



EXAMINATION OF SOCIAL SKILLS OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN IN TURKEY

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Abstract:

This study aims to investigate whether there is a relationship between the 5-6 years old children's social skills and their age, gender as well as their parent's age and educational background and similar variables. The sampling of the study consists of the 5-6 years old children who continue kindergarten, nursery and pre-school in the city of Ankara. The sampling was composed of 300 children and their parents (143 girls and 157 boys). The data was collected with questionnaire and scales. The information about children and their parents was compiled by using the questionnaire form that was prepared by the researcher. The children social skills were measured by using "Social Skills Assessment Scale" that includes 62 items with 9 sub-scales developed by Avcıoğlu (2007). The obtained data was tested with t-test and one-way ANOVA. The results showed that there are statistically significant differences between gender and social skills of children. The girls have statistically higher scores than boys on social skills sub-scales. Also, there are statistically significant differences in some social skills scales between mothers who are not working and mothers who are working. Children whose mothers are housewives had much higher scores on Anger Management and Accommodation Skills, Self-Control Skills, Listening Skills, Outcome Accepting Skills than children whose mothers are working. The results are discussed within the scope of the relevant literature.

Keywords: 5-6 years children, pre-school, social skills, Turkey

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1. Introduction

The pre-school education mostly comprises of early childhood years from the beginning of birth to the first year of primary education. During the early childhood years, the children should have rich and stimulant educational environment. The pre-school education also shapes children's cognitive and developmental characteristics with the appropriate cultural values (Oğuzkan ve Oral, 1997: 3).

According to Özdemir (2012), the first social contact of the child is with the mother. In order to satisfy his /her needs, the child communicate with his/her mother. Human beings tend to interact with other people to acknowledge their needs, thoughts and feelings. In order to be accepted by other people, a person should have appropriate social skills. All of these skills can be labeled as 'social skills' (Öğretir, 2006). Social skills are approaches that children acquire that make them enable to behave appropriately in different environments. They assist children learn to start or manage social interaction in divergent settings with a number of people. Social skills are increased as children learn from a variety of models for learning and friendship.

Social skills can be defined as abilities for the adaptation of social environment. They play important role to develop inter-personal relations and social interaction (Avcıoğlu, 2001: 2). Social skills include multiple set of behaviors. They can be the basis of broader social competences. During the early childhood development, social skills are fundamental factor of emotional and social learning. They are prerequisite for the development of social competences during middle childhood and even adulthood. Social skills can be categorized as sharing, comforting, helping, cooperation, social problem solving, assertion, and other forms of pro-social behaviors (Trentacosta and Izard, 2007: 65).

Social development during early childhood is characterized by learning social skills to in the family context. A healthy and comfortable family environment promotes the development of social skills. When the children have good relations with their parents during infancy, it is likely that they have friendly relationships with their peers. In the early childhood state, children may have specific social skills. First, they build an ability to understand others' emotions and cognitions. Second, they can generate alternative solutions to certain problems. They can think about their actions and behaviors in terms of consequences of those actions. In terms of communication skills, children may become aware of turn-taking, positive reinforcement, listener responsiveness, and the maintaining attention. In terms of friendships, the children move from playing alone to coordinated social plays. Although friendships are mostly transitory, the children still play with their friends in order to increase entertainment and excitement. Children become friends with their peers *"on the basis of playing together, physical proximity, and common expectations, activities and possessions."* (Merrell and Gimpel, 2014: 32-33).

During the early childhood development stage, there are many factors affecting social skills. One of the most important factors is the parent attitudes toward their child. Attitudes are cognitive, social, behavioral and emotional predispositions toward any object. We cannot directly observe attitudes. They cannot obtain by birth and they are not innate. They mostly learned (Öğretir, 1999). We can only change a person attitude by learning and teaching. As a result, family should play constructive and important roles to develop healthy social attitudes and social skills (Demiriz and Ogretir, 2007; Aydın, 1985: 88). In a study, Merrell (1994) shows that when the children grow older, they have much better social interaction, social independence and social cooperation with their environment. Also, they have less problematic behaviors (Pırtık, 2013: 36).

In some early childhood education, it is shown that education may help pre-school children to obtain social skills. There is a positive correlation between the adults personality, habit, belief, attitude and value and early childhood social and emotional development and skills (Oktay, 2004). During the pre-school years in kindergarten and nursery, the shaping of social relationship with other children is essential for healthy cognitive, emotional, behavioral, social and psychological development of young children. When the child enter into early childhood education environment, it is the departure from the infants' social world that represented by the parents-child social interactions. In a family environment, the children may learn social skills such as turn-taking and reciprocity "literally at their mother's knee." When the child starts school, they can learn new social skills because of their interaction with peers. Such social skills are fundamental for shaping positive relationships with peers and reaching social goals (Odom and McConnell, 1996: 436).

Family is the most important institution that affect the child's early development. According to studies, family and school should work together to have better early childhood development and education (Olçay, 2008: 79). Family is the first place where a child obtains its social skills (Çağdaş, 1997: 102). School environment is also an important factor to acquire social skills for early childhood development. Teachers can help children read other people feelings by their body language or tone of voice. Moreover, they are instrumental for children to cope with their emotions (self-regulation). Children can be taught in early childhood education setting to have better social skills to handle bullying of other children. Children who had closer relationships with their early childhood teachers may have better social skills and behavior. Also, the child who has relationships with age-level peers may develop better social skills. In a school with small group experience, the child may build social skills by better understanding of self and other. Also, the child may appreciate group membership (Gordon and Browne, 2017: 472).

Social-emotional development is prerequisite for early childhood development. Studies show that a person display behaviors that is acceptable by social environment. When a person learns a behavior, after a while it becomes natural behavior for that

person (Öğretir, 2004; Çetin, Bilbay, Kaymak, 2002: 6). In a play group environment in the pre-school, play partners offer opportunities for interpersonal learning with companionship and entertainment. In order to have friendly relations, children first learn the rule of reciprocity. They need to learn how to cooperate, negotiate and compromise. Interactions with other peers in school foster and motivate interpersonal understanding and support the development of crucial social skills.

Language is the primary tool in which children make interpersonal contact, construct relationships, and conduct interactions with others. When children have poor communication skills, they may not be able to effectively engage in others. Many important social skills are also depended on expressive and friendly language abilities. Children also need to adequately express their own needs, ideas, and goals. During early childhood, peer interactions more and more become part of children's social worlds. During this period, peers have many influences on socialization of a child than during infancy and toddlerhood. It assumes that socially skilled children have more positive interactions with peers. (Martin and Fabes, 2009: 434) Similarly, more positive interactions with peers increase social skills, socialization experience, and social contact. When the child plays with the peers, it requires the ability to communicate shared representations. If children have good communication skills, they can demonstrate more social competence with their peers. If children have low ability to express themselves, they become frustrated. As a result, it limits their ability to effectively interact with peers and uses non-verbal and aggressive communication tools. In short, good language skills are essential for good social skills (Fabes, Gaertner, and Popp, 2008).

This study is essential because it compares 5-6 years old children's social skills in accordance with their gender, age, parents working condition, living places, family's number of children and child sequence in the family. It contributes child development literature. It focuses on the question which variables affect pre-school children social skills.

2. Method and Materials

2.1 Research Model

In order to determine the degree of variation between two or more variables, this research was used to quantitative method with statistical analysis. The research is implemented by using the relational survey model.

2.2 Data Collection

Before any data collection attempt, the parents of the children were invited for a contact meeting in order to inform them about the purpose of the research and collect necessary permission for the study. The researcher has prepared personal data form to collect the

basic information such as children gender and age as well as parents' ages, educational background, occupations, living places, number of children, etc. In addition, the researcher has used the Social Skills Assessment Scale that was distributed to children's parents and teachers. The teachers have filled out the scale by observing children during the semester.

The sampling of the study consists of the 5-6 years old children who attend the state-run independent pre-schools, kindergarten and nursery classes in the city of Ankara. The sampling was composed of 300 children in the 5-6 years old and their parents. The sampling method was simple random sampling method. Out of 300 children who participated at the study, 143 of them were girls while 157 were boys. (%47.7girls and %52.3boys).

2.3 Social Skills Assessment Scale (SSAS 4-6 years old)

The Social Skills Assessment Scale (SSAS) was developed by Avcıoğlu (2001) in order to measure the 4-6 years old children social skills during the pre-school stage. The Scale has 62 items and 9 subscales. All scale items include positive statement with 5-Likert scale: Always does (5), Often does (4), Usually does (3), Slightly does (2), Never does (1).

The subscales are labeled as follows: (1) Interpersonal Skills (IS); (2) Anger Management and Accommodation Skills (AMAS); (3) Coping with Peer Pressure Skills (CPPS); (4) Verbal Explanation Skills (VES); (5) Self-Control Skills (SCS); (6) Purpose Forming Skills (PFS); (7) Listening Skills (LS); (8) Task Completing Skills (TCS); (9) Outcome Accepting Skills (OAS).

In addition to subscales, total score of the scale can be taken into consideration. If the children receive the low total score, it means that they have low level of social skills. If they get the high total score, it can be interpreted as having high level of social skills. The highest score could be 310 and the lowest score could be 62 (Avcıoğlu, 2007).

2.4 Data Analysis

The Cronbach Alpha reliability co-efficient was found .972. The Cronbach Alpha of the subscales are as follows: .957 for 1st, .917 for 2nd, .927 for 3rd, .940 for 4th, .907 for 5th, .953 for 6th, .835 for 7th, .945 for 8th, .912 for 9th. and .972 for the total. The data were analyzed by SPSS 20. The first analysis was primarily frequency. Because the data were normally distributed, T-Test and One-Way ANOVA were performed in order to reveal the effects of variables on the social skills of the children.

3. Findings and Discussion

This section presents the main findings within the framework of the purpose of this study. The descriptive statistical results were given in Table 1 about the children, their

parents and family. After presenting demographic variables, there are results about social skills sub-scales.

Table 1: Results of Demographic Variables of Children and Their Parents

Demographic Variables		N (300)	%
Mothers Ages	20-30 years old	109	36.3
	31-35 years old	107	35.7
	36-45 years old	84	28.0
Mothers Educational Backgrounds	Primary and Secondary School	82	27.3
	High School	133	44.3
	University	85	28.3
Whether Mothers Work or not	Yes	85	28.3
	No	215	71.7
Mothers Occupation	Housewife	203	67.7
	Civil Servant	58	19.3
	Self-employed /Artisan	39	13.0
Fathers Age	20-30 years old	37	12.3
	31-35 years old	100	33.3
	36-40 years old	97	32.3
	41-45 years old	66	22.0
Fathers Educational Backgrounds	Primary and Secondary School	65	21.7
	High School	116	38.7
	University	119	39.7
Fathers Occupation	Civil Servant	127	42.3
	Self-employed /Artisan	173	57.7
How long Children continue pre-school	0-1 Year	203	67,7
	1 and more	97	32.3
Where Last Five Years Family Live	City	247	82.3
	Town	53	17.7
Family Structure	Geniş Aile	43	14.3
	Çekirdek Aile	257	85.7
Family Income Level	500-2500 TL arası	190	63.3
	2501-üzeri	110	36.7
Children Sequence in the Family	First child	137	45.7
	Second child	122	40.7
	Third child	41	13.7
Child Age	48-60 months	65	21.7
	61-84 months	235	78.3
Child Gender	Girl	143	47.7
	Boy	157	52.3
Family's Children Number	1	79	26.3
	2	163	54.3
	3 and above	58	19.3
Total		300	100

When we focus on Table 1, mothers who participate in the study were % 36,3 of them are in the age range of 20-30years, % 35,7 of them were in 31-35 years, and % 28 of them were in 36-45 years. According the results of mothers education background, % 27,3 of them graduated from elementary school, % 44,3 of them were in high school and % 28,3 of them attended university. The question about whether mothers are working or not, % 28,3 of them indicated they were working and % 71,7 of them were not working. If we look mothers' occupation, % 67,7 of them were housewives, % 19,3 of them were civil servants and % 13 of them self-employed/artisan.

The fathers who participate the study were % 12,3 of them were in 20-30 age range, % 33,3 of them were in 31-35 age, % 32,3 of them were in 36-40, % 22 of them were in 41-45. The educational background of fathers were as follows: % 21,7 of them were elementary, % 38,7 of them were high school, and % 39,7 of them were university.

The occupation of the fathers indicated that % 42,3 of them were civil servant and % 57,7 of them were self-employed/artisan.

The question about how long the children are attending the pre-school institution, the percentage of 0-1 year were % 67,7 and 1 year and more were % 32,3. The family who live in city in the last five years were % 82,3 and the family who live in town in the last five years were 17,7. If we look at the children sequence in the family, the percentage of the first child were % 45,7, the second child were % 40,7 and the third child were % 13,7. The children age range were as follows: 48-60 months were % 21,7 and 61-84 months were 78,3. The gender of the children were % 47,7 of girls and % 52,3 of boys. The number of the children in the family indicated % 26,3 of them had one child, % 54,3 of them had two child and % 19,3 of them had three and more child.

Table 2: t-test Results of the Social Skills Assessment Sub-Scales by Children Gender

Social Skills Assessment Scale	Girl (n=143)		Boy(n=157)		t-Test results	
	\bar{x}	Ss	\bar{x}	Ss	T	p
Interpersonal Skills (IS)	57.25	13.53	51.94	13.56	3.389	.001
Anger Management and Accommodation Skills (AMAS)	41.13	9.39	37.77	8.82	3.195	.002
Coping with Peer Pressure Skills (CPPS)	34.02	8.67	31.84	8.38	2.206	.028
Verbal Explanation Skills (VES)	26.65	7.23	23.77	6.86	3.528	.000
Self-Control Skills (SCS)	14.69	3.87	12.92	4.04	3.859	.000
Purpose Forming Skills (PFS)	11.34	3.09	10.22	3.09	3.129	.002
Listening Skills (LS)	20.50	4.91	19.14	5.01	2.363	.019
Task Completing Skills (TCS)	12.78	2.90	11.85	3.00	2.698	.007
Outcome Accepting Skills (OAS)	15.21	3.86	13.92	3.87	2.888	.004

p>.005

Table 2 indicates statistically significant results for children interpersonal skills (IS). The girls participants (\bar{x} =57,25) had much higher scores on IS than the boy participants (\bar{x} =51,94) (t=3.389, p<.001). The girls participants (\bar{x} =41,13) had statistically significant

results than the boy participants ($\bar{x} = 37,77$) on the anger management and accommodation skills (AMAS) sub-scale ($t=3.195$, $p<.002$). When the researcher analyzed the verbal explanation skills subscale, the results showed that the scores of the girl participants ($\bar{x} = 26,65$) were statistically significant than the score of the boy participants ($\bar{x} = 23,77$) ($t=3.528$, $p<.000$). Similarly, the girls ($\bar{x} = 14,69$) had statistically significant results on self-control skills than the boys ($\bar{x} = 12,92$) ($t=3.859$, $p<.000$). In the purpose forming skills subscale, the girls ($\bar{x} = 11,34$) had higher scores than the boys ($\bar{x} = 10,22$) ($t=3.129$, $p<.002$). The outcome accepting skills also show statistically significant differences between the girls ($\bar{x} = 15,21$) and boys ($\bar{x} = 13,92$) participants ($t=2.888$, $p<.004$). As we analyzed the Table 2, we can clearly observe that the girls participants had higher scores for the most social skills sub-scales than the boy participants. It can be interpreted as mother's attitudes may have an effect on children according to their gender. Girls were much more socially skilled than boys.

Table 3: t-test Results of the Social Skills Assessment Sub-Scales by Mothers Working Conditions

Social Skills Assessment Scale	Not Working (n=215)		Working (n=85)		t-Test results	
	\bar{x}	Ss	\bar{x}	Ss	T	p
Sub-scales						
Interpersonal Skills (IS)	55,37	13,70	52,18	13,81	-1,812	.071
Anger Management and Accommodation Skills (AMAS)	40,07	9,11	37,60	9,38	2,102	.036
Coping with Peer Pressure Skills (CPPS)	33,32	8,43	31,76	8,88	1,422	.156
Verbal Explanation Skills (VES)	25,39	7,29	24,52	6,87	-,936	.350
Self-Control Skills (SCS)	14,10	4,01	12,91	4,05	2,296	.022
Purpose Forming Skills (PFS)	10,86	3,15	10,48	3,10	-,951	.342
Listening Skills (LS)	20,24	4,88	18,65	5,15	2,490	.013
Task Completing Skills (TCS)	12,47	2,87	11,85	3,24	1,611	.108
Outcome Accepting Skills (OAS)	14,90	3,80	13,62	4,09	2,569	.011

$p>.05$

Table 3 has given information about the comparison between mothers working conditions and social skills assessment subscales. The participants were asked whether they are working or not. They responded that 215 of them are housewives (not working) and 85 of them are working with jobs. In anger management and accommodation skills, the children whose mothers are not working ($\bar{x} = 40,07$) had statistically significant results than the children whose mothers are working ($\bar{x} = 37,60$) ($t=2,102$, $p<.05$). In self-control skills sub-scale, the children whose mothers are housewives ($\bar{x} = 14,10$) were significantly higher scores than the children whose mothers have jobs ($\bar{x} = 12,91$) ($t=2,296$, $p<.05$). The children whose mothers are housewives ($\bar{x} = 20,24$) were significantly higher scores than the children whose mothers have jobs ($\bar{x} = 18,65$) in listening skills sub-scale ($t=2,490$, $p<.05$). The children whose mothers

responded question as not working (\bar{x} =14,90) had statistically significant differences than the children whose mothers responded question as working (\bar{x} =13,62) ($t=2,569$, $p<.05$). It is noted that there were no statistically significant differences between children mothers' who has jobs and children mothers' who are housewives. However, it should be emphasized that children whose mothers are housewives had much higher scores on Anger Management and Accommodation Skills, Self-Control Skills, Listening Skills, Outcome Accepting Skills than children whose mothers are working. As a result, we may conclude that children whose mothers are not working were more successful in some social skills areas than children whose mothers are working.

Table 4: t-test Results of the Social Skills Assessment Sub-Scales
by Families Living Place (City versus Town)

Social Skills Assessment Scale Sub-scales	Town (n=53)		City (n=247)		t-Test	
	\bar{x}	Ss	\bar{x}	Ss	T	p
Interpersonal Skills (IS)	52,01	15,47	55,00	13,37	-1,431	.154
Anger Management and Accommodation Skills (AMAS)	38,07	10,57	39,65	8,92	-1,127	.298
Coping with Peer Pressure Skills (CPPS)	32,03	10,08	33,06	8,23	-,790	.430
Verbal Explanation Skills (VES)	23,37	7,57	25,52	7,04	-1,987	.048
Self-Control Skills (SCS)	12,96	4,66	13,93	3,90	-1,595	.112
Purpose Forming Skills (PFS)	10,15	3,53	10,88	3,04	-1,551	.111
Listening Skills (LS)	18,81	6,62	20,00	4,57	-1,578	.116
Task Completing Skills (TCS)	11,64	3,50	12,44	2,85	-1,773	.077
Outcome Accepting Skills (OAS)	13,92	4,37	14,67	3,81	-1,261	.208

$p>0,05$

When we focused on Table 4, we are able to compare the children who live in city and the children who live in town. In most subscales of social skills assessment, there were no statistically significant differences. But we can conclude that the children who live in city may have relatively higher scores on all sub-scales than the children who live in town. The only statistically significant difference is on verbal explanation skills sub scale between children who are in city (\bar{x} =25,52) than children who are in town (\bar{x} =23,37) ($t=1,987$, $p<.05$).

Table 5: t-test Results of the Social Skills Assessment Sub-Scales by Children Age

Social Skills Assessment Scale Sub-scales	48-60 months (n=65)		61-84 months (n=235)		t-Test	
	\bar{x}	Ss	\bar{x}	Ss	T	p
Interpersonal Skills (IS)	52,93	13,65	54,89	13,82	1,014	.311
Anger Management and Accommodation Skills (AMAS)	38,09	9,20	39,72	9,24	1,264	.207
Coping with Peer Pressure Skills (CPPS)	33,63	8,93	32,67	8,48	,793	.428

Verbal Explanation Skills (VES)	24,35	7,37	25,36	7,12	1,006	.315
Self-Control Skills (SCS)	13,50	4,14	13,83	4,03	-581	.562
Purpose Forming Skills (PFS)	10,00	3,08	10,96	3,12	2,209	.028
Listening Skills (LS)	19,18	4,93	19,96	5,02	1,108	.269
Task Completing Skills (TCS)	11,98	3,01	12,38	2,98	-,960	.338
Outcome Accepting Skills (OAS)	14,35	3,70	14,59	3,98	-,432	.666

p>0.05

If Table 5 is examined, it is inferred that there were is statistically significant differences between the children who are 61-84 months (\bar{x} =10,96) and the children who are 61-84 months (\bar{x} =10,00) about the purpose forming skills (PFS) sub-scale (t=2,209 , p<.05). In terms of age differences, older children had much better skills on purpose forming than younger children.

Table 6: One-Way ANOVA Results of the Social Skills Assessment Sub-Scales by Mother Job/Occupation

Social Skills Assessment Sub-scales		Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Square	F	p
Interpersonal Skills (IS)	Between Groups	410,582	2	128,26	1,081	.340
	Within Groups	56419,96	297	189,32		
	Total	56830,78	299			
Anger Management and Accommodation Skills (AMAS)	Between Groups	256,52	2	128,26	1,507	.223
	Within Groups	25283,66	297	189,32		
	Total	25540,78	299			
Coping with Peer Pressure Skills (CPPS)	Between Groups	115,52	2	57,76	,783	.458
	Within Groups	21903,39	297	73,74		
	Total	22018,91	299			
Verbal Explanation Skills (VES)	Between Groups	72,02	2	36,01	,697	.499
	Within Groups	15337,51	297	51,64		
	Total	15409,54	299			
Self-Control Skills (SCS)	Between Groups	34,53	2	17,26	1,050	.351
	Within Groups	4885,13	297	16,44		
	Total	4919,66	299			
Purpose Forming Skills (PFS)	Between Groups	34,83	2	17,41	1,775	.171

	Within Groups	2914,40	297	9,81		
	Total	2949,23	299			
Listening Skills (LS)	Between Groups	174,82	2	87,41	3,548	.030
	Within Groups	7316,36	297	24,63		
	Total	7491,18	299			
Task Completing Skills (TCS)	Between Groups	22,42	2	11,20	1,254	.287
	Within Groups	2652,59	297	8,93		
	Total	2675,00	299			
Outcome Accepting Skills (OAS)	Between Groups	52,76	2	61,40	1,724	,180
	Within Groups	4543,76	297	15,06		
	Total	4596,52	299			

Table 6 shows that children whose mother are not working (\bar{x} =20,29) had higher listening skills scores than children whose mother either civil servants (\bar{x} =19,12) or self-employed (\bar{x} =18,20) (F =3.548, p <.030).

Table 7: One-Way ANOVA Results of the Social Skills Assessment Sub-Scales by Children Sequence in the Family

Social Skills Assessment Sub-scales		Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Square	F	p
Interpersonal Skills (IS)	Within Groups	1534,71	2	767,35	4,122	,017
	Between Groups	55296,06	297	186,18		
	Total	56830,78	299			
Anger Management and Accommodation Skills (AMAS)	Within Groups	527,30	2	263,65	3,131	,045
	Between Groups	25012,87	297	84,21		
	Total	25540,18	299			
Coping with Peer Pressure Skills (CPPS)	Within Groups	510,18	2	255,09	3,522	,031
	Between Groups	21508,73	297	72,42		
	Total	22018,91	299			
Verbal Explanation Skills (VES)	Within Groups	254,36	2	127,18	2,492	,084
	Between Groups	15155,18	297	51,02		

	Total	15409,54	299			
Self-Control Skills (SCS)	Within Groups	92,50	2	46,25	2,846	,060
	Between Groups	4827,16	297	16,25		
	Total	4919,66	299			
Purpose Forming Skills (PFS)	Within Groups	104,30	2	52,15	5,445	,005
	Between Groups	2844,93	297	9,57		
	Total	2949,23	299			
Listening Skills (LS)	Within Groups	388,70	2	194,35	8,127	,000
	Between Groups	7102,48	297	23,91		
	Total	7491,18	299			
Task Completing Skills (TCS)	Within Groups	125,09	2	62,54	7,285	,001
	Between Groups	2549,90	297	8,58		
	Total	2675,00	299			
Outcome Accepting Skills (OAS)	Within Groups	133,135	2	66,56	4,430	,013
	Between Groups	4463,38	297	15,02		
	Total	4596,52	299			

Table 7 indicates statistically significant results for purpose forming skills (PFS) according the child sequence in the family. There are first child, second child and third child. The second child (\bar{x} =11,18) had much higher scores on PFS than the first (\bar{x} =10,80) and the third child (\bar{x} =9,34) ($F=5.445$, $p<.005$). Similarly, the second child (\bar{x} =20,70) had statistically significant results than the first child (\bar{x} =19,77) and the third child (\bar{x} =17,14) on the listening skills (LS) sub-scale ($F=8.127$, $p<.000$). When the researcher analyzed the task completing skills subscale, the results showed that the scores of the second (\bar{x} =12,84) were statistically significant than the scores of the first (\bar{x} =12,25) and third child (\bar{x} =10,82) ($F=7.285$, $p<.001$). As we analyzed the Table 6, we can clearly observe that the second child had higher scores for the some social skills sub-scales than the first and third child.

Table 8: One-Way ANOVA Results of the Social Skills Assessment Sub-Scales
by Number of Children in the Family

Social Skills Assessment Sub-scales		Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Square	F	p
Interpersonal Skills (IS)	Within Groups	654,73	2	327,36	1,731	,179
	Between Groups	56176,05	297	189,14		
	Total	56830,78	299			
Anger Management and Accommodation Skills (AMAS)	Within Groups	404,39	2	202,19	2,389	,093
	Between Groups	25135,78	297	84,63		
	Total	25540,18	299			
Coping with Peer Pressure Skills (CPPS)	Within Groups	228,15	2	114,07	1,555	,213
	Between Groups	21790,75	297	73,37		
	Total	22018,91	299			
Verbal Explanation Skills (VES)	Within Groups	217,10	2	108,55	2,122	,122
	Between Groups	15192,43	297	51,15		
	Total	15409,54	299			
Self-Control Skills (SCS)	Within Groups	55,94	2	27,97	1,708	,183
	Between Groups	4863,72	297	16,37		
	Total	4919,66	299			
Purpose Forming Skills (PFS)	Within Groups	67,03	2	33,51	3,454	,033
	Between Groups	2882,19	297	9,70		
	Total	2949,23	299			
Listening Skills (LS)	Within Groups	320,25	2	160,12	6,632	,002
	Between Groups	7170,93	297	24,14		
	Total	7491,18	299			
Task Completing Skills (TCS)	Within Groups	87,36	2	43,68	5,014	,007
	Between Groups	2587,63	297	8,71		
	Total	2675,00	299			
Outcome Accepting Skills (OAS)	Within Groups	53,61	2	26,80	1,752	,175
	Between Groups	4542,91	297	115,29		

	Groups					
	Total	4596,52	299			

According the Table 8, the number of children in the family had only statistically significant difference on listening skills. The family who has two children ($\bar{x}=20,47$) had much higher scores than the family who has one child ($\bar{x}=19,89$) and the family who has three or more children ($\bar{x}=17,74$) ($F=6.632, p<.002$).

4. Result and Suggestions

The results clearly indicate that the girls who are 5-6 years old had much better and successful social skills than the boys who are 5-6 years old. The girls had higher scores at interpersonal skills, anger management and accommodation skills, verbal explanation skills, self-control skills, purpose forming skills, and outcome accepting skills than the boys. In addition, the girls also showed better results on other social skill subscales than the boys.

Also, it is interesting to note that the second child in the family had much higher scores on purpose forming, listening and outcome accepting skills than the first and third child in family sequence. The results may contradict the middle child syndrome that claims the middle child has no role in the family and feeling left out. If we look closely at socio-demographic data, most of the mothers are housewives (%71) and they are in the 20-30 years scale. It can be interpreted as young and dynamic families with not working mothers have a chance to more involve their children. As a result, the children may increase their social skills.

Some of the results in this study is coherent with other studies such Pekdogan (2011). She found that the gender of the child has an effect on social skills. The girls are much better abilities to have self-control and peer pressure (41-44).

There can be some suggestions to improve the children's social skills:

- a) Family and teachers should increase the children's awareness of their social goals and the goals of others. In a school setting, teachers can help children to recognize children's choices and intervene so that other children can communicate with each other;
- b) They aid to develop better and effective social skills. In a conflict situation, they aid children to find common grounds and accommodate others' needs by using cooperation, helping, and coping skills. They should provide model for active listening and respecting other ideas;
- c) They make children aware of others' emotions and intentions. Teachers can assist children to have empathy by seeing from another point of view or hearing others' voices;

- d) Family and teachers should create an environment for the children to reflect how their behaviors affect other people;
- e) Teachers should include parents and close family members into the children's socialization process. Both parents and teachers have equal responsibilities to develop children's social skills;
- f) We should underline children's successful social relations so that they can learn appropriate social behaviors (Casey and Carter, 2016: 163-164).

Children's social behaviors have begun to shape and change developmentally throughout infancy. The social skills acquired during the infancy may be decisive to social competences during the preschool years, school years as well as throughout their life. Children initiate socially expected behaviors in their social development. They gain desirable social behaviors and exclude negative social behaviors across different social contexts (family, neighborhood, community and school). In peer group environment, children cope with new relationships. Within these more complex and new social relationships, they need a variety of social skills. Social development is closely linked to the social skills, social competence, and relationships of children. Social skills may have a fundamental role in affecting the quality of the children's social relationships.

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