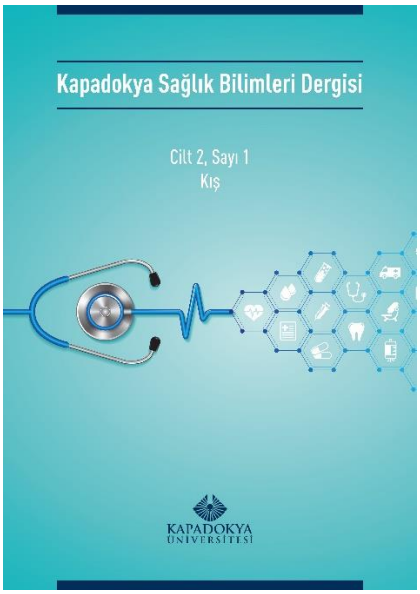

Volume 2 / Issue 1 / December 2023

Research Article

Social Problem-Solving Skills in Sock Factory Employees: A Cross-Sectional Study

Güllü USLIKILIÇ[1], Mahmut KILIÇ[2], Nursel ÜSTÜNDAĞ ÖCAL[3]

[1]Nurse, Yozgat Bozok University, Health Application and Research Center Hospital, Yozgat, Turkey.
ORCID: 0000-0002-8085-7826
2 Professor, Yozgat Bozok University Faculty of Medicine Department of Public Health, Yozgat, Turkey.
ORCID: 0000-0002-8921-1597
3 Assistant professor, Yozgat Bozok University Vocational School of Health Services, Yozgat, Turkey.
ORCID: 0000-0002-4951-0613
**Corresponding author: gullu.uslukilic@yobu.edu.tr*

Uslukılıç, G., Kılıç, M., Öcal, Üstündağ, N. (2023). Social problem-solving skills in sock factory employees: A cross-sectional study. *Cappadocia Health Sciences Journal*, 2(1), 181-197. DOI: https://doi.org/10.58241/ksbd.16

Submission Date: 20.07.2023; Accepted Date: 13.10.2023; Publication Date: 31.12.2023

Social Problem-Solving Skills in Sock Factory Employees: A Cross-Sectional Study

Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine the social problem-solving skill levels of the employees in the socks factory according to their socio-demographic characteristics. This research is cross-sectional type. The research was conducted among people aged 18-64 working in a socks factory in 2022. The research was conducted by applying a questionnaire to 152 employees who agreed to participate in the study. Data were collected using a socio-demographic data form and Social Problem-Solving Inventory-Short Form (SPSI-SF). The data were evaluated in the SPSS program. The scores obtained from the scales were analyzed using the T-test, ANOVA, and chi-square test. The total mean SPSI score of the participants was 70.6±12.6 high, and the scores of positive orientations to the problem (POI) (18.6) and negative orientation to the problem (POSY) (18.9), which are the sub-dimension of the problem orientation, were found to be similar. In the problem-solving sub-dimension, the mean scores of rational problem-solving (RPC), careless/impulsive style (RIS), and avoidant style (AS) were found to be 19.1, 18.7, and 20.2, respectively. The mean SPSI score was lower in the 30-34 age group ($p<0.05$). While the SPSI level of 23.0% of the employees was low, it was found to be high at 27.6%. The participants' problem orientation and problem-solving sub-dimensions mean scores were not statistically different according to gender, marital status, education level, income status, and working time at work. The employees' problem-solving skills were found to be high. Older people have higher problem-solving skills due to their more life experience.

Keywords: Social Problem Solving, Socks Factory, Sociodemographic Factors.

Çorap Fabrikası Çalışanlarının Sosyal Problem Çözme Becerileri: Kesitsel Bir Çalışma

Öz

Bu çalışma çorap fabrikasında çalışanların sosyo-demografik özelliklerine göre sosyal problem çözme beceri düzeylerini tespit etmek amacıyla yapılmıştır. Bu araştırma kesitsel tiptedir. Araştırma, 2022 yılında bir çorap fabrikasında çalışan 18-64 yaş grubunda olan kişiler arasında yapılmıştır. Araştırma, çalışmaya katılmayı kabul eden 152 çalışana anket uygulanarak yapılmıştır. Veriler, sosyo-demografik veri formu ve Sosyal Problem Çözme Envanteri-Kısa Formu (SPÇE-KF) kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Veriler SPSS programında değerlendirilmiştir. Ölçeklerden elde edilen puanlar, t testi, ANOVA testi ve ki-kare testi ile analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmaya katılanların SPÇE toplam puan ortalaması 70.6±12.6 yüksek olup, probleme yönelim alt boyutu olan probleme olumlu yönelim (POY) (18.6) ve probleme olumsuz yönelim (POSY) (18.9) puanları benzer bulunmuştur. Problem çözme alt boyutunda da rasyonel problem çözme (RPÇ), dikkatsiz/dürtüsel tarz (DDT) ve kaçınan tarz (KT) puan ortalamaları sırası ile 19.1, 18.7 ve 20.2 olduğu bulunmuştur. SPÇE puan ortalaması 30-34 yaş grubunda daha düşüktür ($p<0.05$). Çalışanların %23.0'ünün SPÇE düzeyi düşük iken %27.6'sının ise yüksek bulunmuştur. Katılımcıların probleme yönelim ve problem çözme alt boyutları puan ortalamaları cinsiyet, medeni durum, öğrenim durumu, gelir durumu ve iş yerinde çalışma süresine göre istatistiksel olarak farklı bulunmamıştır. Çalışanların problem çözme becerileri yüksek bulunmuştur. Yaşı büyük olanların hayat tecrübelerinin daha fazla olması nedeniyle problem çözme becerileri daha yüksektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Problem Çözme, Çorap Fabrikası, Sosyodemografik Faktörler

INTRODUCTION

Social problem-solving ability emerges as an important factor in every aspect of life. Faced with a problem, it can lead to an increase in anxiety and uncertainty in individuals, which in turn can lead to an increase in stress hormones (Çevik & Şentürk, 2008). Stress can cause various health problems in individuals and generally have a negative impact on mental health (Çevik & Şentürk, 2008). Besides affecting health, stress can also have a negative impact on individuals' daily lives. Stress can hinder individuals' capacity and even halt the expression of their existing capacity. The

longer a problem remains unresolved, the greater the exposure to stress. Therefore, early detection and recognition of problems and knowledge of appropriate solution methods are very important for individuals. It is believed that individuals with problem-solving skills can increase their quality of life and life satisfaction (Eryılmaz, 2009; Rowshan, 2000; Kaba, 2019; Doğan, 2020). There is a positive relationship between quality of life and job satisfaction, and therefore, the early identification of problems by employees and their ability to create necessary solutions are also important for quality of life and job satisfaction. When the literature is reviewed, it is observed that social problem-solving skills have been mostly studied in relation to students, parents, the healthcare sector, the education sector, and social workers (Akkuzu, 2019; Tuncel & Demirel, 2010; Altuntaş & Altınova, 2015; Samanci & Uçan, 2015; Duran, 2015). A detailed study examining the social problem-solving attitudes of employees in sock factories in our country has not been found.

The concept of work is a term that emerges alongside social relationships driven by individuals' motivation to meet their needs (Christiansen & Townsend, 2009). Work,' on the other hand, can be defined as the action and effort exerted by individuals to produce a physical or mental good or service for their benefit, providing them with material resources, status, and value, as well as enabling them to become an integral part of society (Gündoğan & Biçerli, 2004; Püsküllüoğlu, 1995). Work life constitutes a significant portion of an individual's overall life. It should be noted that problems arising from the workplace, as well as problems experienced in the social environment, can impact one's ability to eto solve problems effectively may manifest in the workplace. This is because the existence of a problem is often perceived as frustrating for individuals. In its most general sense, a problem refers to the inability to achieve the desired goal due to obstacles encountered between the current and desired states (Nezu, 2004; Nezu, Nezu, Zurilla, 2007). Individuals exhibit different behaviors when faced with problems, primarily due to their unease and discomfort in confronting problems. In fact, at this stage, individuals' approaches to problem-solving can vary greatly. Some individuals may reject and ignore the problem, while others accept its existence and try to overcome it. Consequently, individuals with underdeveloped problem-solving skills tend to avoid problems, whereas those with developed problem-solving skills identify and address the issues. The ability of individuals to identify a problem and find effective solutions by utilizing scientific and behavioral knowledge is referred to as problem-solving skills. Problem-solving skills are positively related to individuals' social activity and psychological well-being (Nezu, 2004). The working environment is crucial for occupational health and safety. Ensuring a safe and healthy working environment is the most important requirement and obligation in occupational life, aiming to protect employees from work

accidents and occupational diseases (Ünsar, 2003). Safety culture is defined as a complex framework within which groups and individuals function, consisting of national and occupational attitudes, values, beliefs, norms, social and technical practices (Özkan & Lajunen, 2003). Another definition states that it encompasses beliefs, attitudes, roles, norms, and social and technical practices developed to eliminate harmful or dangerous situations for employees, managers, customers, or the public (Turner et al., 1989).

Social problem-solving skills are essential for coping with the challenges of everyday life. These skills are particularly important in the workplace, where employees often face complex and demanding situations. Sock factory employees are no exception. This manuscript examines the social problem-solving skills of sock factory employees and the factors that influence these skills.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research was carried out cross-sectional.

Location and Time of the Research

The research was conducted in a sock factory located in Yozgat Organized Industrial Zone. Data collection took place between May and August 2022.

Population and Sample of the Research

The population of the research consisted of employees between the ages of 18 and 64 who worked in a socks factory located in the Yozgat Organized Industrial Zone. Two hundred people work in the Yozgat Socks factory. No sampling was done for the research, and 152 factory employees who agreed to participate were included. The minimum sample size for the study was calculated using GPower 3.1 software. In the minimum sample size calculation, when the SPSI-SF-CF scale score mean was 65.5 and the standard deviation was 6.4 (Çekici, 2009), with an effect size of 0.5 (Ho: 62.0), the minimum sample size was calculated as n = 54 with alpha = 0.05 and 0.95 power. Before filling out the survey forms, individuals were informed about the subject and purpose of the research, and their verbal consent was obtained.

Data Collection Methods

Data was collected by applying an online survey to sock factory employees. Before applying the data forms, employees were informed about the purpose and importance of the research. The data was completed by reaching a total of 152 factory employees who agreed to participate in the research between 31.01.2022 and 08.08.2022.

Data Collection Instruments

Socio-Demographic Questionnaire The socio-demographic questionnaire consists of a total of 12 questions developed by the researchers to determine variables such as age, gender, education level, perception of economic status, field of work, marital status, occupational health and safety training, and exposure to work accidents.

Social Problem-Solving Inventory-Short Form (SPSI-SF)

The short form of the Social Problem Solving Inventory, consisting of 25 items, was developed by D'Zurilla and his colleagues in 2002 (Zurilla, Maydeu-Olivares, & Kant, 1998). Turkish validity and reliability were tested by Çekici in 2009. The scale consists of two dimensions: problem orientation and problem-solving styles. The problem orientation dimension includes two sub-dimensions: positive problem orientation (PPO) and negative problem orientation (NPO).

The problem-solving dimension includes three sub-scales: Rational Problem Solving (RPS), Impulsive/Careless Style (ICS), and Avoidant Style (AS). The scale consists of a total of 25 items across 5 sub-scales. The scale items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (Not at all suitable) to 4 (Completely suitable). The sub-scale scores can be evaluated separately or based on the total score of the scale. The scale yields a score between 0 and 100, with 100 indicating the highest level of problem-solving ability. A high score indicates a "good level" of social problem-solving skills, while a low score indicates a low level of social problem-solving skills. The PPO sub-scale comprises items 4, 5, 13, 15, and 22, while the NPO sub-scale includes items 1, 3, 7, 8, and 11. The RPS sub-scale consists of items 12, 16, 19, 21, and 23, while the ICS sub-scale encompasses items 2, 14, 20, 24, and 25. Finally, items 6, 9, 10, 17, and 18 represent the AS sub-scale. No reverse-scored items are included in the scale.

The total scores of each subscale can be calculated and evaluated separately. However, in order to obtain the SPSSI-SF total score, the following formula must be applied: SPSSI-SF Total Score = Positive Problem Orientation Total Score + Rational Problem Solving Total Score + (20 - Negative Problem Orientation Total Score) + (20 - Impulsive/Careless Style Total Score) + (20 - Avoidant Style Total Score).

The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the scales are 0.81 for PPO-RPS, 0.76 for NPO, 0.61 for ICS, and 0.74 for AS. Cronbach's Alpha values in this study are 0.88, 0.67, 0.68, and 0.75 respectively. The SPSSI-SF total score was categorized as follows: 38-59 insufficient, 60-69 moderate, 70-79 su fficient, and 80 and above very sufficient level of problem-solving.

The positive problem orientation and rational problem-solving sub-scales represent a constructive approach to social problem-solving, while the negative problem orientation, impulsive/careless style, and avoidant style represent a "non-constructive (dysfunctional) approach" (Çekici, 2009).

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using the SPSS software. Independent samples t-test and ANOVA test were used to compare the arithmetic means of the scores obtained from the scales according to independent variables. The dependent variable was the SPSSI-SF scale score; the independent variables were socio-demographic characteristics. A table was created to display the problem-solving level according to socio-demographic characteristics and analyzed using a chi-square test. The statistical significance level was set at $p < 0.05$.

Ethics

The research obtained institutional permission from the management of Eren Socks Factory and ethical approval from the Yozgat Bozok University Ethics Committee, with a decision dated April 20, 2022, numbered 32/18. Prior to the research, participants were provided with necessary explanations, and their informed consent was obtained, assuring them that their information would be kept confidential and not used elsewhere. The research was conducted in accordance with the principles of the Helsinki Declaration.

RESULTS

Among our study participants, 46.1% were female, 29% were aged 18-24, 57.9% were married, 39.5% had a high school diploma, 57.2% had an income lower than their expenses, 55.3% had 0-1 years of work experience at their workplace, 44.7% had a job involving machinery operation, and 69.1% had not experienced any near-miss incidents (Table 1).

When examining the mean scores of SPSI according to the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants, the average total SPSI score was 70.6. According to the post hoc Tamhane test, the average SPSI score of the 30-34 age group was lower than that of the 35-39 and 40+ age groups and was statistically significant. The SPSI score was found to be higher and statistically significant ($p <0.05$) in individuals who did not experience a near-miss event (72.1). Gender, marital status, educational level, income level, work experience, and job position did not show a statistically significant difference in SPSI scores ($p>0.05$) (Table 1).

Table 1. SPSI-SF Total Scores According to the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Emp loyees

				SPSI-SF Total		t/ F P
		n	%	Mean	Sd	
Gender	Female	70	46,1	72,1	12,4	t=1,420 0,158
	Male	82	53,9	69,2	12,6	
Age Groups	18-24 Age	45	29,6	69,1	13,3	F=4,614 **0,002**
	25-29 Age	38	25,0	71,2	12,8	
	30-34Age	27	17,8	63,7	12,8	
	35-39 Age	23	15,1	75,0	7,7	
	Ages 40 and Above	19	12,5	77,3	9,9	
Marital Status	Married	88	57,9	70,2	11,7	t=0,375 0,708
	Single	64	42,1	71,0	13,7	
Education Levels	Middle school and below	48	31,6	69,0	11,8	F=2,270 0,107
	High school	60	39,5	69,4	12,6	
	University	44	28,9	73,9	13,0	
Income Levels	Income less than expenses	87	57,2	70,2	12,4	F=0,171 0,843
	Income equal to expense	49	32,2	70,7	13,8	
	Income more than expenses	16	10,5	72,2	9,6	
Duration At Workplace	0-1 Years	84	55,3	70,5	13,1	t=0,084 0,933
	2 years and above	68	44,7	70,7	12,1	
Tasked Work	Working with the machine	68	44,7	68,9	12,6	F=1,297 0,276
	Doing other production work other than machinery	33	21,7	70,6	12,5	
	Working in cooking, cleaning, etc.	51	33,6	72,7	12,5	
Near-Miss Event Status	No	105	69,1	72,1	12,7	t=2,413 **0,018**
	Yes	47	30,9	67,0	11,8	
	Total	**152**	**100,0**	**70,6**	**12,6**	

SPSI-SF: Social Problem Solving Inventory, t-test for independent groups, F. One-way ANOVA test

23.0% of the employees had low SPSI levels, while 27.6% had high levels. The SPSI levels of the employees were found to be significantly different across age groups, with the lowest level observed in the 30-34 age groups (11.1%) and the highest level in the 40+ age group (36.8%) ($p<0.05$). Gender, marital status, educational level, income level, work experience, job position, and experience of a near-miss event did not show a statistically significant difference in SPSI levels ($p>0.05$) (Table 2).

Table 2. SPSI Level of Employees by Socio-Demographical Characteristics

		SPSI-SF grup								X^2
		38-59		60-69		70-79		80 +		P
		n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	
Gender	Female	13	18,6	12	17,1	22	31,4	23	32,9	4,939 0,176
	Male	22	26,8	22	26,8	19	23,2	19	23,2	
Age Groups	18-24 Age	11	24,4	12	26,7	11	24,4	11	24,4	27,935 **0,006**
	25-29 Age	9	23,7	9	23,7	7	18,4	13	34,2	
	30-34 Age	14	51,9	4	14,8	6	22,2	3	11,1	
	35-39 Age	1	4,3	4	17,4	10	43,5	8	34,8	
	Ages 40 and Above	0	,0	5	26,3	7	36,8	7	36,8	
Marital Status	Married	21	23,9	19	21,6	26	29,5	22	25,0	1,156 0,763
	Single	14	21,9	15	23,4	15	23,4	20	31,3	
Education Level	Middle school and below	12	25,0	12	25,0	16	33,3	8	16,7	7,162 0,306
	High school	15	25,0	15	25,0	13	21,7	17	28,3	
	University	8	18,2	7	15,9	12	27,3	17	38,6	
Income Level	Income less than expenses	23	26,4	17	19,5	23	26,4	24	27,6	10,905 0,091
	Income equal to expense	10	20,4	15	30,6	9	18,4	15	30,6	
	Income more than expenses	2	12,5	2	12,5	9	56,3	3	18,8	
Duration At Workplace	0-1 Yeras	18	21,4	21	25,0	22	26,2	23	27,4	0,836 0,841
	2 years and above	17	25,0	13	19,1	19	27,9	19	27,9	
Tasked Work	Working with the machine	19	27,9	17	25,0	15	22,1	17	25,0	8,413 0,209
	Doing other production work other than machinery	6	18,2	7	21,2	14	42,4	6	18,2	
	Working in cooking, cleaning, etc.	10	19,6	10	19,6	12	23,5	19	37,3	
Near-Miss Event Status	No	20	19,0	22	21,0	30	28,6	33	31,4	4,732 0,193
	Yes	15	31,9	12	25,5	11	23,4	9	19,1	
	Total	**35**	**23,0**	**34**	**22,4**	**41**	**27,0**	**42**	**27,6**	

When examining the sub-dimension scores of problem orientation according to the socio-demographic characteristics of the employees, the average score for positive orientation towards problems (PPO) was 18.6, while the average score for negative orientation towards problems (NPO) was 18.9. The PPO score was significantly higher in individuals who did not experience a near-miss event (19.2) compared to those who did (17.3) ($p<0.05$). There was no statistically significant difference in PPO scores based on gender, marital status, educational level, income

level, work experience, and job position (p>0.05). There was no statistically significant difference between socio-demographic characteristics and NPO scores (p>0.05) (Table 3).

Table 3. Average Scores of Sub-Dimensions of Problem Orientation by Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Employees

		PPO		t/ F	NPO		t/ F
		Mean	**Sd**	**P**	**Mean**	**Sd**	**P**
Gender	Woman	19,0	3,2	1,318 0,190	19,1	3,2	t=0,489 0,625
	Man	18,2	4,1		18,8	4,4	
Age Groups	18-24 Age	18,2	4,0		18,8	4,4	
	25-29 Age	18,3	4,6	1,152 0,335	19,1	4,2	F=0,216 0,929
	30-34 Age	18,3	3,0		18,4	3,6	
	35-39 Age	18,8	2,7		19,3	2,4	
	Ages 40 and Above	20,2	2,9		19,2	4,2	
Marital Status	Married	18,5	3,6	0,224 0,823	18,8	3,6	t=0,295 0,769
	Single	18,7	3,9		19,0	4,3	
Education Status	Middle school and below	18,3	3,7	0,259 0,773	19,1	3,6	F=1,468 0,234
	High school	18,7	3,7		18,3	4,1	
	University	18,8	3,8		19,6	3,9	
Income Level	Income less than expenses	18,7	3,9	1,477 0,232	18,8	3,7	F=2,510 0,085
	Income equal to expense	18,9	3,0		18,5	4,6	
	Income more than expenses	17,1	4,6		20,9	2,3	
Duration At Workplace	0-1 Years	18,7	3,5	0,448 0,655	18,5	4,1	t=1,478 0,142
	2 years and above	18,4	4,0		19,4	3,6	
Tasked Work	Working with the machine	18,4	3,9		18,5	4,3	
	Doing other production work other than machinery	18,7	3,2	0,146 0,865	18,8	3,2	F=1,023 0,362
	Working in cooking, cleaning, etc.	18,8	3,9		19,5	3,8	
Near-Miss Event Status	No	19,2	3,4	2,884 **0,005**	18,9	4,2	t=0,300 0,765
	Yes	17,3	4,1		19,1	3,3	
	Total	**18,6**	**3,7**		**18,9**	**3,9**	

PPO: Positive problem orientation, NPO: Negative problem orientation

In our study, the sub-dimension scores of problem-solving methods (RPS, ICS, and AS) according to the socio-demographic characteristics of the employees were found to be 19.1, 18.7, and 20.2, respectively. When examining the average scores of rational problem-solving (RPS) based on socio-demographic characteristics, it was found that females, individuals aged 40 and above, and those who did not experience a near-miss event had higher RPÇ skill scores, and these differences were statistically significant ($p<0.05$). Marital status, educational level, income level, work experience, and job position did not show a statistically significant difference in RPÇ scores ($p>0.05$) (Table 4).

Table 4. The Sub-Dimensions of Problem Solving Methods According to the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Employees, Mean Scores

		RPS		t/ F P	ICS		t/ F P	AS		t/ F P
		Mean	**Sd**		**Mean**	**Sd**		**Mean**	**Sd**	
Germen	Female	19,4	3,8	7,895 **0,006**	19,2	4,1	0,208 0,649	20,5	4,2	0,028 0,867
	Male	18,8	5,1		18,4	4,4		20,1	4,4	
Age Groups	18-24 Age	18,2	5,0	2,768 **0,03**	18,8	4,3	7,607 **0,00**	20,2	4,7	2,874 **0,025**
	25-29 Age	18,8	5,5		18,6	4,5		21,3	4,1	
	30-34 Age	18,4	3,6		15,6	4,3		18,0	5,0	
	35-39 Age	19,4	3,0		21,4	2,3		21,0	2,7	
	Ages 40 and Above	22,1	3,0		20,1	2,8		20,7	3,0	
Marital Status	Married	19,1	4,4	0,008 0,994	18,7	3,9	0,186 0,853	20,1	4,0	0,459 0,647
	Single	19,1	4,8		18,8	4,8		20,4	4,6	
Education Level	Middle school and below	18,4	4,3	1,234 0,294	18,5	4,6	0,243 0,785	19,6	4,1	2,929 0,057
	High school	19,0	4,7		18,6	4,2		19,8	4,5	
	University	19,9	4,5		19,1	4,0		21,5	4,0	
Income Level	Income less than expenses	19,0	4,5	1,473 0,233	18,7	4,1	1,136 0,324	20,0	4,3	0,802 0,450
	Income equal to expense	19,7	3,9		18,3	4,6		20,2	4,5	
	Income more than expenses	17,4	6,2		20,2	4,1		21,5	3,5	
Duration At Workplace	0-1 Yıl	18,9	4,4	0,555 0,580	19,0	4,4	0,959 0,339	20,4	4,3	0,342 0,733
	2 years and above	19,3	4,8		18,4	4,1		20,1	4,3	
Tasked Work	Working with the machine	18,9	4,8	0,573 0,565	18,3	4,5	1,247 0,290	19,9	4,4	1,311 0,273
	Doing other production work other than machinery	19,8	3,6		18,5	3,7		19,8	4,0	
	Working in cooking, cleaning, etc.	18,8	4,8		19,5	4,3		21,0	4,3	

Near-Miss Event Status	No	19,6	4,2	2,351 **0,02**	18,9	4,3	0,765 0,445	20,6	4,2	1,388 0,167
	Yes	17,8	5,2		18,3	4,2		19,5	4,3	
	Total	**19,1**	**4,6**		**18,7**	**4,3**		**20,2**	**4,3**	

RPS: Rational Problem Solving, ICS: Impulsive/Careless Style, AS: Avoidant Style

When examining the average scores of the sub-dimension of impulsive/problematic style (ICS) of SPSI based on socio-demographic characteristics, it was found that individuals aged 30-39 had the highest score (21.4) ($p<0.05$). Gender, marital status, educational level, income level, work experience, job position, and experience of a near-miss event did not show a statistically significant difference in ICS scores ($p>0.05$) (Table 4).

The average scores of the sub-dimension of avoidance style (AS) of SPSI were found to be highest in the 25-29 age group (21.3), which was statistically significant ($p<0.05$). Gender, marital status, educational level, income level, work experience, job position, and experience of a near-miss event did not show a statistically significant difference in AS scores ($p>0.05$) (Table 4).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined social problem-solving skills among sock factory employees and the factors that influence them. No previous study has specifically investigated the attitudes of sock factory employees in our country regarding social problem-solving.

Our study revealed that textile workers have a high level of effective social problem-solving skills. The results also showed a positive association between advanced age and problem-solving abilities, which is consistent with the findings of previous studies (Efe, Öztürk, & Koparan, 2008). In a study conducted by Seçer and Kanbur (2019) on textile factory workers, it was found that employees perceived themselves as insufficient in problem-solving skills.

In a research study aimed at investigating differences in social problem-solving skills across age groups, the findings indicated that these skills tend to increase from young adulthood (17-20 years) onwards. However, a decline in these skills was observed during middle adulthood (40-45 years) and in the subsequent period categorized as late adulthood (60-80 years) and beyond (Zurilla, Maydeu-Olivares, and Kant, 1998). Similarly, in our study, the average SPSI score of the 30-34 age group was lower compared to the 35-39 and 40+ age groups, and this difference was statistically significant (see Table 1). These results highlight lower SPSI scores in younger individuals compared to their older counterparts.

In a study conducted by Başar and colleagues on nurses, they concluded that there was no significant relationship between education level and problem-solving skills. Similarly, Kelleci and Gölbaşı also reached the same conclusion in their studies involving nurses, stating that there was no significant relationship between nurses' problem-solving skills and their education levels. These two studies support the findings of our own research (Başar et al., 2015; Kelleci & Gölbaşı,

2004). Although the development of problem-solving skills is often associated with acquiring knowledge, the lack of a significant relationship between education and problem-solving skills is an interesting observation. In our study, no relationship was found between education level and social problem-solving skills (Table 1). There are studies in the literature that support our findings (Küçük, 2013; Karakurt, 2015).

Akın et al. (2017) found that gender was associated with problem-solving skills in nursing students, unlike our study. Kelleci and Gölbaşı (2004) also found a relationship between problem-solving skills and gender in nurses. However, Bozkurt and Özgenel (2020) found no significant relationship between social problem-solving and gender, years of experience in the profession, or education level in teachers, which is consistent with our study. These differences in research findings may be due to the different sectors in which the studies were conducted.

In our study, there was no difference in social problem-solving skills based on work experience (Table 1). A study conducted on healthcare professionals also found no relationship between work experience and social problem-solving (Erdem, 2001).

Previous research has shown that problem-solving skills tend to increase with age (Gemlik & Sur, 2003; Çelenk & Topoyan, 2017; Öztürk & Öner). For example, Blanchard-Fields (2007) found that older workers were more effective in solving problems than younger workers. Similarly, in our study, we found a positive relationship between age and problem-solving skills. Problem-solving skills tend to increase with age because older adults have more experience and knowledge, which allows them to better identify and solve problems. There were no statistically significant relationships between problem-solving skills and gender, marital status, education level, income level, work experience, job position, or near-miss incident experience (Table 2).

When the problem orientation sub-dimension scores were examined, the average scores of positive and negative problem-solving orientations were very similar. Employees who had near-miss incident experience had higher positive problem orientation scores, but the difference was not statistically significant (Table 3). People with a positive problem-solving orientation are thought to have more self-confidence and to better evaluate the risk of work accidents. However, in our study, there was no statistically significant difference in PPO or NPO scores among employees based on their gender, marital status, education level, income level, work experience, or profession (Table 3). One possible explanation for the lack of a statistically significant difference in PPO or NPO scores among employees based on their gender, marital status, education level, income level, work experience, or profession is that these factors are less important than other factors, such as near-miss incident experience, in determining problem-solving skills. Near-miss incident experience is crucial for recognizing and identifying risks.

Therefore, it is assumed that employees who have experienced near-miss incidents are more likely to have a high problem-solving orientation.

In a study conducted with university students, the rational problem-solving method was found to be higher compared to other methods (Çeşit, 2017). A high avoidance style can be considered a negative tendency to avoid taking responsibility by ignoring or denying the problem. Erkuş and Bahçecik (2015) found that the level of avoidance style was higher among nurses working in outpatient clinics than among those working in intensive care units (Kantek & Gezer, 2010). Similarly, in another study conducted on employees working in childcare centers, the level of avoidance style was found to be lower than in our study. This difference may be due to the sector and the nature of the work. For example, in the complex and challenging environment of the intensive care unit, nurses need to detect and solve problems early, which require taking urgent responsibility. On the other hand, polyclinic duties may not be as systematic and complex, which may lead to a higher tendency for avoidance style. Similarly, in an environment with family-like characteristics where there are family problems and special attention is required, individuals working with children may not be able to avoid responsibility and may be more active in problem-solving, resulting in lower avoidance style scores (Nacar & Tümkaya, 2011; Erçevik & Köseoğlu, 2019).

Previous research has shown that people with high proactive problem-solving (PPS) scores are able to generate solutions to the problems they encounter and are more confident in their problem-solving skills (Ertuğrul, 2019). Additionally, older workers have been found to have higher problem-solving skills than younger workers (Blanchard-Fields, 2007; Erdem & Yazıcıoğlu, 2015; Kutluca, 2018). In our study, we found that individuals aged 40 and over, women, and those who had not experienced near-miss incidents had higher PPS scores. Similar to the findings of Ertuğrul (2019) and Demirtaş and Dönmez (2008), our research findings showed that individuals aged 40 and over had significantly higher scores on the proactive problem-solving sub-dimension. However, in Ertuğrul's study, both age and work experience were found to be statistically significant factors affecting problem-solving skills, while in our study, work experience was not found to be significant. These differences may be due to changes in personal characteristics or differences in the nature of the work being done.

The impulsive/careless approach is known to involve the need for using necessary knowledge and experience, making hasty decisions, and inadequate planning. In our study, it was determined that only ICS scores were significant according to age groups (Table 4). No significant difference was observed with respect to other factors. In contrast to our study findings, Çeşit's study found that the avoidance style score increased with age (Çeşit, 2017). It is believed that as age increases, the

use of the negative problem-solving sub-dimension ICS style may be influenced by behaviors such as the desire to complete tasks and avoiding wasting time.

Developing social problem-solving skills is essential for employees in every sector. Therefore, it is recommended to understand employees' attitudes toward solving social problems and support them with in-service training. It is important to remember that facing problems is a normal part of life, and that failure to use effective problem-solving methods can lead to a decrease in self-confidence, an increase in the risk of work accidents, social isolation, negative experiences, and avoidance of responsibility, decreased job satisfaction, and decreased work efficiency. More comprehensive studies on social problem-solving skills in different populations are needed.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of our study is that it was conducted in a single textile factory, with few comparable studies in the literature. This limits our ability to generalize our findings to other populations and settings. Additionally, our sample size was relatively small. Future research could address these limitations by conducting studies with larger sample sizes and in different populations and settings.

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