therapy promotes the belief that individuals have the ability to express themselves creatively (Çınar 2019). Halmatov (2020) asserts that among the four healing mechanisms of art therapy, the creativity mechanism is related to the ability of individuals to produce, and that this enables individuals to realize their existing but unrecognized talents on the way to self-realization, to overcome their fears and anxieties, and to develop their self-confidence. In other words, the development of self-confidence, self-expression and self-actualization of individuals is related to the increase in self-efficacy. Koydemir (2016) points out that during group counseling, individuals develop their self-perception and self-esteem through interpersonal relationships. In this milieu, individuals have the opportunity to practice new behaviors, and with the feedback and support received from other group members, the individual starts to feel more confident in themselves. Therefore, this information, which shows that art therapy and group counseling increase self-confidence and self-efficacy in individuals, is in line with the qualitative findings of our study, especially with the statements of the individuals about the improvement in self-confidence and progress in the last session and the results of observations.

Art enables individuals to express themselves without difficulty and techniques such as poetry can ensure the rapid expression of an inner life that would take a long time to articulate. Therefore, art contributes to the rapid development of the therapeutic relationship (Eracar 2013). Degges-White (2019) claims that the creation of a product through sculpture, story, painting or dance in expressive art is a means of accessing individuals' inner feelings and subconscious. Similarly, Halmatov (2020) states that clients externalize their emotions through artistic endeavors and thus experience change. Therefore, the inclusion of art practices in this study is related to the accelerating role of art in the changes experienced by individuals.

Due to the changes experienced in many aspects during adolescence, adolescents experience problems such as conflicts with the people around them, increased anxiety about the future and difficulty in expressing their feelings. Through art therapy, adolescents who use art materials instead of words through painting, dance and stories can easily overcome these problems (Genç and Aslan 2019). Riley (2001) argues that adolescents like to make depictions using symbols, so expressing themselves through art is more facilitating than verbal expression, and particularly expressing a negative behavior through painting contributes to externalization. Thus, art therapy enables adolescents to express themselves better by utilizing their creativity and providing them with a form of communication over which they have control (Riley 2001). Accordingly, in the present study, positive developments may have occurred in adolescents through artistic practices that involve action.

The direct appeal of art to the sensory organs accelerates and facilitates individuals to express their inner feelings. In this respect, the music that clients listen to in therapy, the paintings they make and the poems they compose carry many therapeutic materials and develop and enrich the client's awareness (Eracar 2013). Expressive arts use symbols that represent the inner feelings and conflicts of the clients, helping to recognize the deepest feelings that are usually hidden. This process therefore supports the improvement of clients and enables them to explore and express themselves more comprehensively (Degges-White 2019). According to Halmatov (2020), art therapy is very effective in group work and group members begin to feel more comfortable during the implementation phase. Similarly, Kim et al. (2014) suggest that group counseling activities focused on art therapy are effective in terms of clients' self-understanding, self-recognition, and improvement in human relations. So in this study, the group counseling study in which art practices were used for the changes experienced by the participants can be considered to be effective.

The research is limited to 14-15 year old individuals studying in a public school in Adapazarı district of Sakarya in the 2018-2019 academic year and the subjects of the group counseling program based on art practices to develop social self-efficacy, emotional self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy skills.

## Conclusion

Based on the quantitative findings of the study, there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the individuals in the experimental group in favor of the post-test. Similarly, there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups. According to the qualitative results of the study, based on the statements of the participants, the participants made progress in their individual goals and their academic, emotional and social self-efficacy increased compared to the first session. Similarly, since the participants stated that they achieved goals such as recognizing and expressing their emotions, communicating, getting to know themselves, recognizing their strengths, and setting goals for the future, there is a progress indicating that the self-efficacy levels of the participants have improved. Based on these findings, overall, expression-based group counseling based on art activities can be considered to be effective in enhancing adolescents' self-efficacy.

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