

The Effect of “Anger Management Peer Education” Applied to University Students on Training Anger and Anger Expression Style

Üniversite Öğrencilerine Uygulanan “Öfke Kontrolü Akran Eğitimi”nin Sürekli Öfke ve Öfke İfade Tarzına Etkisi

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ÖZET

Amaç: Bu çalışmanın amacı, "Öfke Yönetimi Akran Eğitimi Programı"na katılan üniversite öğrencilerinin sürekli öfke düzeylerini ve öfke ifade biçimlerini belirlemektir.

Yöntem: Selçuk Üniversitesi Hemşirelik Fakültesi üçüncü sınıf öğrencileri çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Çalışma, 30 müdahale grubu ve 30 kontrol grubu olmak üzere toplam 60 öğrenci ile yürütülmüştür. Müdahale grubuna 6 oturumlu "Öfke Yönetimi Akran Eğitimi" programı uygulanırken, kontrol grubuna herhangi bir müdahale uygulanmamıştır. Örneklem büyütüklüğü G*Power 3.1.9.2 programı kullanılarak hesaplanmıştır. Örneklem büyütüklüğü, etki büyütüklüğü 0,8, istatistiksel güç %80 ve hata payı %5 olacak şekilde 60 öğrenci olarak belirlenmiştir. Dahil etme kriterlerini, sürekli öfke ölçeginde 20 ve üzeri puan alan öğrenciler oluşturmaktadır. Dışlama kriterlerini ise psikiyatrik tanı almış olmak veya en az iki eğitim oturumuna katılmamış olmak oluşturmaktadır.

Bulgular: Program, sürekli öfke düzeylerini önemli ölçüde azaltmış ve öfke ifade biçimlerini olumlu yönde etkilemiştir.

Sonuç: Literatür taraması, üniversite öğrencilerinde öfke üzerine sınırlı sayıda çalışma olduğunu göstermektedir. Akran temelli öfke yönetimi programları özellikle yetersizdir. Akran eğitimi modelinin üniversite öğrencilerine öfkeyle ilgili konularda daha yaygın olarak uygulanması gerektiği düşünülmektedir. Ayrıca daha kapsamlı araştırmalar yapılması da önerilmektedir. Öfkenin doğal ve bazen de gereklili bir duygusu olduğu göz önüne alındığında, akran eğitimi programlarının artırılması, öğrencilerin öfkeyi yapıcı bir şekilde kullanmalarına ve kötü öfke yönetimiyle ilişkili olumsuz sonuçları önlemelerine yardımcı olabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öfke, Akran Eğitimi, Üniversite Öğrencileri, Rastgele Kontrollü Çalışma.

ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of this study was to determine the trait anger levels and anger expression styles of university students who participated in the 'Anger Management Peer Education Programme'.

Method: Third year students of Selçuk University Faculty of Nursing were included in the study. The study was conducted with a total of 60 students, 30 in the intervention group and 30 in the control group. A 6-session 'Anger Management Peer Education' programme was applied to the intervention group, while no intervention was applied to the control group. Sample size was calculated using G*Power 3.1.9.2 program. The sample size was determined as 60 students with an effect size of 0.8, statistical power of 80%, and a 5% margin of error. Inclusion criteria were students who scored 20 or above on the trait anger scale. Exclusion criteria were having a psychiatric diagnosis or missing at least two training sessions.

Results: The programme significantly reduced trait anger levels and positively affected anger expression styles.

Conclusion: The literature review shows that there is a limited number of studies on anger in university students. Peer-based anger management programmes are particularly lacking. It is believed that the peer education model should be applied more widely for university students on anger-related issues. It is also recommended to conduct more comprehensive research. Given that anger is a natural and sometimes necessary emotion, increasing peer education programmes may help students use anger constructively and prevent negative outcomes associated with poor anger management.

Keywords: Anger, Peer Education, University Students, Randomized Controlled Trial.

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INTRODUCTION

When the definitions made regarding the concept of anger are examined, it is striking that there are different views on this subject. Webster Dictionary (1999) defines anger as a strong emotion that occurs in the face of injustice. The dictionary of psychological terms, on the other hand, addresses anger as the emotional awareness that an individual develops against disturbing situations (Waddel, 2004). In the Turkish Language Association Dictionary (2005), anger is defined as the aggressive reaction, anger and rage given against situations of frustration, injury or threat (Turkish Language Association Dictionary, 2005).

Anger is a natural, universal and human emotion that occurs in the face of uncontrollable events, unmet needs and expectations. It is also an emotional reaction with high potential for harm. Uncontrolled anger has serious effects not only on individuals but also on the social level. Anger plays an important role in social problems such as crime, violence and harassment (Askari, 2019; Yang et al., 2020). Anger experienced in daily life often causes at least two people to be negatively affected. While an angry individual has difficulty controlling his/her emotions, the other person may not know how to deal with this situation. While intense and improperly managed anger can lead to serious problems, anger can also serve a constructive function if the individual knows himself/herself and expresses his/her emotions in appropriate ways. On the other hand, suppressed or denied anger can have consequences that can harm both the individual and his/her environment (La & Yun, 2019). Therefore, how anger is expressed is of great importance. Anger can be interpreted in different ways depending on the way it is expressed. Depending on the nature of the event, the current circumstances and the individual's personal characteristics, anger can turn from a mild irritability to a serious reaction accompanied by intense and aggressive behavior. In this respect, anger can sometimes appear as a moderate, sometimes constructive,

and sometimes an intense emotion that lasts for a long time and has destructive effects. Anger manifests itself in different ways in each individual and is generally classified in three ways: anger directed inward, anger expressed outward and anger control (Sadri Damirchi et al., 2018; Willner et al., 2019). When anger is managed appropriately, it has positive effects on the individual's psychosocial development, interpersonal relationships and general life satisfaction. However, when it is not managed, it can lead to destructive consequences for the individual himself, his family, his work environment and society (Özmen, 2016). Considering that university students will provide services to protect and improve individual, family and community health in their future professional lives, they must first be healthy and strong individuals in terms of biopsychosocial aspects. Students who cannot manage their anger and cannot establish healthy and satisfying relationships may encounter various difficulties in fulfilling their responsibilities towards the individuals they serve, their close circle, society, colleagues and members of the healthcare team. Therefore, providing anger management training to students so that they can cope with such difficulties during the education process is of great importance for both their individual and professional development. In our project carried out within this framework, a peer education on anger management was carried out for university students. The peer education approach allows students with similar experiences to empathize with each other more easily and to make practical suggestions to each other. When the relevant literature is examined, it is seen that there are descriptive and experimental studies on the emotion of anger in Turkey; however, peer education practices are generally aimed at young people at middle and high school levels. In this context, our study is original in terms of presenting a peer education program for university students and the content of the education sessions.

Purpose of the study

This study was conducted to determine the trait anger levels and anger expression styles of university students in the 'Anger Control Peer Education Programme'.

Research hypotheses

Hypothesis 1.1: There is a difference between the trait anger score averages of university students who participated in anger management peer education and the score averages of the students in the control group.

Hypothesis 1.2: There is a difference between the anger-in sub-dimension score averages of university students who participated in anger management peer education and the score averages of the students in the control group.

Hypothesis 1.3: There is a difference between the anger-out sub-dimension score averages of university students who participated in anger management peer education and the score averages of the students in the control group.

Hypothesis 1.4: There is a difference between the anger control sub-dimension score averages of university students who participated in anger management peer education and the score averages of the students in the control group.

METHOD

Type of research

This study was structured as a pre-test/post-test design

Population and sample of the study

The population of the study consisted of third year students of Selçuk University Faculty of Nursing. The sample size was calculated in G*Power 3.1.9.2 analysis programme. The sample of the study was determined as a total of 60 students, 30 intervention and 30 control, with an effect size of 0.8, 80% power and (Cohen 1988), 5% margin of error. The inclusion criteria were those who scored high (20 points and above) on the trait anger scale, the exclusion criteria included students with any psychiatric diagnosis and those who did not attend at least two sessions of the training programme.

Data collection tools

Personal information form

This form consists of six questions covering age, gender, family structure, parents' education levels, and perceived economic status. It was developed based on existing literature (Al Majali & Ashour, 2020; Bahrami & Yousefi, 2021; Kutlu & Bedel, 2019; Maleki et al., 2011).

Trait anger and anger expression styles scale

The Turkish validity and reliability study of the scale was conducted by Özer (1994) (Özer, 1994).

Anger management peer education program

The program was conducted through weekly sessions, with each session lasting approximately 45 minutes. The training schedule was aligned with students' regular coursework to avoid interruptions to their education. No interventions were applied to the control group. During the training, written and visual materials, Q&A sessions, sample case analyses, and educational CDs were utilized.

The purpose of this experimental study designed in the pre-test post-test design is to examine the effect of "Anger Management Peer Education" applied to university students on trait anger and anger expression style. The study was planned to be conducted on third-year students of Selçuk University Faculty of Nursing. Third-year students of Selçuk University Faculty of Nursing constituted the universe of the study. The sample size in the study was calculated with the G*Power 3.1.9.2 analysis program. The sample of the study was determined as a total of 60 students, 30 intervention and 30 control, with an effect size of 0.8, 80% power, and 5% margin of error. The inclusion criterion of the study was those who scored high (20 points and above) on the trait anger scale, the exclusion criterion was those who had any psychiatric diagnosis, and the exclusion criterion was those who did not attend at least two sessions of the education program.

Data collection

Intervention phase

The Intervention Phase of the study was carried out in two steps: Anger Management Peer

Education Structuring Process and Peer Educator Selection Process. Anger Management Peer Education; was prepared in accordance with the literature. It was organized in accordance with the education level of the students and consists of six sessions (Al Majali & Ashour 2020; Bahrami & Yousefi 2021; Kahali et al., 2020; Kutlu & Bedel 2019; Maleki et al. 2011; Sukhodolsky et al., 2009) (Table 1). In order to evaluate the suitability of the session titles, objectives and contents in terms of content validity, expert opinions were received from 3 faculty members who are experts in the field. The program was finalized in line with the opinions received from the experts.

“Anger management peer education” trainer selection and preparation of trainer

The peer educator was selected from students who had listening skills and interpersonal communication skills, and were accepted and respected by the group. In addition, care was

taken to have students who had leadership qualities, the potential to be exemplary individuals, the time, energy and desire to work voluntarily, the ability to intervene in all kinds of positive and negative situations that may occur in the group and who did not exhibit judgmental attitudes. Before moving on to the experimental phase, the expectations from peer education and the methods to be used in education were explained in detail to the peer educator. The peer educator was explained his/her roles and responsibilities during the education, how to be an example, and the feedback and/or reinforcement processes. A planned, well-organized anger management education program was implemented to develop the teaching skills of the peer educator. Thus, it was expected that the teaching skills of the peer educator would increase with the support provided.

Table 1. Anger management peer education

Sessions	Session Objectives
Session 1: GETTING acquainted	Purpose: To provide information about the anger management program
Session 2: RECOGNIZING ANGER	Purpose: To recognize the causes and symptoms of anger
Session 3: CONTROLLING ANGER-BREATHING AND RELAXATION EXERCISE	Purpose: To learn to control / cope with anger (Developing coping strategies for the body)
Session 4: CONTROLLING ANGER- (Change of thoughts, Problem solving)	Purpose: To learn to control / cope with anger (Developing coping strategies for emotions and thoughts)
Session 5: CONTROLLING ANGER- (Getting away from the environment, discharging negative energy)	Purpose: To learn to control / cope with anger (Developing coping strategies for emotions and thoughts)
Session 6: GENERAL EVALUATION	Purpose: To evaluate the anger management program

Pre-test data collection and program implementation

Pre-test data for the intervention and control groups were collected by researchers in the classroom setting prior to the start of the training program. Post-test data were gathered after the completion of the training program. To determine the sociodemographic characteristics of the students, the Personal Information Form (ANNEX-2) and the Trait Anger and Anger Expression Styles Scale (ANNEX-3) were utilized.

Ethical and legal considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the Selçuk University Faculty of Nursing Non-Interventional Clinical Research Ethics Committee, and legal authorization was granted by the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing (Date: 30.11.2022, Decision number: 2022/60). Consent was secured from participants via the Informed Voluntary Consent. Additionally, permission was sought and obtained via email from the authors who conducted the validity and

reliability studies of the scales used in the research.

Data analysis

The research data were analyzed using the IBM SPSS 22 software package. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Q-Q plots were used to assess data distribution normality. Descriptive statistics (e.g., numbers, percentages, means, and standard deviations) were calculated. Independent t-tests were employed to compare scale score averages between the control and experimental groups, as the data met normal distribution criteria. Wilcoxon analysis was

applied to compare pre-test and post-test scores for data not following a normal distribution. The homogeneity of independent variables between groups was evaluated using chi-square tests. Statistical significance was set at $p<0.05$.

FINDINGS

When the distributions of the students in the experimental and control groups according to gender, mother and father education status were compared with chi-square analysis, it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference between the groups ($p>0.05$) (Table 2).

Table 2. Comparison of descriptive characteristics of students in experimental and control groups

Characteristics	Experimental Group (n: 30)		Control Group (n: 30)		Test value	P
	n	%	n	%		
Gender*						
Female	18	60.0	14	53.3	$\chi^2:2.041$	0.41
Male	12	40.0	16	46.7		
Mother's Education Status*						
Primary/Middle School	19	63.3	15	50.0	$\chi^2:0.374$	0.56
High School and above	11	36.7	15	50.0		
Father's Education Status*						
Primary/Middle School	18	60.0	11	36.7	$\chi^2:6.374$	0.73
High School and above	12	40.0	19	63.3		

χ^2 :Kikare test, $p<0.05$

* Since the observed number in the eyes was less than 25, chi-square analysis with Yates correction was performed.

While the mean Trait Anger score of the students in the experimental group in the pre-test was 28.63 ± 6.03 , it was observed that this mean decreased to 22.63 ± 5.37 in the post-test. In contrast, the mean Trait Anger score of the control group in the pre-test was 29.34 ± 4.37 , and this value remained almost constant at 29.41 ± 4.52 in the post-test. Similarly, the mean Anger-in score of the experimental group in the pre-test was 19.31 ± 3.37 , and it decreased to 15.74 ± 4.45 in the post-test. In the control group, these scores were measured as 20.24 ± 3.74 and 21.05 ± 2.65 , respectively. The mean Anger-out score was found to be 21.36 ± 2.74 in the pre-test and 17.63 ± 1.75 in the post-test in the experimental group. The mean Anger Expression score of the students in the control group at the beginning (pre-test) was found to

be 20.79 ± 2.46 , and the mean Anger Expression score after the experiment (post-test) was found to be 20.86 ± 4.31 . While the mean Anger Control score was 17.32 ± 2.07 in the pre-test in the experimental group, it increased significantly to 21.19 ± 2.41 in the post-test. In the control group, these values were 17.11 ± 3.64 and 17.43 ± 2.36 , respectively.

As a result of the statistical analyses, significant differences were found between the pre-test and post-test measurements of the experimental group in terms of Trait Anger, Anger-in, Anger-out and Anger Control scores ($p<0.05$). In contrast, no significant difference was found in the same variables in the control group ($p>0.05$). In addition, no statistically significant difference was found between the mean scores of both groups before the application ($p>0.05$).

However, after the application, it was determined that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the

experimental and control groups in Trait Anger, Anger-in, Anger-out and Anger Control ($p<0.05$) (Table 3).

Table 3. Comparison of trait anger and anger expression style scale mean scores of students in the experimental and control groups

Scales	Experimental Group (n: 30) $\bar{x} \pm SS$	Control Group (n: 30) $\bar{x} \pm SS$	Test value	Significance p
Trait Anger				
Baseline	28.63±6.03	29.34±4.37	1.207	0.278
Post-Experiment	22.63±5.37	29.41±4.52	0.462	0.03*
Z Value	0.175	2.789		
p (sd:2)	0.01*	0.32		
Anger-In				
Baseline	19.31±3.37	20.24±3.74	1.274	0.41
Post-Experiment	15.74±4.45	21.05±2.65	1.241	0.02*
Z Value	1.207	0.452		
p (sd:2)	0.04*	0.49		
Anger-Out				
Baseline	21.36±2.74	20.79±2.46	0.415	0.641
Post-Experiment	17.63±1.75	20.86±4.31	2.475	0.01*
Z Value	0.374	1.034		
p (sd:2)	0.03*	0.41		
Anger Control				
Baseline	17.32±2.07	17.11±3.64	0.673	0.71
Post-Experiment	21.19±2.41	17.43±2.36	2.374	0.02*
Z Value	2.224	0.782		
p (sd:2)	0.01*	0.91		

* $p<0.05$, Z: Wilcoxon test, t: Independent groups t test

DISCUSSION

In this study, an anger management-based peer education program was implemented for third-year university students in order to enable them to manage their anger levels, develop appropriate coping strategies, and offer constructive suggestions to each other with peer support. When the trait anger, anger-in, anger-out, and anger control levels of the experimental and control groups were compared within the scope of the study, it was observed that the students in the experimental group differed significantly and positively in terms of these variables. It was determined that trait anger, anger-in, and anger-out scores decreased significantly in the experimental group; on the other hand, anger control scores increased significantly. According to the findings obtained, it can be said that peer-supported anger management training applied to ,

university students was effective in reducing both inward and outward expressions of anger and in developing anger management skills. There are also studies in the literature that reach similar results. For example, in the study conducted by Duran and Eldeleklioglu (2005) with adolescents aged 15-18, significant improvements were observed in the experimental group's trait anger, anger-in, anger-out, and anger control levels after the anger control program; In the control group, no significant change was recorded in these levels. Similarly, in a study conducted by Cenkseven (2003) with vocational high school students aged 14-18 in Adana, it was stated that the anger management skills program created significant changes in the students' trait anger, externalized anger and anger control levels. However, in the same study, although there was a decrease in the

levels of internalized anger in favor of the experimental group, the pre-post test interaction between the experimental and control groups was not found to be statistically significant. This suggests that although a positive change was observed in the experimental group, the difference between the two groups did not reach a significant level. Serin and Genç (2011) examined the effects of anger management training on the anger control skills of adolescents. As a result of the research conducted with 9th grade students in a state high school in Buca district of Izmir province in the 2006-2007 academic year, it was determined that there was a significant improvement in trait anger, anger-in and anger-out levels and anger control scores after the anger management training program applied to the experimental group. Sütçü et al. (2010) evaluated the effectiveness of the cognitive behavioral group therapy program they applied to reduce anger and aggression in adolescents. According to the research findings, significant differences were observed in trait anger, anger-in, anger-out and anger control levels in the experimental group after the therapy, while no significant change was observed in these variables in the control group. Kelleci et al. (2014) conducted a study with 337 ninth grade students studying at a high school in the spring semester of the 2012-2013 academic year and investigated the effects of an anger management program based on cognitive behavioral techniques on the students' anger and assertiveness levels. The findings revealed that there was a significant decrease in anger levels and an increase in anger control in the experimental group where the program was applied, while there was no significant change in the control group. Similarly, in a study conducted by Esen et al. (2015) in a middle school in the city center of Mersin, it was determined that the psycho-educational program had a significant effect on the students' trait anger, anger outward, and anger control levels. However, although a decrease in the level of anger-in was observed in favor of the experimental group, the pre-post test interaction between the experimental and control groups

was not found to be statistically significant. Damirchi et al. (2018) investigated the impact of psychological resilience training on anger control and psychological well-being in impulsive students. The study focused on a group of female students exhibiting aggressive behaviors at Kamyaran Shahid Ghafari High School. Their findings revealed that the psycho-education program significantly improved levels of trait anger, anger-in, anger-out, and anger control in the experimental group, while no such significant changes were observed in the control group. Maleki et al. (2011) examined the effects of group-based anger management training on the aggression levels of male students aged 12-15. As a result of the research, significant changes were observed in trait anger, anger expressed, anger expressed, and anger control levels after the anger management training applied to the experimental group. In contrast, no significant difference was found in these variables in the control group. In the study conducted by Harooni et al. (2020) in Tehran, Iran, the effects of anger management training on resilience and general health were evaluated with female students attending technical and vocational high schools. The research results revealed that the applied training provided a significant increase in the students' psychological resilience and general health levels. When the scores obtained from the students' pre-test, post-test, and follow-up tests were examined, it was determined that the post-test and follow-up scores were higher than the pre-test scores. It is thought that the relaxation techniques, assertiveness skills, practices aimed at increasing self-esteem, and strategies focused on strengthening interpersonal relationships included in the training content were effective in this development. Shirin et al. (2010) conducted a study with male high school students and investigated the effects of anger management skills training on aggression levels. The findings revealed a significant decrease in aggression levels in students who participated in the training. These results show that anger management training can be an

effective intervention method in reducing aggressive behavior.

CONCLUSION

When the relevant literature is examined, it is seen that anger management programs play a vital role in managing anger. However, the studies conducted are aimed at high school and middle school students, and it is observed that there are few studies on university students. It is also seen that anger management programs based on peer education are lacking. In addition, we think that the peer education model should be used more frequently for university students in the field of anger and that more comprehensive research should be done on this subject. Considering that anger is an inevitable and even necessary feeling in life, it is thought that peer education models should be increased for university students so that they can use their anger energy positively and thus many negative situations that may be experienced due to anger management disorders can be avoided.

Study limitations

This study was limited to third-year students at Selçuk University Faculty of Nursing who met the study's eligibility criteria.

Yazarlık katkısı

Çalışma fikri: NL, HG

Tasarım: İC

Veri toplama: EP, HG, MA

Sonuçların analizi ve yorumlanması: NL, İC

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Author contributions

Conception: NL, HG

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Design: İC

Data collection: EP, HG, MA

Analysis and interpretation of data: NL, İC

Drafting the manuscript: HG, MA

Critical review: İC, NL

All authors (HG, MA, EP, İC, NL) reviewed the results and approved the final version of the article.

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Ethics Committee

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Lisans bilgisi

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