

The Effect of Theory of Mind-Based Emotional Development Program on Young Children's Emotional Competencies*

Zihin Kuramı Temelli Duygusal Gelişim Programının 5 Yaş Çocuklarının Duygusal Yeterliliklerine Etkisinin İncelenmesi

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effect of the Theory of Mind Based Emotional Development Program (MBEDP), which was prepared to increase the theory of mind and emotional competence level of children with normal development on the emotional competence of 5-year-old children. It investigated whether the program developed for this purpose effectively increased children's theory of mind and emotional competence. The MBEDP program used narrative and guided game methods created from illustrated storybooks. In the research, a quasi-experimental design including experimental-control group, pretest, and posttest was used. In this study, the Personal Information Form, Theory of Mind Scale, Emotion Information Scale, and Emotion Regulation Scale were applied to the study group. In the study's experimental group, a 12-week program consisting of 4 activity sessions and one evaluation session per week was applied to the children in the classroom selected by random sampling. 48 different activities are included in the program. While the program was applied to the children in the

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experimental group, no action was taken against the children in the control group. The data obtained were evaluated with the analysis program. It was concluded that the program significantly affected the theory of mind, emotion knowledge, and emotion regulation levels in the experimental group.

Keywords: Emotion Regulation, Emotional Competence, Emotional Intelligence, Storyline, Theory of Mind, 5 years old

Öz

Bu çalışma, normal gelişim gösteren çocukların zihin kuramı ve duygusal yeterlilik düzeyini artırmak amacıyla hazırlanan Zihin Kuramı Temelli Duygusal Gelişim Programının (MBEDP) 5 yaş çocuklarının duygusal yeterliliği üzerindeki etkisini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla geliştirilen programın çocukların zihin kuramı becerilerini ve duygusal yeterliliğini etkili bir şekilde arttırıp arttırmadığını araştırılmıştır. MBEDP programı, resimli hikaye kitaplarından oluşturularak hazırlanan öyküleştirme yöntemi ve rehberli oyun yöntemleri bir arada kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada deney-kontrol gruplu, ön test ve son testten oluşan yarı deneysel desen kullanılmıştır. Bu araştırmada çalışma grubuna Kişisel Bilgi Formu, Zihin Kuramı Ölçeği, Duygu Bilgi Ölçeği ve Duygu Düzenleme Ölçeği uygulanmıştır. Araştırmanın deney grubunda tesadüfi örnekleme yoluyla seçilen sınıftaki çocuklara 4 etkinlik oturumu ve haftada bir değerlendirme oturumundan oluşan 12 haftalık bir program uygulanmıştır. Programda 48 farklı etkinliğe yer verilmiştir. Program süresince deney grubundaki çocuklara uygulanırken kontrol grubundaki çocuklara herhangi bir işlem yapılmamıştır. Elde edilen veriler analiz programı ile değerlendirilmiştir. Programın deney grubundaki zihin kuramı becerilerini, duygu bilgisi ve duygu düzenleme düzeylerini anlamlı düzeyde etkilediği sonucuna varılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Duygu Düzenleme, Duygusal Yeterlilik, Duygusal Zeka, Öyküleştirme yöntemi, Zihin Teorisi, 5 yaş.

Geniş Özet

Giriş

Psikologlar, çocuk gelişimi uzmanları, psikiyatristler ve erken çocukluk uzmanları son otuz yıldır özellikle sosyal-biliş alanı üzerinde büyük öneme sahip olan zihin kuramı ile ilgili çalışmalar yürütmektedir. Zihin kuramı, hem bilişsel hem de sosyal-duygusal gelişimi kendi içerisinde barındırmaktadır. Zihin kuramı, kişinin kendisine ve başkalarına zihinsel durumları anlama yeteneği (Wimmer ve Perner, 1983) veya zihinsel durumları (duygular, niyetler veya inançlar gibi) başkalarına atfetme yeteneği olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Quesque ve Rossetti, 2020). Bu bulguları bütünlükten zihin kuramı; davranışa sebep olan duygu durumunu anlama, yansıtma, klişeler, metaforlar, yanlışlıkla söylenen sözler veya davranışlar, yargılama (duygusal, kasıtlı vb.) ve mevcut uyarılar (tüm vücut, bakış, sözlü bilgi vb.) sosyal bilişin farklı alt bileşenlerini içine alan bir kuramdır (Quesque ve Rossetti, 2020). Zihin kuramı, klasik bilişsel gelişim kuramlarından farklıdır. Çünkü zihin kuramında çocukların hem duygusal hem sosyal hem de zihinsel beceriler üzerine odaklanılmaktadır. Özellikle bilgi ve inançlar olmak üzere zihinsel durumları atfetme yeteneklerini doğrudan araştırırken; bu araştırmalar aynı zamanda duygular ve bu duyguların getirdiği bilişsel süreçleri de içine almaktadır. Zihin kuramı; bir yandan çocukların kendilerinin ve karşılarındakinin

içsel durumlarını fark edebilme becerilerini içine alarak sosyal davranışları ve uyumları için önemli çıkarımlar taşımaktadır. Diğer yandan ise, sosyal bilişin, farklı ancak birbiriyle ilişkili yeteneklerden oluşan karmaşık bir yapı olduğunu göstermektedir (Cutting ve Dunn, 1999; Garner, Dunsmore ve Southam-Gerrow, 2008; Imuta, Slaughter, Selçuk ve Ruffman, 2016; Knafo, 2011; Longobardi, Spataro, Renna ve Rossi-Arnaud, 2014).

Duygular; kişinin çevre ile çift yönlü etkileşiminden doğmakta ve kişinin bilişsel gelişim, sosyal gelişim, benlik farkındalığının gelişimini hatta fiziksel gelişimini de etkilemektedirler. Karşılaşılan durumlara karşı verilen duygusal tepkiler, yaşamda kalmak için kişinin ihtiyacı olan öğrenmeleri sağlamaktadır (Halle, 2003). Duygu ve bilişsel gelişim arasındaki ilişki, bebeklik döneminde bile iç içe geçmiş bir halde görülmektedir (Lewis, 1999). Duygusal yeterlilik, ömür boyu gelişim gösteren bazı becerilerden oluşmaktadır. Bunlar “duygu bilgisi, duygu düzenleme, duyguların ifade edilmesi ve empati” olmak üzere dörde ayrılmaktadır (Beaty, 1999; Ersay, 2019). Çocukların hem zihin kuramı becerilerini hem de sosyal ve duygusal gelişimlerini destekleyebilmek için okul öncesi dönemde farklı yöntemler kullanılmaktadır. Bu yöntemlerden birisi de öyküleştirme yöntemidir. Öyküleştirme yaklaşımı ilk olarak İskoçya’da geliştirilmiştir. Bell, Harkness ve White (2007)’e göre bu yöntem aracılığıyla sadece kitaplara bağlı bir programın çok daha ötesine geçilerek çocuklarda kalıcı öğrenmeler gerçekleştirilmesine olanak sağlanmıştır.

Son yıllarda zihin kuramı becerileri ile okul öncesi dönemde çocuklara resimli öykü kitaplarının okunması arasındaki ilişkiyi inceleyen çalışmalar artmaktadır (Adrian, Clemente ve Villanueva, 2007; Ilgaz ve Bozbiyık, 2017; Nikolajeva, 2012a). Okul öncesi öğretmenleri tarafından resimli öykü kitapları bütünleştirilmiş etkinliklerde kullanılmaya başlanmıştır. Resimli öykü kitabı okuma ile zihin kuramı arasındaki ilişkiyi gösteren çalışmalar bulunmaktadır (Adrian vd., 2007; Aram, Fine ve Ziv, 2013; Shah, 2003; Symons, Peterson, Slaughter, Roche ve Doyle, 2005). Resimli öykü kitaplarında zihinsel durum ifadeleri, yanlış kanı, ironi ve duygusal ifadeler gibi zihin kuramı becerileri ile ilgili ifadeler bulunmaktadır (Yılmaz, 2014).

Zihinsel gelişim ve duygusal gelişim birbirine paralel olarak ilerlemektedir. Öyküleştirme ve resimli öykü kitabı okumaya dayalı oyun yöntemlerinin ilk ve orta çocukluk döneminde çocukların zihinsel, sosyal ve duygusal gelişimlerine katkı sağladığı düşünülmektedir. Buradan hareketle öyküleştirme ve resimli öykü kitabı okumaya dayalı oyun yöntemleri temel alınarak hazırlanan zihin kuramı temelli duygusal gelişim programının çocukların zihin kuramı becerilerine ve duygusal gelişimlerine olumlu katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir. Bu bağlamda bu araştırmada “Zihin kuramı temelli hazırlanan duygusal gelişim programı, çocukların duygusal ve zihinsel gelişimini desteklemede etkili bir program mıdır?” sorusuna cevap aranmıştır.

Yöntem

Okul öncesi eğitimine devam eden çocukların zihin kuramı becerilerini destekleyerek duygusal yeterliliğini geliştirmeyi amaçlayan bu çalışma, yarı deneysel desen kullanılarak tasarlanmıştır. Deneysel desen çalışmaları iki veya daha fazla değişken arasındaki neden-sonuç ilişkisini belirlemek amacıyla yapılmaktadır (Gay ve Airasian, 2012). Araştırmada beş yaş çocuklarının zihin kuramı

temelli duygusal gelişim programının etkisini incelemek amacıyla “ön test, son test, eşleştirilmiş kontrol gruplu deneysel desen” kullanılmıştır. Yarı deneysel desenler seçkisiz atamayı içermemekle birlikte bu desende hazır gruplardan ikisi belli değişkenler üzerinden eşleştirilmeye çalışılmaktadır (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz ve Demirel, 2016). Öntest sontest kontrol gruplu olarak hazırlanan yarı deneysel araştırma modelinde, araştırmacı tarafından yansız atama yoluyla iki grup oluşturulmaktadır. Bunlardan birisi deney diğeri kontrol grubu şeklinde isimlendirilmektedir ve araştırma kapsamında her iki grupta da deney öncesi ve deney sonrası çalışmaya katılanların bilgi düzeyleri hakkında ölçme sonuçları elde edilmektedir (Karasar, 2010). Yarı deneysel araştırma deseninde deney ve kontrol grubu olarak çalışılacak kişilerin çalışma öncesinde ön testleri araştırmacı tarafından toplanarak uygulama öncesindeki düzeylerinin ölçümü yapılmaktadır. Daha sonra uygulama süresince kontrol grubu ile herhangi bir çalışma yapılmamakta ve deney grubu çalışma ile ilgili olan uygulamaya alınmaktadır. Uygulama sonunda deney ve kontrol gruplarının son testleri alınarak bağımlı değişkenin etkisinin ölçümü yapılmaktadır (Baştürk, 2009). Araştırma kapsamında üç deney, üç kontrol grubu oluşturulmuştur. Üç deney ve kontrol grubu oluşturulmasının sebebi çalışmanın 2019-2020 eğitim öğretim yılında yapılmış olması ve COVID-19 pandemisi nedeniyle sınıflarda yarı deneysel araştırma deseni için yeterli çocuğun olmamasıdır. Deney gruplarında yirmi beş, kontrol gruplarında yirmibeş olmak üzere toplam elli çocuk çalışmaya katılmıştır.

Bulgular ve Tartışma

Deney grubu ön testlerde duygu düzenleme olumsuzluk alt boyutunda zorluk yaşamaktayken zihin kuramı temelli duygusal gelişim programı sonrasında kontrol grubuna yakın bir puan almıştır. Duygu düzenleme ölçeğinin değişkenlik/olumsuzluk alt boyutu; tepkisellik, harekete geçirme, öfkeyi kontrol edememe ve huysuzluk gibi özellikleri kapsamaktadır. Bu nedenle duygu düzenleme olumsuzluk alt boyutunda anlamlı bir fark çıkmamış olması zihin kuramı temelli duygusal gelişim programının çocukların duygularını kontrol etmelerine yardımcı olduğu, tepkiselliği azalttığı düşünülmektedir. Duygu düzenleme (duygu kontrol) becerileri arasında anlamlı bir fark olup olmadığını ortaya koymak için yapılan Mann-Whitney U testinin sonucuna göre istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark gözlemlenmiştir. Programa katılan çocuklarla programa katılmayan çocukların duygu düzenleme becerilerinin farklı olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Bu bulgudan uygulama sonrasında deney grubundaki çocukların duygu düzenleme (duygu kontrol) becerilerinin sontest lehinde olduğu görülmektedir. Yapılan çalışmada hem resimli öykü kitaplarından oyun oluşturma sürecinde hem de öyküleştirme yönteminde çocukların kendilerinin oluşturduğu oyunlar bulunmaktadır. Çocukların oyun oynama sürecinde duygularını düzenleme becerilerinin geliştiği düşünülmektedir. Duygu düzenleme (toplam) puanlarında deney grubundaki çocukların duygu düzenleme becerilerinin sontest lehinde olduğu görülmektedir. Elde edilen veriler ışığında çocuklara uygulanan programın onların duygularını düzenlemelerine yardımcı olduğu sonucuna ulaşılabilir. Yapılan çalışmadan elde edilen verilere göre deney grubunun ön testlerde olumsuz duygularını düzenleyemedikleri ve duygu kontrol boyutunda sıkıntı yaşadıkları görülmektedir. Ancak araştırma sonunda deney grubu hem olumsuz duyguları ile daha iyi başa çıkabilmeye başlamış hem de duygu kontrol boyutunda duygu düzenleme becerilerini geliştirmiştir. Çocuklar oyun yoluyla kendilerini

ifade etme, duygularını tanıma, belirli bir durum karşısında verilecek duygusal tepkileri ayarlamayı öğrenmektedirler. Zihin kuramı temelli duygusal gelişim programının içerisinde çocukların temel duygular (mutluluk,üzüntü,korku,şaşıрма) ve benlik bilinci yüksek olan duyguları(gurur,utanç) tanınması sağlandıktan sonra başkalarının duygularını anlama, olumsuz duygularını düzenleyebilme becerileri ile oyun ve farklı etkinlikler yapılması, yapılan bu etkinliklerin grup içerisinde tartışılarak başkalarının duygularının farkına varılması sağlandığı için araştırmanın sonunda deney grubu lehine bir fark gözlemlendiği düşünülmektedir.

Elde edilen veriler ışığında çocuklara uygulanan programın onların zihin kuramı becerilerini geliştirmeye yardımcı olduğu söylenebilir. Gerçekleştirilen bu oturumlarda çocuklar kitap üzerinden başkalarının duygularını ve duygu-davranış ilişkisini gözleme imkanı bulmuş, bir başkasının gözünden Dünya'yı anlamaya çalışmışlardır. Bu oturumlar aracılığıyla çocukların zihin kuramı becerilerinde artış yaşanmıştır. Zihin kuramı temelli oluşturulan duygusal gelişim programında on farklı duygu çalışılmış, bu duygular çocuklara tanıtıldıktan sonra süreç içerisinde çocuklara duygu-düşünce ve zihinsel yetenekleri anlayabilme, duygu-davranış arasındaki ilişkiyi gözlemleyebilme imkanı sunulmuştur. Aynı şekilde öyküleştirme yönteminde çocukların kendilerinin oluşturduğu karakter aracılığıyla belirli durumlara verilecek tepkileri, kendisini onun yerine koyarak duygu-davranış ilişkisini gözlemlemelerine olanak tanınmıştır. Zihin kuramı temelli duygusal gelişim programına dahil edilen deney grubu çocuklarının duyguları anlama, duygu düzenleme ve zihin kuramı becerilerinde artış yaşanmıştır. Bu artış, yukarıdaki çalışmadan elde edilen verilerle örtüşmektedir. Çünkü zihin kuramı becerileri duygusal yeterlilikle iç içe geçmiş bir kavramdır.

Bu çalışma da uygulanan eğitim programının zihin kuramı ve duyguları anlama becerileri üzerindeki etkisini göstermektedir. Zihin kuramı temelli duygusal gelişim programına dahil edilen deney grubu çocuklarında hem zihin kuramı hem de duyguları anlama becerilerinde pozitif yönlü bir artış yaşanmıştır. Bu artışın sebebinin program içerisinde resimli öykü kitapları kullanılarak duyguları anlama becerileri üzerine çalışıldıktan sonra bu becerilerden yola çıkarak her bir duygu durumunun hem resimli öykü kitaplarındaki öykülerdeki hem de öyküleştirme yönteminde kendi oluşturdukları karakterin içerisinde duygu-durum arasındaki ilişkinin anlaşılabilmesi için çalışmalar yapılmış olmasından kaynaklandığı düşünülmektedir.

Zihin kuramı temelli duygusal gelişim programında COVID-19 pandemisi nedeniyle hem ev temelli etkinlikler planlanmış hem de araştırmacı tarafından resimli öykü kitapları çocuklara okunmuştur. Duygu odaklı olarak seçilen resimli öykü kitaplarının çocukların beden ve yüze bakarak, sadece yüze bakarak ve hikayelerdeki duyguları anlama becerilerini geliştirdiği düşünülmektedir. Ayrıca öyküleştirme yönteminde her hafta resimli öykü kitabına paralel olarak aynı duygu ile ilgili çalışmalar çocuklarla birlikte uygulanmıştır. Farklı etkinliklerle çocukların duyguları hem beden ve yüze hem de sadece yüze bakarak anlamalarının sağlanması amacıyla çalışmalar yapılmıştır. Alanyazındaki çalışmalardan da elde edilen veriler bu çalışma verileri ile örtüşmektedir.

Kültürel farkın gözlemlenmediği bu çalışmadan elde edilen verilere göre, çocuk kitaplarında çocuklarla duygu durumları hakkında konuşulması çocukların duygu bilgisi becerilerine olumlu katkı sağladığı görülmektedir. Zihin kuramı temelli duygusal yeterlilik programının içeriğinde oniki

adet hikaye kitabına yer verilmiş olması, bu kitaplarda da temel(mutluluk, üzüntü,korku, şaşırma) ve ikincil duygulara (gurur ve utanç) yer verilerek hikayeler okunmuş ve duyguları anlamaya yönelik hikaye ile paralel oyunlar oynanmış olması çocukların duyguları anlama becerilerini geliştirmiştir. Alanyazın taraması sonucunda elde edilen çalışmalar, zihin kuramı, duyguları anlama ve duygu düzenleme becerilerinin birbirinin tamamlayıcısı niteliğinde olduğunu ve zihin kuramı temelli duygusal yeterlilik programında bu becerileri geliştirmeye yönelik etkinliklere yer verildiği için çocuklarda son test lehine anlamlı bir fark olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Introduction

The theory of mind is defined as the ability to understand the mental states of oneself and others (Wimmer & Perner, 1983) or to attribute mental states (such as emotions, intentions, or beliefs) to others (Quesque & Rossetti, 2020). The classical theory of mind definitions; states that this theory includes beliefs, intentions, and emotional implications (Frith & Frith, 2006). On the other hand, it shows that social cognition is a complex structure consisting of different but related abilities (Cutting & Dunn, 1999; Garner, Dunsmore, & Southam-Gerrow, 2008; Imuta, Slaughter, Selçuk, & Ruffman, 2016; Knafo, 2011; Longobardi, Spataro, Renna and Rossi-Arnaud, 2014). Theory of mind states that when children understand both the emotions of individuals in society and their emotions, intentions, and the reasons underlying their behaviors, they can explain the reasons for their behaviors and thus both regulate their behavior and reflect their emotions to the other person in a controlled manner (Wellman, 2014). For this reason, the theory of mind is a concept that includes both emotions and social communication (Grazzani, Ornaghi, Conte, Pepe, & Caprin, 2018).

In order for children to be able to understand the feelings of others and themselves, they must first recognize emotions. A child who recognizes his/her emotions also able to be recognize the emotions of others and understand the emotions underlying the behavior of others. Thus, there can be an increase in the theory of mind skills. Different methods are used in the preschool period to support both the theory of mind skills and children's social and emotional development. One of these methods is the narrative method. The narrative approach was first developed in Scotland. According to Bell, Harkness, and White (2007), through this method, it is possible to achieve permanent learning in children by going far beyond a program based only on books. Since the opportunity to be active in the storyline method is provided to the teacher and the child, the method has started to attract attention in other countries outside of Scotland over time. According to Habgood et al. (2005), the storyline method contributes to children's emotional development, increases their motivation, and helps them communicate more effectively with each other. This method is inspired by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. The narrative method has four basic principles, similar to the sociocultural theory. These are adult participation, the social nature of learning, discussion, and play. One of the distinguishing features of socio-cultural theory within the narrative method is that it allows adults to transfer their own culture to the child and to interpret it with the world's cultures. Children interpret events as adults do in the "real" world and respond to them as they see fit. Thus, the story is created together by teachers and children. Structuring the story and the process with children guides children to understand how it requires them to solve problems with their environment. The

principle of working with others is one of the relationships between storyline and socio-cultural theory. Children can achieve permanent learning by studying with an adult (or teacher) or friend (Emo & Wells, 2014).

Theory of mind skills play an important role in children's cognitive development, especially in preschool. Theory of mind skills are related to the ability to understand one's own and others' emotions and to take perspective (Miller, 2008). The ability to take a perspective helps the person to understand that people other than himself may have different views and feelings, while at the same time it increases social interaction by understanding the emotions and mental structures of others (Patnaik, 2008). In recent years, studies examining the relationship between theory of mind skills and reading illustrated storybooks to preschool children have increased (Adrian, Clemente, & Villanueva, 2007; Ilgaz & Bozbıyık, 2017; Nikolajeva, 2012a). Illustrated storybooks have started to be used in integrated activities by preschool teachers. Studies have shown that preschool teachers prefer to read illustrated storybooks with traditional methods and give importance to art and preparation for reading and writing while creating activities from illustrated storybooks and that they give little place to dramatization or game activities (Samur & Soydan, 2013; Turan & Ulutaş, 2016). Studies show the relationship between reading illustrated storybooks and the theory of mind (Adrian et al., 2007; Aram, Fine, & Ziv, 2013; Shah, 2003; Symons, Peterson, Slaughter, Roche, & Doyle, 2005). Mental development and emotional development progress in parallel with each other. It is thought that game method based on storyline and illustrated storybook reading contribute to children's mental, social and emotional development in primary and middle childhood. From this point of view, we believe that it is thought that the theory of mind-based emotional development program, which is based on game methods based on storyline and illustrated storybook reading, will contribute positively to children's theory of mind skills and emotional development. In this context, in this research, the answer to the question, "Is the emotional development program based on the theory of mind an effective program in supporting the emotional and theory of mind skills of children?" has been sought.

Method

Experimental design studies are carried out to determine the cause-effect relationship between two or more variables (Gay & Airasian, 2012). In the study, "pretest, posttest, experimental design with paired control group" was used to examine the effect of the theory of mind based emotional development program for five-year-old children.

Study Group

Which aims to improve the emotional competence of children who continue their preschool education by supporting their theory of mind skills, the children forming the study group (experimental and control group) were selected from preschool education institutions affiliated with the Ministry of National Education in Edremit, Balıkesir, using the random sampling method. The children participating in the study were between 60-66 months old. Within the scope of the

research, three experimental and three control groups were formed. A total of fifty children, twenty-five in the experimental and twenty-five in the control groups, participated in the study. In the study, analyzes were made by combining three experimental and three control groups. The data regarding the working group are as follows:

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Demographic Information of Children in Experimental and Control Groups

Variables	Categories	Experimental Group		Control Group	
		n	%	n	%
1. Gender	Girl	10	40	14	56
	Boy	15	60	11	44
2. Number of Siblings	One kid	2	8	5	20
	Two kids	18	72	16	64
	Three Kids and Above	5	20	4	16
3. Mother's Age	25-30	5	20	5	20
	30-35	20	80	20	80
4. Father's Age	30-35	18	72	16	64
	35-40	7	28	6	24
	40-45	0	0	3	12
5. Mother's Education Status	Primary school	11	44	11	44
	High school	10	40	5	20
	Undergraduate and Postgraduate	4	16	9	36
6. Father's Education Status	Primary school	11	44	11	44
	High school	10	40	6	24
	Undergraduate and Postgraduate	4	16	8	32

According to the demographic information of the children in the experimental and control groups participating in the research; There were 10 girls (40%), 15 boys (60%) in the experimental group, and 14 girls (56%) and 15 boys (44%) in the control group. Of the children in the experimental group, 2 (8%) were single children, 18 (72%) were two children, 5 (20%) were 3 children and above. Of the children in the control group, 5 (20%) were single children, 16 (64%) were two children, 4 (16%) were 3 children and above. 5 (20%) of the mothers in both the experimental and control groups were in the 25-30 age range, and 20 (80%) were in the 30-35 age range. Eighteen (72%) of the fathers in the experimental group were between the ages of 30-35, and 7 (28%) were between the ages of 35-40. Of the fathers in the control group, 16 (64%) were in the age range of 30-35, 6 (24%) were in the age range of 35-40, and 3 (12%) were in the age range of 40-45. Of the mothers in the experimental group, 11 (44%) graduated from primary school, 10 (50%) from high school, and 4 (16%) from undergraduate and postgraduate. Of the mothers in the control group, 11 (44%) were graduated from primary school, 5 (20%) from high school, and 9 (36%) from university. 11 (44%) of the fathers in the experimental group were primary school graduates, 10 (40%) high school graduates, and 4 (16%)

undergraduate and postgraduate. 11 (44%) of the fathers in the control group were primary school graduates, 6 (24%) were high school graduates, and 8 (32%) were undergraduate and postgraduate.

Data Collection Tools

The Demographic Information Form prepared by the researcher to collect demographic information about children, Early Childhood Behavior Questionnaire, Emotion Regulation Scale, and Theory of Mind Scale (TOM) were used.

Demographic Information Form

The form includes the child's gender, age, educational level of the parents, number of siblings, and age of the mother and father.

Early Childhood Behavior Questionnaire

The scale that was created by Putnam, Gartstein, and Rothbart (2006) (Early Childhood Behavior Questionnaire (ECBQ)), was adapted into Turkish by Taşfiliz and Berument (2015). The scale consists of 49 items.

In order to assess the level of children's emotion-understanding abilities, children are asked to first be able to recognize emotions from pictures and, secondly, to be able to recognize emotions from stories. In the recognizing emotions sub-dimension of the scale, children are first asked to describe their emotions from face and face+body posture. These emotions that are required to be defined are; happiness, sadness, fear, surprise, shame, and pride.

The second sub-dimension of the scale is the ability to understand emotions. In order to measure the ability of children to understand emotions, stories consisting of different emotional states were prepared for children. These stories are prepared in different ways for boys and girls. The stories in this scale were first told to the children, and then the children were asked to show the character's emotions in the story with pictures. This scale is divided into three sub-dimensions: situation-based, desire-based, and belief-based. Two stories are read to a child for all emotions, and the child is asked to match the unlabeled emotion in the story by pointing to the drawings of the emotions. Drawings based on photographs used in the emotion recognition task were hand-drawn and printed in black and white. The drawings represent male and female characters with facial expressions and body poses aligned with designated emotions. Cronbach's alpha coefficients in the Turkish version are .83, .85, .84, and .84 (Taşfiliz & Berument, 2015). In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .72 for body and face, .70 for face only, .72 for boy stories, and .81 for girls stories.

Emotion Regulation Scale

The Emotion Regulation Scale (EMS), developed by Shields and Cicchetti (1997), is a scale used to measure children's emotional regulation levels, which can be applied to both preschool and school-age children and can be filled in by parents or teachers. The scale consists of 24 items and is divided into 2 sub-dimensions: negativity and emotion regulation. The internal consistency coefficients of

this scale, which was adapted into Turkish by Batum and Yağmurlu (2007), were determined as .75 in mother evaluations and .84 in teacher evaluations. In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was determined as .78.

Theory of Mind Scale (TOM)

The Theory of Mind Scale, created by Wimmer and Perner (1983), was adapted into Turkish by Yağmurlu, Berument, and Cilimli (2005). There are 19 questions in the scale created to measure children's theory of mind skills. The scale is divided into two parts (false belief tests and unexpected situation tests). False belief tests are again divided into two as the unexpected displacement paradigm and the misinformation test. The unexpected situation test consists of two parts: the content test and the deception task. The Cronbach's Alpha value of the scale is .85. These tests include knowledge, thought, and action questions. Knowledge questions measure the child's knowledge of the subject, thought questions are used to understand the child's thoughts on the subject, and action questions are used to determine how the child or someone else will behave in a particular situation. In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was determined as .83.

Development of Emotional Development Program Based on Theory of Mind

In creating the theory of mind-based emotional development program, the guided game preparation method using illustrated storybooks and the storyline method was also used. The program was organized based on Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory. In this context, the feelings of fear, anxiety, pride, happiness, anger, sadness, excitement/enthusiasm, jealousy, and confidence were included. Based on the program, emotions were first introduced to children through books, and studies supporting the theory of mind and emotional competencies were given during the game and storyline.

The content of the theory of mind-based emotional development program is given in the table below:

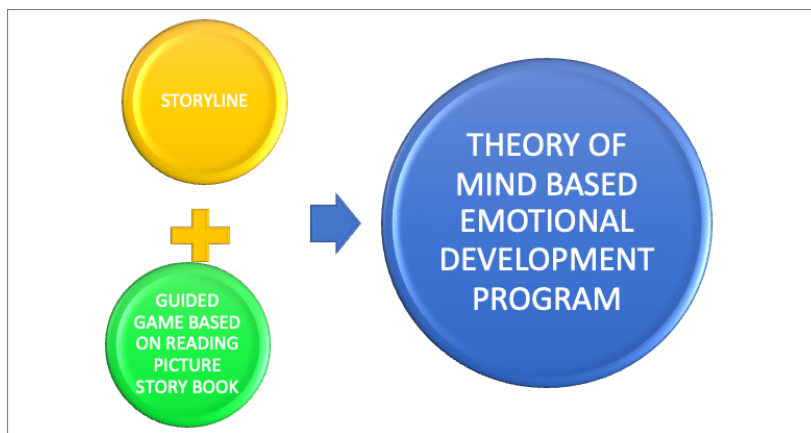


Figure 1. The methods that make up the emotional development program based on the theory of mind.

While creating the theory of mind-based emotional development program, guided game methods based on storyline and illustrated storybook reading were used in the preschool period. In creating a theory of mind-based emotional development program, two days a week were devoted to storyline, and two days were reserved for game creation using illustrated storybooks. The same emotions were included in creating a game from storyline and illustrated storybooks in the same week.

The books used during the program and the emotions handled weekly are given in the table.

WEEKS	WORKING EMOTIONS	BOOKS USED IN CREATING GAMES FROM ILLUSTRATED STORYBOOKS
1.WEEK	INTEREST	BABAMIN BATTANIYESİ
2.WEEK	FEAR	ÜÇ KEDİ BİR CANAVAR
3.WEEK	APPREHENSION	AYI KİM ÇALDI
4.WEEK	PRIDE	ANNEMİN BAVULU
5.WEEK	HAPPINESS	BİR KAVANOZ MUTLULUK
6.WEEK	ANGER	KOLLARI AYAKLARINDA BAY Fİ'NİN KLARNETİ
7.WEEK	ANGER	PİG ADINDA BİR PUG
8.WEEK	SADNESS	MİNİK ÜZGÜN KAKTÜS
9.WEEK	EXCITEMENT	MİNE'NİN KIRMIZI TOPU
10.WEEK	JEALOUSY	ÜZÜM SÜRÜNÜN EN MİNİK İNEĞİ
11.WEEK	FAITH	BENİ YİNE DE SEVER MİSİN?
12.WEEK	CONSIDERATION	CANAVARLARINDA DUYGULARI VAR

Ethical Aspects of the Research

The aim of this research is to examine the effect of the Theory of Mind-Based Emotional Development Program (ZDGP), which was prepared to increase the theory of mind and emotional competence levels of normally developing children, on the emotional competence of 5-year-old children. The ZDGP program was prepared to improve the theory of mind and emotional competence skills of normally developing children. It was investigated whether the program developed for this purpose was effective in increasing children's theory of mind and emotional competence levels.

Before the education program was started, a meeting was held with the families of the children in both the experimental and control groups. In this meeting, the families were informed about the scope of the study, what would be done week by week, that the children would not be included in the study if they did not want to be included or that they had the right to leave the study at any time. Then brief information was given about the content of the program, what was aimed at the end of the program, and the "family consent form" was shared with the parents. The control group was informed that the same program would be applied after the end of the study.

Before starting the pre-test, the researcher introduced himself by doing activities to meet the children and briefly explained what they would do by describing the study. The children were informed that they did not have to participate in the study if they did not want to, and the "child consent form" prepared for the children was filled in with the children.

Analysis of Data

In order to determine whether the pre-test scores of the children in the experimental and control groups differed, the data's assumptions of normality and homogeneity were examined. In this context, skewness-kurtosis values, Q-Q graph, histogram graph, and Shapiro-Wilks test results were examined for the normality distributions of the children's data in the experimental and control groups. According to these results, it was observed that the data did not show normal distribution (Table 4). Since the measurements obtained in the study did not show normal distribution, non-parametric statistical methods were used. In the study, the Mann-Whitney U-test, one of the non-parametric tests, was used to examine whether there was a significant difference in the pre-test scores of the experimental and control groups according to the normality results. The Mann Whitney-U test is used in experimental studies with few subjects and in studies where the assumption of normality is not met to determine the differences or relationships between the experimental and control groups before and after the experiment (Büyüköztürk, 2017). This test checks whether there is a difference between the averages of the two groups before and after the experiment (Can, 2016).

Findings

Table 2: Normality Table

Kolmogorov-Smirnova				Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Emotion Regulation						
Pre-Test	,129	50	,038	,945	50	,021
Post-Test	,094	50	,047	,662	50	,011
Theory of Mind						
Pre-Test	,190	50	,000	,913	50	,001
Post-Test	,253	50	,000	,775	50	,000
Understanding Emotions by Body and Face						
Pre-Test						
Post-Test	,229	50	,000	,782	50	,000
Understanding Emotions by Face						
Pre-Test	,197	50	,000	,914	50	,001
Post-Test	,184	50	,000	,882	50	,000
Understanding Emotions in Stories						
Pre-Test	,130	50	,034	,942	50	,016
Post-Test	,172	50	,001	,864	50	,000

When the normality table is examined, it is seen that the normality distribution of all scales in both pre-test and pos-ttests does not show normal distribution ($p < 0.05$). For this reason, non-parametric tests were used in the study.

Table 3: Mann-Whitney U Test Results Regarding the Difference Between Emotion Regulation Pre-Test Scores of Children in Experimental and Control Groups

	Group	n	\bar{X}	S	Rank Average	Rank Sum	U	Z	p
Emotion Regulation (Negativity)	Experimental	25	31.44	7.65	29.86	746.5	203.5	-2.123	.034
	Control	25	27.56	7.61	21.14	528.5			
Emotion Regulation (Emotion Control)	Experimental	25	22.24	3.09	19.78	494.5	169.5	-2.793	.005
	Control	25	24.80	3.00	31.22	780.5			
Emotion Regulation (Total)	Experimental	25	55.20	8.14	27.24	681	269	-.846	.398
	Control	25	53.64	6.30	23.76	594			

$p < .05$

According to the results of the Mann-Whitney U test, which was performed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the negativity sub-dimension of emotion regulation, a statistically significant difference was observed in the negativity sub-dimension of the experimental group ($U = 203, Z = -2.123, p < 0.05$). This result shows that the experimental group had difficulties in the negativity sub-dimension of emotion regulation.

According to the results of the Mann-Whitney U test performed to determine whether there is a significant difference between the emotion control sub-dimension of emotion regulation, a statistically significant difference was observed in the emotion control sub-dimension of the experimental group ($U = 169.5, Z = -2.793, p < 0.05$). This result shows that the control group is more successful in the emotion control sub-dimension.

According to the results of the Mann-Whitney U test performed to determine whether there is a significant difference between emotion regulation total scores, no statistically significant difference was observed in the emotion control sub-dimension ($U = 269, Z = -.846, p > 0.05$).

Although there was a significant difference in emotion control and emotion regulation sub-dimensions of emotion regulation skills, there was no significant difference in emotion regulation total score.

Table 4: Mann-Whitney U Test Results Regarding the Difference Between Theory of Mind Skills Pre-Test Scores of the Children in the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	N	\bar{X}	S	Rank Average	Rank Sum	U	Z	p
Experimental	25	5.52	2.16	25.52	613	288	-.483	.629
Controll	25	5.92	1.60	26.48	662			

$p < .05$

According to the results of the Mann-Whitney U test, which was conducted to determine whether there was a significant difference between the total theory of mind scores, no statistically significant difference was observed in the theory of mind sub-dimension of the experimental group ($U=288$, $Z=-.483$, $p>0.05$).

Table 5: Mann-Whitney U Results Regarding the Difference Between the Pre-test Scores of Understanding Emotions of the Children in the Experimental and Control Groups

	Group	N	\bar{X}	S	Rank Average	Rank Sum	U	Z	p
Understanding Emotions by Body and Face	Experimental	25	19.08	2.37	25.78	644.5	305.5	-.137	.891
	Control	25	18.76	3.58	25.22	630.5			
	Experimental	25	8.88	2.69	24.04	601			
Control	25	9.24	2.57	26.96	674				
Understanding Emotions in Stories	Experimental	25	10.96	3.24	23.28	582	257	-1.084	.278
	Control	25	11.60	4.16	27.72	693			

$p < .05$

No statistically significant difference was observed according to the results of the Mann-Whitney U test, which was performed to reveal whether there was a significant difference between the skills of understanding emotions by looking at the body and face ($U=305.5$, $Z=-.137$, $p>0.05$).

No statistically significant difference was observed according to the results of the Mann-Whitney U test, which was performed to reveal whether there was a significant difference between the skills of understanding emotions by looking at their faces ($U=276$, $Z=-.719$, $p>0.05$).

No statistically significant difference was observed according to the results of the Mann-Whitney U test, which was performed to reveal whether there was a significant difference between the skills of understanding emotions in the stories ($U=257$, $Z=-1.084$, $p>0.05$).

Table 6: Mann-Whitney U Test Results Regarding the Difference Between Emotion Regulation Post-Test Scores of Children in Experimental and Control Groups

	Group	n	\bar{X}	S	Rank Average	Rank Sum	U	Z	P
Emotion Regulation (Negativity)	Experimental	25	25.24	1.98	24,72	618	293	-.382	.703
			27.92	7.43					
	Control	25			26,28	657			
Emotion Regulation (Emotion Control)	Experimental	25	29.36	1.52	35,82	895,5	54,5	-5.030	.000
	control	25	24.76	2.98	15,18	379,5			
Emotion Regulation (Total)	Experimental	25	55.80	2.73	34.32	858	92.00	-4.554	.000
	Control	25	54.08	5.98	16.68	417			

p<.05

No statistically significant difference was observed according to the results of the Mann-Whitney U test, which was conducted to reveal whether there is a significant difference between emotion regulation (negativity) skills. U=293, Z=-.382, p>0.05.

Table 7: Mann-Whitney U Test Results Regarding the Difference Between Theory of Mind Skills Post-Test Scores of the Children in the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	n	\bar{X}	S	Rank Average	Rank Sum	U	Z	p
Experimental	25	7.72	.541	34.32	858	92.0	-4.554	.00
Control	25	6.04	1.56	16.68	417			

p<.05

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to reveal whether there was a significant difference between the theory of mind skills post-tests. A statistically significant difference was observed according to the test result. U=92.000, Z=-4.554, p<0.005. Considering the average rank, it is understood that the theory of mind skills of the children participating in the program and those not participating are different. From this finding, it is seen that the theory of mind skills of the children in the experimental group was in favor of the post-test after the application. In light of the data obtained, it can be concluded that the program applied to children helps to increase their theory of mind skills.

Table 8: Mann-Whitney U Test Results Regarding the Difference Between the Emotion Understanding Post-Test Scores of the Children in the Experimental and Control Groups

	Group	n	\bar{X}	S	Rank Average	Rank Sum	U	Z	p
Understanding Emotions by Body and Face	Experimental	25	23.48	.714	36,34	908,5	41,5	-5,38	.000
	Control	25	19.0	3.54	14,66	366,5			

Understanding Emotions by Face									
	Experimental	25	19.68	1.70	38.00	950.00	.000	-6.087	.000
	Control	25	9.56	2.72	13.00	325.00			
Understanding the Emotions in the Story									
	Experimental	25	19.04	1.59	37,36	934.00			
	Control	25	12.0	4.15	13,64	341.00	16	-5,828	.000

$p < .05$

A statistically significant difference was observed according to the results of the Mann-Whitney U test, which was conducted to reveal whether there is a significant difference between the skills of understanding emotions by looking at the body and face. $U=41.500$, $Z=-5.380$, $p < 0.05$. When the average rank is considered, it is understood that the children who participated in the program and those who did not participate in the program differ in their ability to understand emotions by looking at the face and body. From this finding, it is seen that the ability of the children in the experimental group to understand emotions by looking at the face and body after the application is in favor of the post-test. According to these results, it can be said that the program has an important effect on the development of children's ability to understand emotions by looking at the face and body.

Discussion and Conclusion

While the experimental group had difficulty in the negativity sub-dimension of emotion regulation in the pre-tests, they scored close to the control group after the theory of mind-based emotional development program. Aral et al. (2021) gave breathing exercise training to preschool teachers. In the role of emotion socializers, these teachers applied the breathing exercises given through distance education to children within the scope of distance education activities. As a result of the application, it was determined that there was no significant difference in the emotion regulation (negativity) sub-dimension. The variability/negativity sub-dimension of the emotion regulation scale includes characteristics such as reactivity, mobilization, inability to control anger, and moodiness. Therefore, no significant difference was found in the emotion regulation negativity sub-dimension, which suggests that the theory of mind-based emotional development program helps children control their emotions and reduces reactivity. Emotion regulation negativity subdimension is related to children's negative behaviors. For this reason, since no significant difference was found between the experimental and control groups in the emotion regulation negativity sub-dimension, it can be said that the program helped the children in the experimental group to regulate their negative emotions. The emotional development program based on the theory of mind includes drama and breathing exercises. Yoga and breathing exercises were performed with the children within the program. In addition, while working on the feeling of anxiety, the drama of a rabbit who had just started forest school was performed with the children. Since the program included activities that appealed to children's different senses, it is thought that while a significant difference was obtained in favor of the experimental group in the negativity sub-dimension of emotion regulation before the application, this difference disappeared after the application.

In light of the data obtained, it can be said that the program applied to the children helps to develop emotion regulation (emotion control) skills. Galyer and Evans (2001) determined that the emotion regulation and game behaviors of children aged four to five who benefit from preschool education are in a positive relationship with each other. In the study, there are games created by the children in the process of creating games from illustrated storybooks and in the method of storyline. It is thought that children's ability to regulate their emotions develops while playing games. After the program was implemented, there was an increase in the emotion control skills of five-year-old children who participated in the storyline and game-based education program prepared by Aksoy and Baran (2020), and in the ability to be aware of their emotions of themselves and those around them in the communication sub-dimension. The reason for this increase is stated in the program that children learn to develop alternative solutions to control their own emotions when they experience negative situations, and their ability to control their emotions with different activities is developed. It is thought that the fact that different activities such as Turkish language, art, science, and drama are included in the theory of mind-based emotional development program and that solutions are produced about how children can cope with their negative emotions through these activities create a significant difference in favor of the experimental group in the emotion regulation sub-dimension of the children.

In light of the data obtained, it can be concluded that the program applied to children helps them regulate their emotions. According to the data obtained from the study, it is seen that the experimental group could not regulate their negative emotions in the pre-tests and had difficulties in the dimension of emotion control. However, at the end of the research, the experimental group both started to cope with their negative emotions better and improve their emotion regulation skills in the dimension of emotion control. Aktürk (2016) examined the Effect of Game-Based Education on Children's Emotion Regulation Skills. At the end of the study, it was determined that the experimental group of children who received game-based education were more successful in emotion regulation skills. In the current research it has been determined that especially children who play imaginary and imitation games can better regulate their emotions through these games. As a result of the frequent use of game activities in the program applied to the experimental group children, the result in favor of the experimental group coincides with the results of this research. It is seen that the education given through games with different education programs improves children's emotion regulation skills. Because children learn to express themselves, recognize their emotions, and adjust their emotional reactions to a certain situation through games, within the theory of mind-based emotional development program, after children's basic emotions (happiness, sadness, fear, surprise) and emotions with high self-consciousness (pride, shame) are recognized, they can understand other people's emotions, regulate their negative emotions, and perform games and different activities. It is thought that a difference in favor of the experimental group was observed at the end of the study since the activities were discussed within the group and the feelings of others were realized.

In light of the data obtained, it can be said that the program applied to the children helps to develop their theory of mind skills. Ten different emotions were studied in the emotional development program based on the theory of mind. After these emotions were introduced to children, the

opportunity to understand emotion-thought and mental abilities and to observe the relationship between emotion-behavior was given to children. Likewise, in the storyline method, children were allowed to observe their reactions to certain situations through the character they created and the emotion-behavior relationship by putting themselves in their shoes. A similar study was done by Henseler (2000). Within the scope of the research, illustrated storybooks were read to children, and they were asked to tell these illustrated storybooks. According to the data obtained from the research, it was concluded that children who can better express the characters' emotional states in the illustrated storybook are better in both language and theory of mind skills.

According to a study conducted by Walker (2005) with children between the ages of three and five to examine the relationship between children's theory of mind skills and regulating negative emotions, a positive relationship was found between the theory of mind and the ability to regulate negative emotions. The experimental group of children included in the theory of mind-based emotional development program showed an increased understanding of emotions, emotion regulation, and the theory of mind skills. This increase is in line with the data obtained from the above study. Because the theory of mind skills is a concept intertwined with emotional competence. Likewise, according to the study conducted by Qui (2002) to understand the relationship between the theory of mind and understanding emotions in preschool children between the ages of two and eight, it is stated that children begin to be able to establish a relationship between emotions and the theory of mind especially when they reach the age range of five to six and that there is a positive relationship between understanding the desires and wishes of people and understanding facial expressions. This study also shows the effect of the applied education program on the theory of mind and the ability to understand emotions. In the experimental group of children included in the theory of mind-based emotional development program, there was a positive increase in both the theory of mind and the ability to understand emotions. It is thought that the reason for this increase is that after studying on the skills of understanding emotions by using illustrated storybooks in the program, based on these skills, studies were carried out to understand the relationship between emotion and state both in the stories in the illustrated storybooks and in the character they created in the storyline method. Similarly, Pelletier and Beaty (2015) found a significant relationship between the levels of understanding of the stories in illustrated storybooks and preschool children's theory of mind skills. In a study conducted by Fernández (2013), children with high theory of mind skills scores had higher scores in making sense of the characters' mental states in the storybooks they read. When we look at the data obtained from this research, it is seen that both the understanding of the emotions in the stories and the theory of mind skills of the children in the experimental group resulted in favor of the experimental group in the posttests. Educational programs supported by illustrated storybooks are thought to support children's theory of mind skills. According to the data obtained, the thoughts of the characters in the illustrated story books read by the children about the situations in the stories improve their gaze-taking skills. In this case, it increases their theory of mind levels. According to the data obtained in the study, it is thought that the point of view of the characters in the story is effective in developing children's theory of mind skills. However, these mass media provide one-way communication. During the time children spend with adults, two-way

interaction can be achieved by chatting and talking about a certain situation. When storybooks are included in this interaction, the child will be able to observe the emotional states of the adult reading the storybook and the character in the illustrated storybook and their reactions to a certain situation. It is thought that this situation contributes to the development of children's theory of mind skills. It is thought that the reason why the data obtained by Mar et al. (2010) and this study overlap with each other is the situation described above. As seen from the studies above, the theory of mind, knowledge of emotions, and skills of understanding emotions should not be considered separately. In the "theory of mind-based emotional development program" applied to the experimental group, there was an increase in favor of the experimental group because it included both theory of mind, emotion knowledge, and emotion regulation skills. It is thought that the activities that develop the theory of mind skills used in the storyline method and the questions used during reading in the illustrated storybooks in the program affect an increase in the children's theory of mind skills. The results obtained from the program overlap with the literature above.

According to these results, it can be said that the program has an important effect on children's ability to understand emotions by looking at the face and body. As a result of their study with preschool children, Parker, Mathis, and Kupersmidt (2013) found that understanding emotions by looking at the face and the body and understanding emotions only by looking at the face are predictors of each other and that the emotion regulation skills of the children who have a high level of understanding the emotions by looking at the body and the face or only by looking at the face. They determined that they got higher scores in their ability to solve emotional problems. The children included in the theory of mind-based emotional development program showed an increase in the ability to understand emotions by looking at the body and face, to understand emotions by looking at the face, and to regulate emotions in favor of the experimental group post-test. It is thought that the study is compatible with the studies obtained when the literature is examined. According to the data obtained from the study conducted by Nelson and Russell (2011) to understand the development of children's ability to understand emotions by looking at the body and face or just looking at the face, they determined that more stimuli should be given to preschool children to recognize emotions. As the clues (sound, etc.) increased, the children could better define that emotion. Within the theory of mind emotional development program, all emotions were introduced to children primarily with illustrated story books. In the emotional introductions, the researcher used both the books, his own body, and face and also worked with the children on the vocal responses that could be given when that emotion was felt. While giving emotional reactions, the children both saw the changes in the body visually and heard them as sounds. In this way, it aimed to develop the skills of understanding emotions by appealing to all children's senses. When the literature is examined, the findings obtained are in line with the data of Nelson and Russell (2011).

In light of the data obtained, it can be concluded that the program applied to the children helps their ability to understand emotions by looking at their faces. Izard et al. (2001) stated that children included in the emotional development program could better read the facial expressions of others, understand both their own and others' emotions, and thus are more successful in social relations and communication. When the studies obtained from the literature are examined, it is seen that there is

an increase in the ability to understand emotions by looking at the face with different activities. For this reason, it is thought that there is an increase in favor of the experimental group.

In light of the data obtained, it is thought that the program applied to the children helps their ability to understand emotions by looking at the stories. According to the results obtained from the study conducted by Uzmen and Mağden (2002) with the aim of “Supporting the prosocial behaviors of sharing and helping behaviors of 6-year-old children attending preschool institutions with illustrated children’s books that deal with these behaviors”, there were great changes in the helping behaviors of the girls participating in the study and in the sharing behaviors of the boys. Emotional competence is a concept that includes emotion knowledge, emotion regulation, expression of emotions, and empathy (Ersay, 2019). It is thought that even if the child has not experienced any situation, he can put himself in the place of that character through the studies made using illustrated storybooks, and in this way, he is trying to learn how to deal with that situation. Empathy is a concept included in prosocial behaviors (Eisenberg & Morris, 2001). Studies show that children’s prosocial behaviors are improved with illustrated storybooks, which are the harbingers of developing their emotional competence skills. Because children can put themselves in place of the characters in illustrated story books, which is thought to support the development of empathy. In this study, it is seen that the use of illustrated storybooks improves children’s ability to understand emotions positively. The ability to understand emotions is one of the sub-dimensions of emotional competence, just like empathy. For this reason, it is thought that this study and the data obtained from Uzmen and Mağden (2002) overlap.

According to the data obtained from this study, in which cultural differences are not observed, it is seen that talking to children about their emotional states in children’s books contributes positively to children’s emotional knowledge skills. The fact that twelve storybooks were included in the content of the theory of mind-based emotional competence program, stories were read by including primary (happiness, sadness, fear, surprise) and secondary emotions (pride and shame) in these books. Games were played in parallel with the story to understand emotions, which improved children’s ability to understand emotions. The studies obtained as a result of the literature review suggest that the theory of mind, understanding emotions, and emotion regulation skills are complementary to each other, and since activities to develop these skills are included in the theory of mind based emotional competence program, it is thought that there is a significant difference in favor of the posttest in children.

Suggestions

- In line with the data obtained in the research, the effectiveness of the program can be investigated by comparing studies in schools in regions with different socioeconomic levels.
- The effectiveness of the program can be investigated by adapting it to different age groups receiving pre-school education.
- The effectiveness of the prepared education program can be investigated by updating it as a family education program.

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