

FACTORS UNDERLYING PEER ACCEPTANCE: GENDER, AGE AND SOCIAL  
SKILLS

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BOĞAZIÇI UNIVERSITY

2008

FACTORS UNDERLYING PEER ACCEPTANCE: GENDER, AGE AND SOCIAL  
SKILLS

Thesis submitted to the  
Institute for Graduate Studies in the Social Sciences  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
in  
Psychology  
by  
Nurçin Eğerciođlu

Bođaziçi University

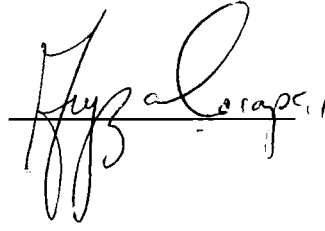
2008

Factors Underlying Peer Acceptance: Social Skills, Age and Gender

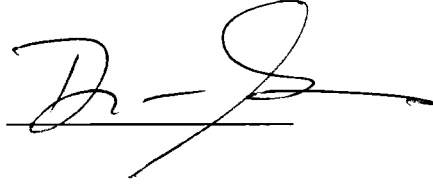
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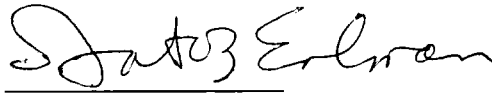
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May 2008

## Thesis Abstract

Nurçin Eğercioğlu, “Factors Underlying Peer Acceptance: Gender, Age and Social Skills”

The aim of the present study is threefold: first, to assess the psychometric structure of Social Skills Rating System-Student form (Gresham & Elliot, 1990) in a sample of Turkish students from third through eighth grades; second, to test age and sex-related differences in same sex preference (gender cleavage) so as to determine developmental trajectories in this tendency for boys and girls; and lastly, to examine the effects of gender and age on the relationship between peer acceptance and social skills.

The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients for the elementary and the secondary scale were .86 and .89, respectively. In line with Gresham and Elliot (1991), cooperativeness, self control, assertiveness and empathy factors were found for the secondary level; the same factors, except for empathy, were also found for the elementary level. Same-sex preference was found for both the elementary and the secondary boys and girls. Girls’ social skills scores were higher than those of boys except for assertiveness at the secondary level. The impact of cooperativeness on peer acceptance emerged for the elementary level whereas assertiveness, self control and empathy gained significance for the secondary level. Boys’ cooperativeness and self control was related to peer acceptance, particularly among girls at the elementary level whereas boys’ assertiveness and empathy was crucial for peer acceptance by secondary level students.

## Tez Özeti

Nurçin Eğercioğlu, “Akran Kabulünü Etkileyen Faktörler: Cinsiyet, Yaş ve Sosyal Beceriler”

Bu araştırmanın üç amacı vardır: Sosyal Beceri Derecelendirme Ölçeği-Öğrenci formunun (Gresham & Elliot, 1990) psikometrik özelliklerinin üçüncü ve sekizinci sınıf öğrencilerinden oluşan Türk örnekleme incelenmesi; yaşın ve cinsiyetin aynı cinsiyetteki akranları tercih etmeye etkisinin ve akran kabulü ile sosyal beceriler arasındaki ilişkiye yaş ve cinsiyetin etkisinin araştırılmasıdır.

İçsel tutarlılık analizlerinin sonucunda, ilköğretim formunun Cronbach alfa içsel tutarlılık korelasyon katsayısı .86 iken ortaöğretim formunun içsel tutarlılık korelasyon katsayısı .89 olarak bulunmuştur. İkinci kademe öğrencileri için Gresham ve Elliot (1990) tarafından ileri sürülen dörtlü faktör modeline uygun olarak işbirliği içinde olma, kendini kontrol etme, girişkenlik ve empati faktörleri bulunmuştur. Farklı olarak birinci kademe için empati faktörü bulunamamıştır.

Hem birinci hem ikinci kademe erkeklerin erkekleri daha fazla kabul ettiği bulunmuştur. Kızların sosyal becerilerinin erkeklere göre daha yüksek olduğu saptanmıştır. Birinci kademe işbirliği akran kabulünde etkili bulunurken ikinci kademe girişkenlik, kendini kontrol ve empati önem kazanmaktadır. Birinci kademe erkeklerin işbirliği içinde olması ve kendini kontrol etmesi, ikinci kademe ise erkeklerin girişkenlik becerileri ve empati düzeyleri özellikle kızlar tarafından kabul edilmeleri için önemli bulunmuştur.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to dedicate my thesis to my parents who always stood beside me in everything I did. I owe my heartfelt gratitude and thanks particularly to my mother, Şükran for her support in entering data in SPSS in only five days and my father and my twin sister for their support and patience at every phase of my study.

I would initially like to express my deep gratitude to Prof. Dr. Diane Sunar, for her guidance, encouragement, ongoing support, and invaluable suggestions throughout this study. I was honored to work with an outstanding supervisor during this hard work.

I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Hamit Fişek for his valuable contributions and ongoing help on statistical analyses of the study. My gratitude is also extended to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fatoş Erkman and Assist Prof. Dr. Feyza Çorapçı for their valuable contributions and suggestions to my study.

I would also like to express my thanks to students who took part in this study.

I also want to express my thanks to my best friend, Nihal, for her support to enter the data into SPSS.

Finally, my special thanks goes to my partner, Yavuz, for his priceless support and guidance on every step of my study (while entering data in SPSS, doing the analyses) and teaching me how to be a researcher. In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to him also for being so understanding when I needed time to study and waiting with patience to see me once a week.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### Background to the Study

Empirical research with regard to children's peer relationships began to emerge in the 1930s. Investigations focused on the structure of children's peer group and the relationship between children's characteristics and their status in peer groups (Ladd, 1999).

Piaget (1932) stated that peer relationships of children differed from their relationships with adults. The relationship with adults has an asymmetrical structure since it is not horizontal but rather includes adult dominance and power assertion. Children tend to obey the rules of adults even though they do not understand them since obedience is compulsory. On the other hand, relationships with peers have a horizontal plane of dominance and power assertion. In other words, it is more egalitarian and symmetrical. Piaget suggested that peer interaction provides children a context in which to analyze conflicting ideas and comments, to negotiate different perspectives and to agree with or reject others' thoughts (Rubin, Chen, Coplan, & Buskirk, 2005).

Like Piaget, Sullivan (1953) held that peer relationships brought mutual respect, equality and reciprocity. He claimed that even though children were insensitive to their peers in the beginning of elementary school, they began to realize and appreciate others' personal qualities during late elementary school. Particularly, during childhood and preadolescent years, peer relations are significant due to the fact that they provide contexts for children to develop social skills such as

cooperation, altruism and empathy. In this sense, peers function as personality shaping agents in this period. Likewise, Mead (1934), in his theory, asserted that peers and peer interaction play a major role in self development, particularly over the early years of life (Rubin et al., 2005).

Social learning theory has also provided guidance to contemporary research on children's peer relationships. The basic assumption of social learning theory is that children learn how to behave in their social contexts, through direct peer teaching and indirect observation of the behaviors of peers (Bandura & Walters, 1963). Therefore, peers function as controlling agents for each other's behaviors. In this respect, children penalize or ignore non-normative social behaviors and give positive reinforcement to culturally appropriate and competent behaviors (Rubin et al., 2005).

Human ethological research also focuses on the organization and structure of social behaviors and groups (Strayer & Santos, 1996). The major impact of ethological theory on contemporary research has been through the assumption that the natural setting is the best place to understand behavior, which influenced how peer interactions and relationships of children were studied (Rubin et al., 2005). Another assumption of the ethological theory was that a relation exists between biology and the ability to initiate, sustain or break off relationships, and that biological constraints limit social behaviors and, by this way, define organizational structure (Hinde & Stevenson- Hinde, 1976).

In the Group Socialization theory, Harris (1995, 1999) suggested that the peer group has greater influence in personality development than parents. Outside the home, group norms define children's identities, so that experiences with peers gain importance.

Hartup (1989) claimed that after venturing out from the secure family atmosphere, it is the peer relations that take children into a wider social world. In this social world, peers are significant since they provide friendship, entertainment, personal guidance and emotional support to children. In other words, peers are a source of comfort and support for children. In this way, peer relations play a crucial role in social development of children.

Peer relations gain significance particularly during the preadolescent years when children spend most of their time with age-mates (Sümer, 1999). A relation was found between peer relations and childhood social skills. Research indicated that children with friends tend to be more socially skilled, and likely to initiate conversations with peers (Asher, 1983). On the other hand, children without friends were found to be more physically aggressive in elementary school (Dodge, 1998) and verbally aggressive in secondary school (Coie, Dodge & Coppotelli, 1982). In addition, children without friends were more likely to lack skills necessary for resolving conflicts (Parker & Asher, 1989), and to be more sensitive to teasing (Carlson, Lahey & Neeper, 1984). It is evident that social skills play a crucial role in establishing and sustaining positive relations with peers. Kelly (1982) defined prosocial-play interaction skills as initiation of interactions, greeting peers, asking and answering questions, cooperation with peers, praising peers and affective responsiveness (Sümer, 1999). Likewise, LaGreca and Santogrossi (1980) put forward nine social skills areas which facilitate positive peer relations, which were smiling, greeting others, participating in ongoing activities, sharing and cooperation, skills concerning conversations, extending invitations, verbal complimenting, and physical correlates. However, these social skills which facilitate peer acceptance are

likely to vary with age and gender. Different kinds of behaviors may lead to positive peer relations at different ages for boys and girls.

### The Present Study

In the last three decades, a number of studies have been conducted on a variety of factors predicting peer acceptance in early and middle childhood such as cognitive and social problem solving ability, emotion knowledge and regulation and prosocial behaviors (Denham, McKinley, Couchoud, & Holt, 1990; Eisenberg, Fabes, Shepard, Murphy, Guthrie, Jones, Friedman, Poulin, & Maszk, 1997; Parke, O'Neil, Spitzer, Isley, Welsch,, Wang, Lee, Strand, & Cupp, 1997; Mostow, Izard, Fine & Trentacosta, 2002). Likewise, this study aims to focus on peer acceptance.

Studies in Turkey have dealt with how a variety of factors relate to social skills such as attachment security (Seven, 2006); locus of control (Akkuş, 2005; Odacı, Kalkan, Balcı & Yılmaz, 2003), creative drama (Kaf, 1999; Kocayörük, 2000; Önalın- Akfırat, 2004), school adjustment and depression level (Baş, 2003), self concept (Akkuş, 2005; Cerrahođlu, 2002), perceived emotional abuse (Karakuş, 2006) and body image satisfaction (Kalafat, 2006). However, although the relationship between sociometric status and social skills is a profitable research area and many studies abroad have been conducted to detect the relationship between peer acceptance and social skills (e.g., Andreassi, 2007; Lopez-Williams, Chacko, Wymbs, Fabiano, Seymour, Gnagy, Chronis, Burrows-Maclean, Pelham, & Morris, 2005; Tomado, 1997; Wentzel & Erdley, 1993) only a few studies investigating this relationship have been done in Turkey (e.g. Sümer, 1999; Tarhan, 1996). That is why a major goal of this study was to investigate the relationship between social skills and peer acceptance.

On the other hand, one of the limitations of the literature on peer acceptance is the lack of studies on developmental change. Even though there are some studies on social skills in Turkey, most of them have included only one age group (e.g. preschoolers in Gülay, 2004, Kapıkıran, İvrendi & Adak, 2006 and Seven, 2006; Tüy, 1999; primary school students in Akkuş, 2005, Atılın, 2001, Akalın, 2005 and Kaf , 1999; adolescents in Albayrak-Arın, 1999, Altınoğlu- Dikmer, 1997; Cerrahoğlu, 2002 and Sümer, 1999). Accordingly, one of the aims of this study was to shed light on developmental differences in peer acceptance between middle childhood and adolescence. With this aim, both elementary school students (between 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades) and middle school students (between 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades) were included in this study.

Even though the term *peer acceptance* would appear to be almost the same as *socioemetric status*, there are differences in terms of assessment methods for these two concepts. The term *sociometric status* was used rather than term *peer acceptance* in some of the studies conducted in Turkey (e.g. Oral, 2007; Pekel, 2004; Sümer, 1999; Tarhan, 1996) owing to the assessment methods used in these studies. In most of these studies, children were categorized according to peer nominations in order to define their sociometric status (e.g. Baş, 2003; Demir, 2006; Oral, 2007; Sümer, 1999; Yukay, 2003). It is Coie, Dodge and Coppotelli's (1982) classic sociometric classification method which was used in these studies. In other words, rather than acceptance scores of children, sociometric categories of children were defined. Only a few studies used the peer rating method to define peer acceptance level of students (e.g. Bilbay, 1999; Köseoğlu, 1999). In the current study, peer acceptance scores of children depending upon peer ratings were used in the analyses and the term *peer acceptance* is used rather than the term *socioemetric status*.



In addition, the effects of sex on peer acceptance were also examined in this study, which has not been widely studied in Turkey (e.g. Karakuş, 2006). However, not only the sex of the raters, i.e., peers, but also the sex of the students who were rated was taken into consideration in order to discover whether there was a difference in desired behaviors for girls and boys to be accepted by same and the opposite sex peers.

There are many social skills scales in Turkey. Some of these scales were formed by researchers during the study (Gülay, 2004; Kaf, 1999; Kapıkıran, İvrendi & Adak, 2006; Kara, 2003; Kocayörük, 2000; Özbek, 2004). There are some other widely used social skills scales adapted for Turkish samples such as Achenbach and Edelbrock's (1983) Child Behavior Checklist (Akalın, 2005); Merrell's (1994), Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales (Tüy, 1999); Merrell's (1993), School Social Behavior Scale (Yukay, 2003); Walker-McConnell Social Competence and School Adjustment Scale (Baş, 2003); Matson, Rotatory and Hessel's (1983) The Matson Evaluation of Social Skills with Youngsters (MESSY) (Akkuş, 2005; Bacanlı & Erdoğan, 2003; Balcı & Kalkan, 2001; Karakuş, 2006); Riggio's (1989) Social Skills Inventory (Albayrak-Arın, 1999; Avşar, 2004; Çilingir, 2006; Deniz, 2002; Dicle, 2006; Hamarta, 2000; Kalafat, 2006; Kara, 2000; Özlek, 2003; Şahin, 1999; Seven & Yoldaş, 2007). However, these scales are generally limited to certain age groups. For example, Merrell's (1994) Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales applies only to preschoolers; Achenbach and Edelbrock's (1983) Child Behavior Checklist, the Walker –McConnell Scale of Social Skills and School Adjustment, and the School Social Behavior Scale (Merrell, 1993) apply only to primary school students; and the Social Skills Inventory (Riggio, 1989) applies only to adolescents and adults. As stated above, since the studies using these scales dealt

with only one age group, it was not essential to use a scale which can be used for different age groups. However, the Social Skills Rating System was selected for the present study since it has forms for different age groups, i.e. both elementary and secondary level. In the SSRS, social skills consisted of four subscales: Cooperation (helping others, sharing materials, complying with rules and directions), Assertion (initiating behaviors, such as asking for information, introducing oneself, and responding to the actions of others), Empathy (concern and respect for others' feelings and viewpoints), and Self-Control (to control oneself and respond appropriately in conflicts and in non-conflict situations in which turn taking and compromising is required). The original *SSRS* is a multi-rater assessment tool which aims to measure the perceived frequency and significance of a student's social behaviors. It consists of student, teacher and parent forms (the preschool system does not include the student form). In the present study, only the elementary and secondary levels of the student form were used. The elementary form was designed for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades. It consists of 34 items. The secondary form, designed for seventh through eighth grades, includes 39 items. Students are asked to rate the frequency of their own behaviors on a three-point Likert scale (0=never, 1=sometimes, 2=very often). The reliability and validity of the *SSRS* has been demonstrated. Internal consistency is .83-.94 for Social Skills and test-retest reliability for the elementary form is .68-85 for Social Skills (Gresham & Elliot, 1990). Even though the *SSRS* has been used in some studies in Turkey (e.g. the *SSRS-Teacher* form for elementary level in Seven (2006), Sucuoğlu & Özokçu, (2005) and, Sümer (1999); the *SSRS-student* and parent form for elementary level in Sümer (1999); the *SSRS-teacher* and parent form for preschool level in Kamaraj (2004)), both elementary and secondary forms have never been used simultaneously

in the same study to make age comparisons. As stated above, in the current study, elementary and secondary level students were compared in terms of social skills and the relation between social skills and peer acceptance. For this reason, the SSRS has been preferred to assess perceived social skills of both elementary and secondary level students.

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter includes the research literature related to the purposes of this study. The first section provides the definition of peer acceptance and different methods of assessment of peer acceptance. The second section presents related studies in the field of peer acceptance in middle childhood and adolescence. In the last section, social skills, age and sex are presented as factors influencing peer acceptance. Different definitions of social skills, experimental studies in the field of social skills which were conducted both abroad and in Turkey, and studies concerning the relationship between social skills and peer acceptance are presented. Furthermore, the effects of sex and age on peer relations are explained.

### Peer Acceptance

Peer acceptance can be defined as the relational status of children in a peer group (Ladd, 1999), or as the degree of being liked or disliked among peers (Gifford-Smith, & Brownell, 2003).

Peer acceptance has been studied in a number of different ways. One of the ways is studying group based relationships. Another way is examining dyadic peer interactions. At the group level, peer acceptance may be represented by social acceptance by peers, prominence in the group, affiliation to the group (e.g., network centrality), dominance in the group (Hawley, 2002), and reputation among peers (e.g., Hymel, Bowker, & Woody, 1993). On the other hand, at the dyadic level, friendships among peers are studied (Bukowski, Newcomb, & Hartup, 1996). In this study, peer acceptance was studied at the group level in terms of social acceptance by peers.

## Assessment Methods for Peer Acceptance

Hymel, Vaillancourt, McDougall and Renshaw (2002) likened assessment methods for peer acceptance to a unique window allowing us to see how individuals are admitted to their social world. One of the assessment methods for peer acceptance is the use of teacher reports. Rubin et al. (2005) claimed that teachers may supply rich and useful data with regard to the frequency of social exchanges. They also asserted that teacher assessment was efficient and less time consuming since it was not necessary to spend classroom time to gather data. In addition, this kind of assessment method tends to be more objective than peer assessment since teachers are not part of a group structure. Even though teacher assessments may be efficient and objective, in fact, it cannot be claimed that they are less time consuming for teachers, even though they are less time consuming for the class. They are a big burden for the teacher, which may take more time compared to one-shot class application. In addition, teachers' expectations may differ from those of children particularly in adolescence, which leads to invalid information regarding acceptance level of students.

On the other hand, peers are excellent at defining others who have qualitatively good or poor relationships. Since they are inside the peer group they have the ability to judge the behaviors of the child from the perspective of others who determine the social status of child. Peer evaluation of children's behaviors illustrates perspectives of others with whom the target child has had a variety of experiences (Rubin, Bukowski & Parker, 1998). Das and Bernt (1992) alleged that peers are more likely to be aware of the behaviors of their classmates than teachers who are responsible for the whole class. Furthermore, when the peer assessment method is used it is possible to collect the whole data in 40 minutes, while the

teacher's evaluation of each child separately may take a longer time. For these reasons, peer assessment methodology has been widely used in recent research related to peer relationships (Rubin et al., 2005). Likewise in the current study, rather than teacher assessment method, peer assessment method was used.

At the group level, there are two widely used methods for assessing peer acceptance: peer nominations and peer ratings (Maassen, Boxtel & Goossens, 2005).

### Peer Nominations

The use of sociometry traces back to Moreno (1934). Moreno used sociometry to define the attraction and repulsion of children in the peer group (Rubin et al., 2005). Afterwards, Coie, Dodge, and Coppotelli (1982) developed Moreno's work and formed the peer nomination method which is still widely used.

Peer nomination method depends on the fact that peer acceptance and rejection are not opposite ends of the same continuum. In this method, classmates are asked to name their peers whom they "like most" and "like most to play with" and whom they "least like" and "like least to play with" (Maassen, Boxtel & Goossens, 2005). Typically, the number of peers they like most and like least is limited (between 3 and 5). To control for class size, standardization of nominations within each class or grade is used. Generally, in order to avoid the opposite sex negative biases, only same-sex nominations are used (Rubin et al., 2005). Peer acceptance refers to the number of most liked nominations whereas peer rejection is the number of least liked nominations. Children's raw scores, i.e. peer acceptance and rejection scores, are standardized at classroom or grade level and then combined to calculate social preference and social impact scores. Social preference scores are calculated by subtracting standardized least liked scores from most liked scores. On the other hand,

social impact score is calculated by summing standardized most liked and least liked scores. Social preference and impact scores are used to define five mutually exclusive sociometric categories: popular (high social preference score, high on liked most and low score on liked least nominations), rejected (low social preference score and low on liked most nomination but high score on liked least nominations), neglected (not only low social preference score but also low scores on liked most and liked least nominations), controversial (not only high social impact score but also high score on liked least and liked most nominations) and average (all remaining). As stated above, Coie, Dodge and Coppotelli (1982) used standard scores, i.e. z-scores, for their classifications for each classroom or grade. However, the usage of standard z scores may not always draw a realistic picture of children's placements in sociometric categories. Regardless of whether only a few students get high scores, or a majority of children get high scores, (e.g. in well-integrated groups) the size of status categories remains the same across classrooms. In other words, when z-scores are used, similar proportions of children are classified in each category (popular:

twelve-thirteen percent, rejected: twelve-thirteen percent, neglected: six-seven percent, controversial: six-seven percent, average: fifty eight- sixty percent), which does not indicate actual category distributions across samples. Moreover, z-scores are unsuitable for observing long term development and for evaluating the consequences of an intervention. In addition to the usage of standard scores, another disadvantage of the peer nomination method is that children who are not nominated by their peers, either positively or negatively, are presumed to have had indifferent nominations, which may not draw the real picture (Maassen, Boxtel & Goossens, 2005).

Newcomb and Bukowski (1983) used raw “like most” and “like least” scores rather than standard scores to derive rare cases on two dimensions, social impact and social preference. In this way, the liked and disliked scores of children are expected to exceed the chance level for classification of children. Since more conservative cut off scores are used, more homogeneous and extreme groups are defined.

### Peer Ratings

In the rating method which was developed by Asher and Hymel (1981), participants are asked to rate their peers on a scale of likeability ranging from acceptance “like very much” to rejection “dislike very much”. The mean rating which is received across respondents reflects social acceptance within the group. The rating method requires children to evaluate each of their peers. That is why it provides information with regard to all children in the class. In other words, it gives more valid, reliable and detailed information regarding peer acceptance than the peer nomination method. In addition, rating enables the participant to define the level of attraction or rejection. In case of indifferent judgment, a neutral scale point exists in the scale. It also provides continuous variables which enables the calculation of group means. Therefore it allows within-time between group comparisons and cross-time comparisons within the same group. For instance, the mean of the average rating indicates social climates within a group and can be used to compare groups in terms of social climate or to evaluate the development of social climate in time. On the other hand, in nomination procedures, scores are standardized within the groups. In other words, the group means are standardized as zero within each group, which



makes between-group comparisons impossible (Maassen, Boxtel & Goossens, 2005). Since this study aimed to compare two groups, i.e. elementary and secondary level students the rating method was used in this study.

Asher and Hymer (1981) asserted that peer nomination and peer rating methods assess different aspects of peer relations. While best and high priority friends are identified by the peer nomination method, the peer rating method assesses overall acceptability in the social group (Asher, Singleton, Tinsley & Hymel, 1979; Gresham, 1981; Lopez-Williams et al., 2005). Depending upon the aims, some studies used only the peer nomination method (e.g. Andreassi, 2007; Tomada & Schneider 1997) and others used only the peer rating method (e.g. Hughes & Zhang, 2006; Kistner et al. 2001; Shuster, 1996; Trzepacz, 2000; Wentzel & Erdley, 1993). On the other hand, some studies used both the peer nomination and peer rating method to analyze the inter-test correlation between peer ratings and peer nominations (positive nominations, social preference, social impact etc.) (e.g. Blanc, 2003; Hughes & Kwok, 2005; Lemerise, 1997; Lopez-Williams et al., 2005; Vaughn et al., 1990). In the research which used both of these analyses, peer liking score (peer rating score or peer acceptance score), liked most score (positive peer nominations), liked least score (negative peer nominations), social impact score, were entered in the analyses individually. In other words, they were treated as different variables. The relations between each of these factors and other variables were analyzed separately.

The current study focuses on acceptance in the peer group rather than friendship relations. In other words, acceptance was studied at the group level in this study. There was no need to calculate the social preference score or the social

impact scores of children, so only peer liking score was used in the analyses. Peer acceptance scores could also be estimated via peer nomination method. However, as stated above, since the peer rating method provides more valid and reliable data it was selected for this study. On the other hand, since participants are expected to perform a more laborious task to rate each classmate, the rating method is applicable particularly in small to moderately sized classes. This study was carried out in a private school which included small classes with close relationships. For that reason, also, the rating method was suitable for the current study.

### Factors Underlying Peer Acceptance

Of the main interest has been investigating underlying reasons why some children are better liked by their peer, whereas others are neglected or rejected by their peers. There are many factors that affect peer acceptance such as race, sex, age, GPA (e.g. Chen, Chang & He, 2003), IQ, attendance, self concept of academic ability or years in the school (Carter, DeTine, Spero, & Benson, 1975). In the literature, all of these factors defining peer acceptance are classified within four areas:

1. Individual characteristics which promote the formation and maintenance of social status (e.g. social behaviors and cognitions). A number of such characteristics have been identified such as behavioral styles among peers (aggressive vs. prosocial) (Coie, Dodge & Kupersmidt, 1990); social cognitive skills (e.g. social problem solving skills, understanding others' intent) (Dodge & Feldman, 1990); the

ability to regulate emotions (Fabes, & Eisenberg, 1992), gender, age and the like.

2. Peer group features which are related to acquisition and maintenance of social status (e.g. reputational prejudice and group norms)
3. Prior experiences which are likely to affect children's social status among peers (e.g., parenting strategies and attachment)
4. Other developmental outcomes (e.g. academic success and delinquency) (Gifford-Smith, & Brownell, 2003).

The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of individual characteristics i.e. gender and social skills on peer acceptance in two age groups.

### The Effect of Gender on Peer Acceptance

#### Gender Cleavage (Same-sex Preference)

Gender cleavage refers to “self segregation based on sex” (Smith, Davidson & Ball, 2001, p.153). It emerges in the preschool years. From kindergarten until ninth grade children have been found to like same-sex peers more than cross sex peers.

Moreno (1953) put forward a developmental model of gender cleavage. He asked children to nominate friends and playmates from the class. He analyzed the results and defined the proportions of same and cross gender nominations. He referred to these proportions as gender cleavage and determined gender cleavage for

different grades. He discussed about three stages according to which gender cleavage develops. According to Moreno, the most significant stage is the homosexual cycle between grade three and grade seven in which same gender orientations increase. By grade four, gender cleavage is “almost entirely complete. . .” (Moreno, 1953, p. 186; as cited in Smith, Davidson & Ball, 2001). By grade 5, two homosexual units exist in the group. By grade 6, gender cleavage reaches a peak. Many studies supported Moreno’s (1953) views and indicated that children tend to prefer same gender peers rather than cross gender peers (e. g., Smith & Inder, 1990; Bukowski et al., 1993). In line with Moreno, Hayden-Thompson et al., (1987) alleged that negative evaluations with regard to cross sex peers increase for both boys and girls during the elementary years.

According to Smith, Davidson and Ball (2001), what is the lacking in Moreno’s (1953) model is that Moreno did not focus on sex differences in gender cleavage. Daniels- Bierness (1989) claimed that same-sex preference may not be observed at the same intensity in the two sexes and that is why it is essential to study same and cross-gender interest in boys and girls separately. For instance, Hayden-Thompson, Rubin, & Hymel (1987) claimed that girls displayed more cross sex negativity while rating cross sex peers.

On the other hand, Kon and Losenoff, (1978) and Cohen, D’Heurle, and Widmark-Peterson, (1980) asserted that developmental factors also need to be taken into consideration to determine which sex is more gender-exclusive in peer relations. For this reason, gender cleavage was investigated in two different age groups in the current study.

#### The Cross-Gender Ignorance Effect (Prototypicality Effect)

Dijkstra, Lindenberg and Veenstra (2007) examined the relation between bullying, helping and same-sex and cross-sex peer acceptance and peer rejection for preadolescents between the ages of eleven and twelve. The most significant finding of the study was that peer acceptance was found to be more frequent and gendered than peer rejection. The effect of helping on peer acceptance was more than that of bullying on rejection. They found supporting evidence for both the “prototypicality effect (i.e., boys accept bullying girls better than nonbullying girls, and girls accept helping boys better than nonhelping boys); and for acceptance, there is a cross-gender ignorance effect (i.e., boys ignore helping in girls, and girls ignore bullying in boys)” (p. 1377).

#### Age: Developmental Course of Peer Interaction and Social Skills

It is not possible to understand social acceptance without considering the peer group (Vosk, Forehand, Parker & Rickard, 1982). Rejection or acceptance is related to fitting in with peers and is a result of judgment regarding the individual. This judgment depends on both the characteristics of the judged individual and the expectations of peers doing the judging rather than invariant social traits (Wright, Giammarino, & Parad, 1986). Since the characteristics of both judge and target may change across developmental stages, awareness of these developmental changes is crucial for defining which behaviors are expected from peers in different age groups.

Since children’s relationships reflect their cognitive and emotional development as Mostow et al. (2002) claimed, the indirect effect of age on peer relations is inevitable. What children do with peers, how they organize their

interactions (in terms of control and compliance), what they expect from their peers and how they communicate with each other all change with age (Hartup, 1989). It was found that peer relationships proceed from simple approaches to complicated hierarchies, from vague differentiation in social meetings to discriminative interaction, from low levels of recognition of needs of others to complex social attributions. In other words, the nature of social interaction varies with chronological age (Hartup, 1979). In addition to the nature of social interaction, social behaviors which lead to popularity vary by age and sex (Johnson, Ironsmith, Snow & Poteat, 2000). Dodge and Feldman (1990) suggested that popular children are the ones who manage to endorse age appropriate responses.

From two to five years of age and continuing through adolescence, interaction with peers increases due to joining new social groups such as kindergarten, a class in school, or extracurricular groups. Masters and Furman (1981) noted that giving and taking behaviors (e.g. giving or taking gifts, attention and acceptance) contribute to peer acceptance among four to five year-old children.

A great deal of change takes place in peer relations throughout the primary school years and peer acceptance becomes very crucial. By middle childhood, i.e. at the age of 10 or 11, children's social interactions with peers increase. From middle to late childhood, there occurs improvement in interpersonal communication since cliques become most salient. In this period, rather than being accepted by the larger group, closed dyadic relationships or taking part in a tightly knit clique gain significance. Therefore, being active in the group entry and initiating friendships gain importance in this period. The study which was conducted by Feldman and Dodge, (1987) indicated a positive relation between being active in the group entry and popularity from first to third and fifth-grade levels. In addition, an increase in

prosocial and cooperative behaviors such as sharing and decrease in aggression is observed in this period. All these factors are closely linked to peer acceptance (Erwin, 1993).

Chen, Chang and He (2003) observed an increase in the size of the peer groups at the beginning of adolescence. In other words, adolescent social life includes affiliation with larger crowds (Brown, Eicher, & Petri, 1986; Cairns, Leung, Buchanan, & Cairns, 1995; Shrum & Cheek, 1987). They associated this increase to changing demands of adolescence such as displaying autonomous behaviors in interactions and searching for diverse life styles in the social world. With increasing age, individuals become discontented with mutual constraints which hinder the search for individual interests and acquisition of diverse peer experiences. However, not only the size of the peer groups but also peer interaction and the intensity of the relationships increase (Cole & Cole, 2001). Even though initiating relations, providing support and disclosing oneself are still demanded, as they are during middle childhood, some other skills gain significance during this period. In other words, there is only partial overlap between the interpersonal competences of adolescence and those of childhood (Buhrmester, 1990). Social skills required for adolescents are to be capable of expressing their own opinions and even criticizing peers in case they dislike their behaviors (Younis & Smollar, 1985; as cited in Engels, Dekovic & Meus, 2002). While intensive clique interaction and emotional involvement in peer groups in childhood may increase the significance of cooperation to maintain peer relations, assertiveness may be much more significant for expression of distinct identity in adolescence. On the other hand, research indicated that the relation between peer acceptance and social dominance increases in line with age, which may also indicate that peer acceptance may be much more

related to assertive behavior among older children (Lease, Kennedy & Axelrod, 2002). In addition, adolescence is the period in which heterosexual behavior begins to gain significance in contrast to elementary school years (Dodge & Feldman, 1990). In this study, heterosexual relationships were taken into consideration for the older age group while assessing social skills.

As stated above, adolescence is a period in which a marked reorganization occurs in social relationships with peers, which may stem from developmental shifts in social cognitive abilities and social ecological conditions. So, adolescents need more sophisticated skills to sustain peer relationships (Rubin, Bukowski, Parker, 1998). The ones who lack these skills have difficulties in establishing friendships and even if they manage to establish relationships they have problems in involvement and intimacy in peer groups. In sum, lack of social skills influences both the quantity and the quality of the relations with peers (Buhrmester, 1990).

### Similarity Theory and Peer Acceptance

As stated above, there is a direct effect of gender on peer acceptance through gender cleavage whereas there is an indirect effect of age on peer acceptance through variation in peer relations. The other factor influencing peer acceptance is similarity of peers, i.e. targets. According to Similarity theory, individuals tend to like others having similar characteristics to their own (Byrne, 1971). Dissimilarity results in being disliked by others (Rosenbaum, 1988; Nangle, Erdlay, Zeff, Stanchfield, & Gold, 2004). From this perspective, children may tend to like others who have similar behaviors to their own.



## Social Skills

### Definition of Social Skills

Social skills have been defined in numerous ways such as desirable behaviors, specific abilities, traits. For instance, Ladd (1999) defined social skills as “behaviors that appear to enhance peer acceptance, friendship and other positive relational outcomes” (p.335). These desirable behaviors which enable effective communication can be classified under three subheadings: interpersonal, assertive, and self-control behaviors. Interpersonal behaviors refer to abilities which promote dyadic relations. These behaviors include spending time together, accepting, forgiving and helping each other. Helping behaviors include not only helping with personal work such as finding things and playing activities (e.g., in Warnes, et al. 2005) but also helping in a quiz by letting others copy (e.g., in Allen, Weisberg & Hawkins, 1989). Assertive behaviors are related to abilities to express oneself directly as in talking about frustrations openly and expressing feelings in case of problems regarding a relationship. In addition, assertiveness includes praising others, making jokes and exhibiting leadership behaviors, which also promote positive relationships with others. Self control refers to the ability to control one’s own behaviors even if the individual is upset. Self-controlling behaviors prevent children from verbally and physically harming others.

Social skills refer to the specific abilities which are essential in order to perform competently in social interaction. In other words, social skills consist of abilities which are required for effective interaction with others (Erwin, 1993).

Some authors have defined social skills as traits. For instance, Water, Noyes, Vaughn and Ricks (1985) asked 35 psychologists to define social competence of preschool children. It was found that social competence consisted of attributes such as helpful, self-reliant, empathetic and self-assertive. Warnes, Sheridan, Geske, and Warnes (2005) asked parents and teachers to list specific qualities which are important for second- or fifth-grade children to get along with peers. They reported being empathetic, respectful of others, loyal, reliable, trustworthy, funny, open to others' ideas, outgoing, friendly and moral as significant characteristics for getting along well with others. Similarly, children reported that most of these characteristics were crucial for friendship. However, in contrast to adults, they also emphasized being generous, good listener and fair as important for getting on well with others.

### Social Skills and Peer Acceptance

Social skills are essential to establish and sustain positive relationships with peers (Sümer, 1999). In other words, children need a variety of social skills to function successfully in peer groups. Deficiency in social skills and social competence plays a crucial role in the emergence of behavioral and emotional disorders for both children and adolescents (Dicle, 2006).

Most of the research in the literature indicated a relation between social skills and peer acceptance (e.g. Asher, 1983; Engels, Dekovic and Meeus; 2002; Hartup & Rubin, 1986; Kelly, 1982; LaGreca and Santogrossi, 1980; Lopez-Williams et al., 2005; Mostow, Izar, Fine, & Trentacosta, 2002; Wentzel and Erdley, 1993).

Kelly (1982), as a result of literature review regarding the correlates of peer acceptance, defined prosocial-play interaction skills for young children. He found that social initiation, greeting peers, cooperating, sharing, praising peers, asking and answering questions and affective responsiveness are significant for effective interaction among young children (Sümer, 1999). Likewise, LaGreca and Santogrossi (1980) determined nine social skills areas which facilitate positive peer relations. These nine social skills areas consist of smiling, greeting others, joining ongoing activities, physical correlates, verbal complementing, conversational skills, sharing and cooperation and extending invitations.

Lopez-Williams, et al.(2005) enrolled sixty-three children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in 8-week summer treatment program to examine the relationship between social behaviors and peer acceptance. They made observations on six categories of a range of social behaviors throughout the day: rule violations, negative verbalizations, conduct behavior, sharing with a peer, helping a peer and ignoring a negative stimulus. They used both peer rating and peer nomination method to define positive peer nominations and negative peer nominations for each child. Positive peer nominations, negative peer nominations and peer rating scores were used in the analysis. Results indicated that negative social behaviors predicted peer acceptance as measured by sociometric ratings and positive peer nominations. In addition, positive behaviors were found to be related to positive peer nominations.

Pardini, Barry and Lochman (2006) examined whether perceived social acceptance and peer rated social standing would predict emotional and behavioral problems. Results indicated a relation between self perceived social acceptance and peer-rated fighting at school. Students with poor self perceived social acceptance

were found to display oppositional behaviors at school and conduct problems at home.

Wentzel and Erdley (1993) conducted a study on adolescents to investigate the relations among developing strategy with regard to making friends, prosocial, antisocial behavior and peer acceptance at school during early adolescence. They detected a significant relation between strategies for making friends and prosocial and antisocial behavior and peer acceptance. They also noted that prosocial behaviors mediated the relation between strategy about making friends and peer acceptance.

Engels, Dekovic and Meeus (2002) found a relation among social skills of adolescents, the intensity and the quality of peer relations. They claimed that adolescents who lack the required social skills to establish relationships with others have difficulties in joining groups. Even if they join a group, they are more likely to have problems in involvement and attachment in peer groups.

On the other hand, it has been found that socially inappropriate behaviors such as aggressive, argumentative and disruptive behaviors hinder peer acceptance and lead to peer rejection (Coie, & Dodge, 1988; Dodge, 1983; Dodge, Coie, Petit & Price, 1990; Hatzichristou & Hopf, 1996; Ladd, 1999; Ladd, Price, & Hart, 1988; Lemerise, 1997; Tomada and Schneider, 1997).

In this study, social skills were defined in terms of self rated (perceived) frequency of desirable behaviors. These behaviors defining social skills were classified under four headings which are cooperation, assertiveness, self control and empathy.

Cooperativeness and Peer Acceptance. Even though, in earlier work, cooperative behavior was considered absent during early years of childhood, Ross (1982), and more recently Hay, Payne and Chadwick (2004) have suggested that joining in cooperative games and sustained interaction with peers, which requires turn taking and mutual engagement, were observed even in one-year old infants. It is a fact that cooperativeness emerges when infants or toddlers need to coordinate their behaviors with others and that it develops in line with increasing complexity of peer interactions.

It can be said that cooperation is the “golden rule” of peer interaction (Bierman, 2004; Coie, Dodge & Kupersmidt, 1990). Jones, Young and Friman (2000) found a relation between cooperation and quality of social relationships. Research indicates that cooperative behaviors are positively correlated with peer acceptance (Biermann, 2004; Coie & Dodge, 1988; Coie, Dodge, & Coppotelli, 1982; Coie, Dodge & Kupersmidt, 1990; DeBruyn & VandenBoom, 2005; Dekovic & Gerris, 1994; Denham & Holt, 1993; Dodge, Coie, Petit, & Price, 1990; Erwin, 1993; Hartup, 1992; Ladd, Price & Hart, 1988; Masters & Furman, 1981; Parke et al., 1997). On the other hand, some other studies revealed that uncooperative behaviors are likely to result in rejection by peers (Crick & Dodge, 1996; Dodge, 1983; Orobio de Castro, Veermann, Koops, Bosch, & Monshouwer, 2002; Warman & Cohen, 2002). The study conducted by Coie, Dodge and Coppotelli (1982) included third, fifth and eighth graders, and indicated the significance of cooperativeness not only in middle childhood but also in adolescence.

In this study, cooperation is also defined as conforming to rules in the classroom. Allen, Weissberg and Hawkins (1989) found that the relation between

conforming to adult norms and teachers' rating of social competence was positive. However, conforming to adult norms was found to be negatively correlated with peer status among seventh and eighth graders. In this study, since peers rated each other, a negative correlation was expected between cooperation and peer acceptance particularly for secondary level students.

Empathy and Peer Acceptance. Empathy is a kind of emotional response which is related to understanding and sharing other people's feelings (Cole & Cole, 2001). In other words, it refers to matching one's own feelings with those of other people (Erwin, 1993). It has been defined by many authors in a variety of ways.

Empathy has been defined either as an emotional (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Cole & Cole, 2001) or a cognitive phenomenon (Hoffman, 1975). Contrary to these two traditional approaches, Davis (1983) put forward a multidimensional approach to empathy. He stated that empathy included both cognitive and emotional aspects. In line with Davis (1983; 1996) Deutsch and Madle (1975), Feshbach and Feshbach (1982) claimed that empathy consists of both affective and cognitive components. While the affective component of empathy consists of having the same feeling as others, the cognitive aspect refers to understanding what other people experience by looking at the world with their eyes without judging them (Davis, 1983).

From a developmental perspective, there is very little known about the expression of empathy in the first year of life. However, Hoffman (1975) suggested that there is biological preparedness for empathy, adding that it emerges in early infancy. In spite of the innate basis of empathy, it is a fact that empathy develops with age. Hoffman (1988) put forward a systematic approach to explain the

development of empathy. In the first stage (in the first year of life), where the infant can not differentiate herself from others, empathy is the result of a contagious emotional arousal, therefore automatic and involuntary. Hoffman calls this kind of empathy “global empathy”. However, this is not empathic understanding, because in empathic understanding there is the experience and the cognition of the experience. Global empathy is expressed in the reactive crying of the infants. There are two studies finding the reactive crying of infants (Simper, 1971; Sagi & Hoffman, 1976). In these studies newborns were exposed to sound of the cry of another infant and to the sound of a synthetic cry. The findings of these studies showed that infants only one day old cried significantly more when exposed to the sound of another infant’s cry than to silence or to a synthetic cry. Hoffman proposed that the selective cry of newborns in response to another infant’s cry is evidence for the presence of an innate empathic distress reaction. The second stage consists of the period between the first and third years. In this stage, even though others’ distress causes distress in the child, the nature of empathy is still egocentric. It can be explained with the fact that, in this period, the child’s attempt to relieve others’ distress aims to give comfort to the child himself or herself. Hoffman gave the example of a child who offers his own mother to a crying companion to relieve her distress even though the child’s own mother is also present. True empathetic understanding of others’ feelings starts at about 3 years of age and lasts throughout life (Hoffman, 1988).

By middle childhood, the child develops the ability to deal with simultaneous contradictory emotions. Even though he empathizes with others’ difficulties he may overlook them in order not to cause embarrassment. However, this ability still works at the concrete level; when hypothetical situations are given no relation was found between empathy and social behavior during middle childhood (Eisenberg & Miller,

1987). However, in adolescence, empathetic understanding reaches a high level in which long term effects of life circumstances on individuals can be comprehended by the child even in hypothetical situations. So, it is self evident that affective domain of empathy precedes cognitive empathy. Even though the ability to share others' emotions emerges in infancy, perspective taking, i.e. the cognitive part of empathy, appears depending upon the developmental stage of cognition.

Since the relationships in adolescence depend on intimacy and involvement, empathy level of adolescents has significance for how their peers assess their social competence (Ford, 1982). Therefore, empathic understanding is related to popularity and more satisfying relationships in this period (Erwin, 1993).

Self control and Peer Acceptance. Self control refers to controlling sensory-motor behaviors, emotions and cognitive processes. Sroufe (1997) noted that both emotional and behavioral control depend on social and cognitive development. In fact, self control exists from birth in a primitive form. It begins in infancy and develops in preschool years. The earlier form of self control is reactive rather than proactive. It is reactive since it stems from internal needs, reflexes or external necessities. However, it becomes proactive with maturation. That is, it becomes conscious and planful and includes paying attention and directing behavior, by taking into account its consequences (Carver & Scheier, 2001). These cognitive processes (e.g., understanding expectations) define emotional responses to some extent. In other words, emotional and behavioral control depends on understanding environmental limitations as well as the ability and motivation to control oneself.

The control of external behaviors and emotions (particularly negative emotions) gains significance, particularly in the school setting, since control over



these fields leads to positive social activities whereas lack of self control is likely to result in antisocial behaviors and rejection (Bronson, 2000; Biermann, 2004). Eisenberg and Fabes (1992) claimed that children with difficulties in controlling emotionally driven behaviors tended to have externalizing problems such as aggression. Peer interactions include frustrations such as losing a game), and conflicts such as arguments about certain situations in games such as offside in football). Children who manage to stay calm and find solutions to the problems are the ones who are liked by peers (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1992). Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) noted that lacking self control is related to impulsive behaviors and indifference to the consequences of their actions on others. Due to unconcern for the consequences of their actions, some unacceptable behaviors (e.g. verbal abusiveness, rule violations, bullying) may emerge as well impulsive behaviors, which result in peer rejection (Crick & Dodge, 1996; Coie, Dodge & Kupersmidt, 1990; Dodge & Feldman, 1990; Dodge, Coie, Petit, & Price, 1990; Fabes & Eisenberg, 1992; Hatzichristou & Hopf, 1996; Johnson, Ironsmith, Snow & Poteat, 2000; Tomada and Schneider, 1997). Most of the research also demonstrated that the scores of accepted children were low on starting fights, violating rules (e.g. not being able to wait their turn), being disruptive and high on approaching their peers in a positive manner (Carlson, Lahey, & Neeper, 1984; Coie & Dodge, 1988; Coie, Dodge & Coppotelli, 1982; Dodge, 1983; Atili, Vermigli & Schneider, 1997).

On the other hand, research with adolescents draws a different picture for the effect of self control on peer acceptance. Fabes and Eisenberg (1992) asserted that advancing age increases the ability to cope with interpersonal anger without destroying social relationships. Most of the research indicated a decrease in

aggression from lower grades to higher grades (e.g. Crick & Dodge, 1996; Coie Dodge & Coppotelli, 1982; Coie and Dodge, 1988; Erwin, 1993).

Assertiveness and Peer Acceptance. Assertiveness is an interpersonal skill which includes appropriate and direct expression of one's own emotions and beliefs without violating others' rights (Gist, Stevens & Bavetta, 1991). Wenar (1982) suggested that assertiveness is related to the development of autonomy in children and emerges by the second year of life (Power, McGrath, Hughes & Manire, 1994). In a way, it is related to being able to say "no" to parents in earlier years (Crockenberg & Litman, 1990). In the following years, it is observed as the statement of desires, emotions and thoughts. In addition to the change in display of assertiveness with age, the amount of assertive behaviors increases with age. The older children grow the more interactive and competent they become at initiating and maintaining social relations (Rubin et al., 2005). Eskin (2003) found an increase in assertiveness with advancing age among adolescents.

Yoshimura (2004) noted that self assertion is significant in the sense that it promotes psychological adjustment to groups since it enables the individual to have more effective interaction with others. According to Rubin, Bukowski and Parker (1998), popular children are more likely to be assertive compared to peers. Hazen and Black (1989) emphasized the significance of assertiveness to be liked by peers even for preschool children. They noted that accepted children tended to direct their initiations clearly, respond and acknowledge others. On the other hand, the effect of assertiveness for school adjustment cannot also be overlooked. It was found that adolescents who lack the ability to establish and maintain friendships are less

accepted by peers (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Furthermore, it was found that dealing with bullying and expressing one's own opinions, feelings and desires determines peer relations and that peers like children who appropriately defend themselves towards others' abusive behaviors. Standing up for oneself in case of teasing and verbal bantering emerges as a significant predictor of status, particularly in adolescence (Coie, Dodge, & Kupersmidt, 1990; Dodge & Feldman, 1990).

In addition, Allen, Weissberg and Hawkins (1989) found that direct communication in social interaction was found to be seen as a sign of social competence among peers. Carlson, Lahey, and Neeper (1984) noted that rejected children tended to be less skilful at explaining things to others.

Assertiveness also includes being friendly and initiating social activity. Most of the research indicated a positive relationship between peer acceptance and being friendly, initiating social activity, maintaining positive relationships and resolving conflicts with other children (Asher, 1983; Coie, Dodge & Kupersmidt, 1990; Dekovic & Gerris, 1994; Denham & Holt, 1993; Denham, McKinley, Couchould, & Holt, 1990; Dodge, 1983; Dodge, Coie, Petit, & Price, 1990; Hartup, 1992; Parke et al., 1997). In accordance, Carlson, Lahey, and Neeper (1984) found that rejected children possess less skills regarding joining into group activities.

In this study, assertiveness included behaviors such as initiating friendships, greeting others, expressing one's own emotions and thoughts without arguing with others, and joining in social activities.

## The Impact of Gender on the Relation between Social Skills and Peer Acceptance

Social skills scores of girls were found to be higher than boys (Akkuş, 2005; Erdoğan, 2002; Kara, 2003; Özbek, 2004). Akkuş (2005) found that boys' negative behaviors were higher than those of girls.

Prosocial behaviors affect both same and cross sex peer acceptance (Mostow et al., 2002; Wentzel and Erdley, 1993). However, relationships of boys and girls differ in nature (Fuligni & Eccles, 1993). Accordingly, norms for sociometric status are distinct for the two genders (Johnson, Ironsmith, Snow & Poteat, 2000). In other words, different characteristics define status for girls and boys (e.g., aggression for boys, physical attractiveness for girls). For instance, some research demonstrated that competitive behaviors are more accepted by same-sex peers among boys than among girls (Hay, Payne, & Chadwick, 2004; Sebanc, Pierce, Cheatham, & Gunnar, 2003) whereas cooperative behaviors affect sociometric status of girls more than boys (Coie Dodge and Coppotelli, 1982; Coie, Dodge & Kupersmidt, 1990; Dodge & Feldman, 1990). Girls tend to have more positive attitudes towards other girls who are cooperative (Hibbard & Buhrmester, 1998). However, it is more likely for boys to get angry with well-liked peers due to concerns about dominance and competition (Ladd, 1999). Tomada and Schneider (1997) found that boys scored higher than girls in both overt and relational aggression. Aggressiveness (externalizing behavior stemming from lack of self control) was also found to be a more crucial determinant of status among boys than girls (Chen, Chang, & He, 2003; Coie, Dodge and Coppotelli, 1982; Dodge & Feldman, 1990; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1992). On the other hand, Sebanc, Pierce, Cheatham, and Gunnar (2003) found a relation between assertiveness and boys' acceptance by both same and cross-sex peers. Eskin (1994)

also found that nonassertive girls were accepted more than assertive girls in Turkey. However, he could not find the same relation between assertiveness and peer acceptance for boys.

### The Research Questions

The aim of the present study is three-fold: first, to assess the psychometric properties of Social Skills Rating System-Student form in Turkish 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students; and, second, to test age and sex-related differences in same-sex preference so as to determine developmental trajectories in this tendency for boys and girls; lastly, to examine the relationship between peer acceptance and some personal factors such as social skills, age and sex.

The research questions can be summarized as follows:

1. Do the data of Turkish sample support the original factor structure of Social Skills Rating System- Student form for both the elementary and secondary level?
2. Is same-sex preference observed among girls or boys?
3. Is there a difference between two age groups in terms of observed same-sex preference among boys or girls?
4. Is there a relationship between peer acceptance and social skills of 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade Turkish primary school students?
5. Is there a difference between the elementary and the secondary level students in terms of social skills which are related to peer acceptance?
6. Is there an effect of sex of the rater on the relationship between peer acceptance and social skills?

7. Is there an effect of sex of the target on the relationship between peer acceptance and social skills?

## CHAPTER 3: METHOD

### Participants

The participants included 520 elementary and secondary school students enrolled in private schools. 234 elementary school students in grade 3 through 5 and 281 secondary level students in grade 6 through 8 participated in the study. 239 of the participants were female whereas 281 were male (See Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of Participants by Sex and Grade in School

	Female	Male
	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>
Grade		
Third	39	43
Fourth	32	41
Fifth	38	41
Elementary level	109	125
Sixth	37	45
Seventh	43	59
Eighth	50	52
Secondary level	130	156
TOTAL	239	281

### Instruments

#### Peer Acceptance Scale

Peer acceptance of children was measured through *Like to play* (LITOP). LITOP is a measure which forces students to rate all of classmates on a 4-point Likert type scale. It was adapted from *How I feel towards others* (HIFTO) measure (Agard, Veldman, Kaufman, & Semmel, 1978). In the LITOP measure, there are four circles opposite each classmate's name including a question mark, a smiling, a sad and a neutral

schematic face. Students are asked to tick the face which demonstrates how much they “like to play with” each person in class; the smiling face indicates that they like to play with that person, the straight mouthed face indicates that they do not mind playing with that person and the frowning face indicates that they do not prefer to play with that person. On the other hand, the question-mark category is used for children who are newly arrived and not known enough by classmates to decide how much they want to play with them. Since this study was conducted in November, i.e. two months after the opening of schools, it was thought that classmates would have an idea about each other. So, unlike the original form, only three alternatives were presented in this study (see Appendix A). For the secondary level, rather than LITOP, students were asked to state on a 3 point scale “How much they want to spend time with this person?” (See Appendix B). The scores obtained from rating scales were not used to categorize children (popular, rejected, controversial etc.) but rather they were used as a continuous variable to define peer acceptance scores of children. In the current study, the sum of ratings received across all of the classmates constituted peer acceptance scores within the group. To calculate acceptance among boys or girls, scores received only from boys or girls were summed.

#### The Social Skills Rating System-Student Form

*The Social Skills Rating System (SSRS)* (Gresham & Elliot, 1990) was used to measure self-perceived social competence. In this scale, social skills consisted of four subscales: Cooperation (helping others, sharing materials, complying with rules and directions), Assertion (initiating behaviors, such as asking for information, introducing oneself, and responding to the actions of others), Empathy (concern and



respect for others' feelings and viewpoints), and Self-Control (to control oneself and respond appropriately in conflicts and in non-conflict situations in which turn taking and compromising is required). The original *SSRS* is a multi-rater assessment tool which aims to measure the perceived frequency and significance of a student's social behaviors. It consists of student, teacher and parent forms (The preschool system does not include the student form). In the present study, only the elementary and secondary levels of the student form were used. The elementary form was designed for third through sixth grades. It consists of 34 items. The secondary form, designed for seventh through eighth grades, includes 39 items. Students are asked to rate the frequency of their own behaviors on a three-point Likert scale (0=never, 1=sometimes, 2=very often). The reliability and validity of the *SSRS* has been demonstrated. Internal consistency is .83-.94 for Social Skills and test-retest reliability for the elementary form is .68-85 for Social Skills (Gresham & Elliot, 1990).

Student forms of the elementary and secondary levels of the *SSRS* were translated into Turkish by the researcher. Later on, two ELT instructors back-translated Turkish forms into English. The original form and back-translated forms were compared and discrepancies were resolved. As a result, the original and back translated versions were judged equivalent.

The *SSRS* was pilot tested with a sample of 97 students (50 students from third grade and 47 students from seventh grade). Reliability analyses were conducted to assess the consistency of the items for the whole scale and all sub-dimensions. Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the elementary scale was .83 whereas it was .78 for secondary scale. In addition, principal components factor analyses with

varimax rotation were carried out to examine the construct validity of the scale. It should be noted that, rather than exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted, which examined fit of the four factor model found by Gresham and Elliot (1991). For the elementary level, the internal reliability coefficients (Cronbach Alpha) of the subscales ranged from .44 to .77 while for the secondary level, the internal reliability coefficients (Cronbach Alpha) of the subscales ranged from .63 to .80. It was noted that the reliability coefficients of the elementary scale were lower compared to secondary scale. In addition, the confirmatory factor analysis found the data of the elementary level not to be a good fit for the original factor structure of the SSRS (Gresham & Elliot, 1990).

Since the sentences were too long it was thought that they may be too difficult for elementary school children to understand. To check this, three third-grade students were selected with the help of the class teacher: the first one had high performance, the second one was poor and third student was moderately successful in Turkish. The students were asked to state whether they understood the items of the elementary level, and it was found that several of the items were hard to understand. In consultation with their class teacher, 17 items were rewritten (items 4, 7, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, and 34). The major goal of these changes was to simplify sentences as much as possible without changing the meaning in order to make them understandable for third-grade children.

After that, the new form of the elementary scale was given to 43 third-graders and again, the reliability analyses and factor analyses were conducted. However, the analyses once again did not exhibit the expected factor structure. Instead of empathy, a new dimension appeared which was called *Communicative Skills*. The reliability coefficient of the whole elementary scale increased from .83 to .85, which indicates

high internal consistency. In addition, an increase was observed in the range of internal reliability coefficients (Cronbach Alpha) of the subscales. The new reliability coefficients of the subscales range from .66 to .78.

As will be discussed in the results section in detail, even though the data did not support the original factor structure for elementary level, principal component analysis indicated meaningful dimensions in both the elementary and secondary forms of the Social Skills Rating System-Student form, which demonstrated the construct validity of the instrument.

In the current study, the scores of total social skills and each of the subscales were computed by summing of the related items.

### Procedure

The SSRS was administered to participants in their classrooms by the researcher. Students were asked to rate themselves on Social Skills Rating System in class. In addition, they were given the list of all of their classmates (Appendices A and B). They were asked to cross out their own names on the list and rate each of their classmates on a three-point scale. Elementary level students were given 30 minutes to complete the forms, while secondary level students completed the forms in approximately 20 minutes. All the participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

### Psychometric Analysis of the Social Skills Rating System-Student Form

#### Reliability Analysis

Reliability analyses were conducted to ensure the consistency of the items for the whole SSRS scale and all sub-dimensions, using the data from 520 students. In addition, principal components factor analyses with varimax rotation were carried out to examine the construct validity of the scale. Following factor analysis, 3 items from the elementary level scale (item 6, 4, and 33) and 1 item from the secondary scale level (item 24) whose factor loadings were below .30 were deleted. The reliability analyses were carried out. For the elementary level, the reliability coefficients increased from .85 to .86 while the reliability coefficient increased from .87 to .88 for the secondary level. For the elementary level, the internal reliability coefficients of the factors (subscales) range from .64 to .74 whereas they range from .73 to .81 for the secondary level (See Table 3).

Table 2. Cronbach Alpha Coefficients of Subscales of SSRS-Student Forms

	Elementary level		Secondary Level	
	Gresham & Elliot (1990)	Current study	Gresham & Elliot (1990)	Current study
Assertiveness	.51	.65	.67	.72
Cooperativeness	.68	.74	.69	.81
Empathy	.74		.77	.78
Communicative skills	-	.71	-	-
Self control	.63	.64	.68	.79
TOTAL SCALE	.83	.86	.83	.88

## Factor Analyses

### Factor Analysis for the Elementary Form

A confirmatory factor analysis was carried out to determine whether the factor structure of the current data fit the four factors found by Gresham and Elliot (1990): Assertiveness, Cooperativeness, Empathy and Self Control.

Since most of items in the first factor were about expressing oneself (e.g. 1, 20, 11, 31, 3, 6) this factor was termed “Assertiveness” even though it included items that belonged to the empathy and cooperativeness subscales in the original factor loadings. The first factor explained 16.55% of the total variance. It consisted of eight statements (Cronbach's *Alpha* = 0.65) (See Appendix E & F).

Since most of the items in the second factor had loaded on Cooperativeness subscale in the original factor analysis, this factor was labeled “Cooperativeness”. This factor includes only two items which loaded on different factors in the original factors, i.e. items 9 and 7. It consisted of eight statements and explained 6.39% of the total variance (Cronbach's *Alpha* = 0.74) (See Appendix E & F).

The third factor was termed “Communication skills”. Even though the majority of the items in the third factor loaded on the empathy factor in the original factor analysis, it also includes some items belonging to Assertiveness. When contents of the items were analyzed it was detected that most of the items were about communication skills, particularly expressing oneself to others. Therefore, rather than empathy, this factor was termed “Communication skills”. It explained 5.22% of the total variance. It consisted of nine items (Cronbach's *Alpha* = 0.71) (See Appendix E & F).

As seen in Appendix E, all items in the fourth factor, except for items 13 and 32, had loaded on the Self Control factor in the original analysis. As a result, the fourth factor was labeled “Self control”. It explained 4.64% of the total variance. It consisted of six items (Cronbach's *Alpha* = 0.64) (See Appendix F).

#### Factor Analysis for the Secondary Form

In contrast to the elementary form, a clear factor structure was observed for the secondary level. As seen in Appendix G, most of the items which loaded on the first factor belonged to the Cooperativeness factor in the original factor loadings. Therefore, the first factor was termed “Cooperativeness”. It consisted of twelve statements and explained 21.23% of the total variance. (Cronbach's *Alpha* = 0.78) (See Appendix H).

The second factor was labeled “Empathy” since most of the items had loaded on the original Empathy subscale. It includes only two items which loaded on different factors in the original factors, i.e. 30 and 37 (See Appendix G). It consisted of eight statements and explained 7.69% of the total variance (Cronbach's *Alpha* = 0.74) (See Appendix H).

The third factor was labeled “Self Control” since most of the items had loaded on Self Control subscale in the original factor analysis. It includes only two items which loaded on different factors in the original factors (i.e., 3 and 36) (See Appendix G). It consisted of ten statements and explained 5.33% of the total variance. (Cronbach's *Alpha* = 0.74) (See Appendix H).

All of the items of the fourth had loaded on the Assertiveness factor in the original analysis (See Appendix G) . As a result, the fourth factor was labeled

“Assertiveness ”. It consisted of eight items and explained 4.07% of the total variance. (Cronbach's *Alpha* = 0.64) (See Appendix H).

### Same-Sex Preference

Acceptance scores and gender mean acceptance scores were calculated for same-sex and cross-sex peers for both boys and girls at each level. See Table 3 for the means and standard deviations. Boys’ acceptance by boys was significantly higher than girls’ acceptance by boys, ( $t(232)=6.10, p=.0001$ ) for both the elementary and the secondary level ( $t(284)=5.82, p=.0001$ ). In other words, boys’ acceptance by boys was found to significantly higher than girls’ acceptance by boys. girls’ acceptance by girls was found to significantly higher than girls’ acceptance by boys for the both secondary ( $t(284)=-5.74, p=.0001$ ) and elementary level ( $t(232)=-7.08, p=.0001$ ).

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations of Peer Acceptance Scores

	Elementary				Secondary			
	Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls	
Acceptance	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
by boys	25.44	7.04	19.75	7.19	25.17	4.88	21.45	5.51
by girls	15.60	4.37	19.64	4.30	14.71	5.28	18.05	4.90

Similarly, boys’ acceptance by girls was lower than boys’ acceptance by boys for the secondary level ( $t(155)=21.97, p=.0001$ ). On the other hand, girls’ acceptance by girls was found to be lower than girls’ acceptance by boys for the secondary level ( $t(129)=5.14, p=.0001$ ).

## Social Skills

For the elementary level, social skills scores of students ranged from 35 to 102 with a mean of 87.61 and a standard deviation of 8.35, whereas for the secondary level, social skills scores ranged from 35 to 114 with a mean of 93.46 and a standard deviation of 10.79 (see Table 4).

Table 4. SSRS: Minimum and Maximum Scores, Means and Standard Deviations of Subscales for two age groups.

Level	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	Mean	SD
<b>Elementary</b>					
Total	234	35	102	87.61	8.35
Cooperativeness		9	24	22.52	2.24
Communicative Skills		8	24	20.23	2.76
Self Control		8	24	19.06	2.91
Assertiveness		8	18	14.93	2.43
<b>Secondary</b>					
Total	286	35	114	93.46	10.79
Cooperativeness		12	50	32.32	3.76
Empathy		4	27	23.47	3.48
Self Control		5	30	21.81	4.13
Assertiveness		5	24	18.58	3.23

*N*= Number of students, Min= minimum score, Max= maximum score, SD= standard deviation

As seen in Table 5, girls' social skills scores are higher than boys' in all of the subscales except the Assertiveness scale at the secondary level

### The Relation between Social Skills and Peer Acceptance

To determine the relationships among social skills, gender, and peer acceptance, a series of analyses was carried out. The correlation between overall social skills scores (including all four subscales) and overall peer acceptance was calculated, followed by separate analyses for the relations between social skills scores and same-



sex and cross-sex peer acceptance at both age levels. These were followed by similar analyses for each subscale separately.

Table 6 shows correlations between overall SSRS scores and peer acceptance by age level, sex of rater and sex of target. Tables 7 through 11 show the correlations for each of the subscales.

Table 5. SSRS: Minimum and Maximum Scores, Means and Standard Deviations of Subscales According to Gender.

Social Skills	N		Mean		SD		Min		Max	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
<b>Elementary</b>										
Total	109	125	88.44	86.89	8.88	7.82	35	58	102	101
Cooperativeness			22.73	22.34	2.26	2.21	9	14	24	24
Communicative Skills			20.56	19.93	2.55	2.91	8	12	24	24
Self Control			19.30	18.86	2.87	2.94	8	11	24	24
Assertiveness			15.06	14.81	2.45	2.41	6	8	18	18
<b>Secondary</b>										
Total	130	156	94.56	92.55	9.53	11.70	35	38	114	114
Cooperativeness			32.94	31.81	2.97	4.24	21	12	36	50
Empathy			24.22	22.84	2.94	3.78	4	6	27	27
Self Control			22.19	21.49	4.03	4.19	5	8	30	30
Assertiveness			17.93	19.12	2.62	3.58	5	6	24	24

#### Social Skills and Overall Acceptance

To investigate whether there is a relation between social skills and peer acceptance (acceptance by both genders), Pearson product-moment correlations between social skills and peer acceptance were computed for both elementary and secondary level school students. For the elementary level, there was no significant correlation

between social skills and peer acceptance although a significant correlation was found between total social skills scores and peer acceptance for the secondary level ( $r = .144$ ,  $n = 286$ ,  $p < .05$ ) (See Table 6).

A first order partial correlation was conducted to investigate the relationship between social skills and peer acceptance when the effects of grade were held constant for the secondary level. The correlation between peer acceptance and total social skills score was significant ( $r = .1441$ ,  $p < .05$ ), peer acceptance and grade was not significant ( $r = -.0452$ ,  $p > .05$ ), and social skills and grade was significant ( $r = -.1715$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The correlation between peer acceptance and social skills with the influence of grade ruled remained significant at the secondary level ( $r = .1385$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

#### Boys' Social Skills and Overall Acceptance

To test whether there is a relation between boys' social skills and peer acceptance, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' social skills and peer acceptance were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. A significant correlation was found between boys' social skills and peer acceptance for both the elementary level ( $r = .181$ ,  $n = 125$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the secondary level ( $r = .197$ ,  $n = 156$ ,  $p < .05$ ) (See Table 6).

#### Girls' Social Skills and Overall Acceptance

To analyze whether there is a relation between girls' social skills and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between girls'

social skills and peer acceptance were computed for both elementary and secondary level school students. No significant correlation was found between girls' social skills and peer acceptance for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 6).

Table 6. Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Total Social Skills Scores and Peer Acceptance, Acceptance by Boys and Acceptance by Girls

<i>Rater</i>	Total	Social Skills of Target	
		Boys	Girls
Elementary	<i>N</i> =234	<i>N</i> =125	<i>N</i> =109
Peer acceptance (by both genders)	.105	.181*	.045
Acceptance by boys	.009	.119	-.024
Acceptance by girls	.204**	.224*	.142
Secondary	<i>N</i> =286	<i>N</i> =156	<i>N</i> =130
Peer acceptance	.144*	.197*	.063
Acceptance by boys	.000	.087	-.045
Acceptance by girls	.218**	.240**	.143

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### Social Skills and Acceptance by Boys

To investigate whether there is a relation between social skills and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between social skills and acceptance by boys were computed for both elementary and secondary level school students. There was no significant correlation between social skills and acceptance by boys for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 6).

### Girls' Social Skills and Acceptance by Boys

To investigate whether there is a relation between girls' social skills and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' social skills and acceptance by boys were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level

school students. No significant correlation was found between girls' social skills and acceptance by boys for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 6).

#### Boys' Social Skills and Acceptance by Boys

In order to test whether there is a relation between boys' social skills and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' social skills and acceptance by boys were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was found between boys' social skills and acceptance by boys for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 6).

#### Social Skills and Acceptance by Girls

To investigate whether there is a relation between social skills and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between social skills and acceptance by girls were computed for both elementary and secondary level school students. A significant correlation was found for both the elementary ( $r = .204$ ,  $n = 234$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and the secondary level ( $r = .218$ ,  $n = 286$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (See Table 6).

#### Girls' Social Skills and Acceptance by Girls

In order to analyze the relation between girls' social skills and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' social skills and acceptance by girls were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students.

No significant correlation was found between girls' social skills and acceptance by girls, either for the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 6).

#### Boys' Social Skills and Acceptance by Girls

To check whether there is a relation between boys' social skills and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' social skills and acceptance by girls were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. A significant correlation was found between boys' social skills and acceptance by girls for both the elementary level ( $r = .224$ ,  $n = 125$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the secondary level ( $r = .240$ ,  $n = 156$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (See Table 6).

### The Relation between Cooperativeness and Peer Acceptance

#### Cooperativeness and Overall Peer Acceptance

With the aim of testing whether there is a relation between cooperativeness and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between cooperativeness and peer acceptance were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. The correlation between cooperativeness and peer acceptance for the elementary level was significant ( $r = .1785$ ,  $n = 234$ ,  $p < .01$ ), whereas there was no significant correlation between cooperativeness and peer acceptance for the secondary level (See Table 7).

A first order partial correlation was conducted to investigate the relationship between cooperativeness and peer acceptance when the effects of grade were held

constant for the elementary level. The correlation between cooperation and grade was not significant ( $r=-.1002, p>.05$ ), and peer acceptance and grade was significant ( $r=-.1440, p<.05$ ). The correlation between peer acceptance and cooperativeness with the influence of grade ruled remained still significant ( $r=.1960, p<.05$ ) at the elementary level.

### Girls' Cooperativeness and Overall Acceptance

In order to investigate whether there is a relation between girls' cooperativeness and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' cooperativeness and peer acceptance were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. There is no significant correlation between girls' cooperativeness and peer acceptance neither for the elementary level nor for the secondary level (See Table 7).

Table 7. Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Cooperativeness Scores and Peer Acceptance by Gender of Rater, Gender of Target and Age Level

<i>Rater</i>	Cooperativeness		
	Total	Boys	Girls
Elementary	<i>N</i> =234	<i>N</i> =125	<i>N</i> =109
Peer acceptance (by both sexes)	.178**	.252**	.112
Acceptance by boys	.120	.233**	.089
Acceptance by girls	.178**	.203*	.103
Secondary	<i>N</i> =286	<i>N</i> =156	<i>N</i> =130
Peer acceptance	.097	.125	.058
Acceptance by boys	-.050	.041	-.070
Acceptance by girls	.202**	.168*	.164

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

### Boys' Cooperativeness and Overall Acceptance

To determine whether there is a relation between boys' cooperativeness and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' cooperativeness and peer acceptance were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. There was a significant correlation between boys' cooperativeness and peer acceptance for the elementary level ( $r = .252$ ,  $n = 125$ ,  $p < .01$ ), while no significant correlation was found for the secondary level (See Table 7).

### Cooperativeness and Acceptance by Boys

To establish whether there is a relation between cooperativeness and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between cooperativeness and acceptance by boys were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was found between cooperativeness and acceptance by boys for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 7).

### Girls' Cooperativeness and Acceptance by Boys

In order to determine whether there is a relation between girls' cooperativeness and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' cooperativeness and acceptance by boys were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was found between

girls' cooperativeness and acceptance by boys for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 7).

#### Boys' Cooperativeness and Acceptance by Boys

With the aim of testing whether there is a relation between boys' cooperativeness and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' cooperativeness and acceptance by boys were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. Even though there was a significant correlation between boys' cooperativeness and acceptance by boys for the elementary level ( $r = .233$ ,  $n = 125$ ,  $p < .01$ ), no significant correlation was detected for the secondary level (See Table 7).

#### Cooperativeness and Acceptance by Girls

In order to investigate whether there is a relation between cooperativeness and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between cooperativeness and acceptance by girls were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. A significant correlation was found between cooperativeness and acceptance by girls both for the elementary level ( $r = .178$ ,  $n = 234$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and the secondary level ( $r = .202$ ,  $n = 286$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (See Table 7).



### Girls' Cooperativeness and Acceptance by Girls

With the aim of testing whether there is a relation between girls' cooperativeness and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' cooperativeness and acceptance by girls were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was found between girls' cooperativeness and acceptance by girls for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 7).

### Boys' Cooperativeness and Acceptance by Girls

In order to test whether there is a relation between boys' cooperativeness and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' cooperativeness and acceptance by girls were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. There was a significant correlation between boys' cooperativeness and acceptance by girls for both the elementary level ( $r = .203, n = 125, p < .05$ ) and the secondary level ( $r = .168, n = 156, p < .05$ ) (See Table 7).

## The Relation between Assertiveness and Peer Acceptance

### Assertiveness and Overall Acceptance

In order to test whether there is a relation between assertiveness and overall peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations

between assertiveness and peer acceptance were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. Although no significant correlation was found for the elementary level, a significant correlation was detected between assertiveness and peer acceptance for the secondary level ( $r = .206$ ,  $n = 286$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (See Table 8).

Table 8. Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Assertiveness and Peer Acceptance by Gender of Rater, Gender of Target and Age Level

<i>Rater</i>	Assertiveness		
	Total	Boys	Girls
Elementary	$N=234$	$N=125$	$N=109$
Peer acceptance (by both sexes)	.073	.120	.028
Acceptance by boys	.013	.043	.025
Acceptance by girls	.131*	.207*	.023
Secondary	$N=286$	$N=156$	$N=130$
Peer acceptance	.206**	.274**	.078
Acceptance by boys	.231**	.249**	.090
Acceptance by girls	.057	.194*	.014

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

A first order partial correlation was conducted to investigate the relationship between assertiveness and peer acceptance when the effects of the grade were held constant for the secondary level. As stated above, the correlation between peer acceptance and assertiveness was significant ( $r=.2064$ ,  $p<.05$ ). On the other hand the correlation between peer acceptance and grade ( $r=-.0452$ ,  $p>.05$ ), and assertiveness and grade was not significant ( $r=-.0411$ ,  $p>.05$ ). The partial correlation between peer acceptance and assertiveness with the influence of grade ruled out remained still significant ( $r=.1960$ ,  $p<.05$ ) at the elementary level.

### Girls' Assertiveness and Overall Acceptance

To test whether there is a relation between girls' assertiveness and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' assertiveness and peer acceptance were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was found for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 8).

### Boys' Assertiveness and Overall Acceptance

With the aim of testing whether there is a relation between boys' assertiveness and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' assertiveness and peer acceptance were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. Although no significant correlation was detected for the elementary level, a significant correlation was found between boys' assertiveness and peer acceptance for the secondary level ( $r = .274$ ,  $n = 156$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (See Table 8).

### Assertiveness and Acceptance by Boys

In order to determine whether there is a relation between assertiveness and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between assertiveness and acceptance by boys were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was detected for the elementary level,

while a significant correlation was found between assertiveness and acceptance by boys for the secondary level ( $r = .231, n = 286, p < .01$ ) (See Table 8).

#### Girls' Assertiveness and Acceptance by Boys

In order to test whether there is a relation between girls' assertiveness and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' assertiveness and acceptance by boys were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was detected for either the elementary or the secondary level students (See Table 8).

#### Boys' Assertiveness and Acceptance by Boys

In order to investigate whether there is a relation between boys' assertiveness and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' assertiveness and acceptance by boys were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was detected for the elementary level whereas a significant relation was found between boys' assertiveness and acceptance by boys for the secondary level ( $r = .249, n = 156, p < .01$ ) (See Table 8).

#### Assertiveness and Acceptance by Girls

With the aim of investigating whether there is a relation between assertiveness and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between assertiveness and

acceptance by girls were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. A significant correlation was detected between assertiveness and acceptance by girls for the elementary level ( $r = .131, n = 234, p < .05$ ) but not for the secondary level (See Table 8).

#### Girls' Assertiveness and Acceptance by Girls

In order to test whether there is a relation between girls' assertiveness and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' assertiveness and acceptance by girls were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was detected between girls' assertiveness and acceptance by girls for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 8).

#### Boys' Assertiveness and Acceptance by Girls

To investigate whether there is a relation between boys' assertiveness and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' assertiveness and acceptance by girls were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. A significant correlation was found between boys' assertiveness and acceptance by girls for both the elementary ( $r = .207, n = 125, p < .05$ ) and the secondary level ( $r = .194, n = 156, p < .05$ ) (See Table 8).

## The Relation between Self Control and Peer Acceptance

### Self Control and Overall Acceptance

To test whether there is a relation between self control and overall peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between self control and acceptance by both sexes were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was detected between self control and acceptance by both sexes for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 9).

Table 9. Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Self Control and Peer Acceptance by Gender of Rater, Gender of Target and Age Level

<i>Rater</i>	Total	Self Control	
		Boys	Girls
Elementary	<i>N</i> =234	<i>N</i> =125	<i>N</i> =109
Peer acceptance(by both sexes)	.057	.063	.064
Acceptance by boys	-.020	-.028	.050
Acceptance by girls	.151*	.190*	.061
Secondary	<i>N</i> =286	<i>N</i> =156	<i>N</i> =130
Peer acceptance	.037	.031	.051
Acceptance by boys	-.139*	-.094	-.146
Acceptance by girls	.208**	.154	.240**

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

### Girls' Self Control and Acceptance by Both Sexes

With the aim of investigating the relation between girls' self control and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' self control and acceptance by both sexes were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was

detected between girls' self control and acceptance by both sexes for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 9).

#### Boys' Self Control and Acceptance by Both Sexes

With the aim of investigating the relation between boys' self control and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' self control and acceptance by both sexes were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was detected between boys' self control and acceptance by both sexes for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 9).

#### Self Control and Acceptance by Boys

To test the relation between self control and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between self control and acceptance by boys were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. Although no significant correlation was detected between self control and acceptance by boys for the elementary level a significant correlation was detected for the secondary level ( $r = .139$ ,  $n = 286$ ,  $p < .05$ ) (See Table 9).

#### Girls' Self Control and Acceptance by Boys

In order to determine whether there is a relation between girls' self control and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' self control

and acceptance by boys were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was detected between girls' self control and acceptance by boys for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 9).

#### Boys' Self Control and Acceptance by Boys

In order to test whether there is a relation between boys' self control and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' self control and acceptance by boys were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. No significant correlation was detected between boys' self control and acceptance by boys for either the elementary or the secondary level (See Table 9).

#### Self Control and Acceptance by Girls

With the aim of testing the relation between self control and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between self control and acceptance by girls were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. A significant correlation was detected between self control and acceptance by girls for both the elementary ( $r = .151$ ,  $n = 234$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the secondary level ( $r = .208$ ,  $n = 286$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (See Table 9).



### Girls' Self Control and Acceptance by Girls

In order to investigate the relation between girls' self control and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' self control and acceptance by girls were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. Although no significant correlation was found for the elementary level a significant correlation was detected between girls' self control and acceptance by girls for the secondary level ( $r = .240$ ,  $n = 130$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (See Table 9).

### Boys' Self Control and Acceptance by Girls

With the aim of testing the relation between boys' self control and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' self control and acceptance by girls were computed for both the elementary and the secondary level school students. A significant correlation was found for the elementary level ( $r = .190$ ,  $n = 125$ ,  $p < .05$ ) but not for the secondary level (See Table 9)

## The Relation between Communicative Skills and Peer Acceptance

### Communicative Skills and Overall Acceptance

In order to test whether there is a relation between communicative skills and overall peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between communicative skills and peer acceptance were computed for the elementary level and no significant correlation was found (See Table 10).

Table 10. Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Communicative Skills and Peer Acceptance by Gender of Rater, Gender of Target for the Elementary Level

<i>Rater</i>	Communicative Skills		
	Total <i>N</i> =234	Boys <i>N</i> =125	Girls <i>N</i> =109
Elementary			
Peer acceptance (by both sexes)	.088	.173	-.002
Acceptance by boys	-.005	.141	-.088
Acceptance by girls	.191**	.171	.142

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

#### Girls' Communicative Skills and Overall Acceptance

To test the relation between girls' communicative skills and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' communicative skills and peer acceptance were computed for the elementary level and no significant correlation was found (See Table 10).

#### Boys' Communicative Skills and Overall Acceptance

In order to test whether there is a relation between boys' communicative skills and overall peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' communicative skills and peer acceptance were computed for the elementary level. No significant correlation was found between boys' communicative skills and peer acceptance (See Table 10).

### Communicative Skills and Acceptance by Boys

In order to test whether there is a relation between communicative skills and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between communicative skills and acceptance by boys were computed for the elementary level. No significant correlation was found between communicative skills and acceptance by boys (See Table 10).

### Girls' Communicative Skills and Acceptance by Boys

In order to test the relation between girls' communicative skills and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' communicative skills and acceptance by boys were computed for the elementary level. No significant correlation was found between girls' communicative skills and acceptance by boys (See Table 10).

### Boys' Communicative Skills and Acceptance by Boys

With the aim of testing the relation between boys' communicative skills and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' communicative skills and acceptance by boys were computed for the elementary level. No significant correlation was found between boys' communicative skills and acceptance by boys (See Table 10).

### Communicative Skills and Acceptance by Girls

To test the relation between communicative skills and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between communicative skills and acceptance by girls were computed for the elementary level. A significant correlation was found between communicative skills and acceptance by girls ( $r = .191$ ,  $n = 234$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (See Table 10).

### Girls' Communicative Skills and Acceptance by Girls

In order to test whether there is a relation between girls' communicative skills and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' communicative skills and acceptance by girls were computed for the elementary level. No significant correlation was found between girls' communicative skills and acceptance by girls (See Table 10).

### Boys' Communicative Skills and Acceptance by Girls

In order to test whether there is a relation between boys' communicative skills and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' communicative skills and acceptance by girls were computed for the elementary level. No significant correlation was found between boys' communicative skills and acceptance by girls (See Table 10).

## The Relation between Empathy and Peer Acceptance

### Empathy and Overall Acceptance

In order to test whether there is a relation between empathy and overall peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between empathy and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes) were computed for the secondary level. A significant correlation was found between empathy and peer acceptance ( $r = .140$ ,  $n = 286$ ,  $p < .05$ ) (See Table 11).

A first order partial correlation was conducted to investigate the relationship between empathy and peer acceptance when the effects of grade were held constant for the secondary level. As stated above, the correlation between peer acceptance and empathy was significant ( $r = .1404$ ,  $p < .05$ ). On the other hand the correlation between peer acceptance and grade ( $r = -.0452$ ,  $p > .05$ ), and empathy and grade was not significant ( $r = -.0208$ ,  $p > .05$ ). The partial correlation between peer acceptance and empathy with the influence of grade ruled out from both variables remained still significant ( $r = .1960$ ,  $p < .05$ ) at the elementary level.

### Girls' Empathy Level and Overall Acceptance

In order to test whether there is a relation between girls' empathy level and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' empathy level and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes) were computed for the secondary level. No significant correlation was found between girls' empathy level and peer acceptance (See Table 11).

### Boys' Empathy Level and Overall Acceptance

In order to test whether there is a relation between boys' empathy level and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes), Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' empathy level and peer acceptance (acceptance by both sexes) were computed for the secondary level. A significant correlation was found between boys' empathy level and peer acceptance ( $r = .213$ ,  $n = 156$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (See Table 11).

Table 11. Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Empathy and Peer Acceptance by Gender of Rater, Gender of Target for the Secondary Level

<i>Rater</i>	Empathy		
	Total	Boys	Girls
Secondary	<i>N</i> =286	<i>N</i> =156	<i>N</i> =130
Peer acceptance (by both sexes)	.140*	.213**	.035
Acceptance by boys	.040	.138	.078
Acceptance by girls	.168**	.210**	-.036

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

### Empathy and Acceptance by Boys

With the aim of testing whether there is a relation between empathy and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between empathy and acceptance by boys were computed for the secondary level. No significant correlation was found between empathy and acceptance by boys (See Table 11).

### Girls' Empathy and Acceptance by Boys

In order to investigate whether there is a relation between girls' empathy level and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' empathy

level and acceptance by boys were computed for the secondary level. No significant correlation was found between girls' empathy level and acceptance by boys (See Table 11).

#### Boys' Empathy and Acceptance by Boys

In order to investigate whether there is a relation between boys' empathy level and acceptance by boys, Pearson product-moment correlations between boys' empathy level and acceptance by boys were computed for the secondary level. No significant correlation was found between girls' empathy level and acceptance by boys (See Table 11).

#### Empathy and Acceptance by Girls

To test whether there is a relation between empathy and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between empathy and acceptance by girls, were computed for the secondary level. A significant correlation was found between empathy and acceptance by girls ( $r = .168$ ,  $n = 286$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (See Table 11).

#### Girls' Empathy and Acceptance by Girls

To test whether there is a relation between girls' empathy level and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between girls' empathy level and acceptance by girls were computed for the secondary level. No significant correlation was found between girls' empathy level and acceptance by girls (See Table 11).

### Boys' Empathy and Acceptance by Girls

In order to test whether there is a relation between boys' empathy level and acceptance by girls, Pearson product-moment correlations between empathy and acceptance by girls were computed for the secondary level. A significant correlation was found between boys' empathy level and acceptance by girls, ( $r = .210$ ,  $n = 156$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (See Table 11).



## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the first section included results of the reliability and the factor analyses of the SSRS. In the second section, the results of the study with regard to developmental trajectories in same sex preference of boys and girls are discussed. In third section, gender and age differences in social skills are presented whereas in the fourth section the relation between social skills and peer acceptance are discussed in detail in consideration with gender and age differences. The last section included the limitations of the study.

### Reliability and Factor Analyses of the SSRS

One of the purposes of the study was to test the psychometric properties of Social Skills Rating System in a Turkish sample. With this aim, measures of internal consistency and a confirmatory factor analysis were employed to the data of both the elementary level and the secondary level students. As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis, even though the structure of cooperativeness, self control and assertiveness dimensions were clear, the empathy factor did not emerge for the elementary level. When contents of the items were analyzed in the fourth factor, it was detected that most of the items were about communication skills, particularly expressing oneself to others. So, the fourth factor was labeled as "Communication Skills". However, in another study which was conducted by Diperna and Volpe (2005) on children in grades 3 to 5, empathy factor was found. This difference in results may stem from the fact that the Social Skills Rating System is developed in English and the sample of Diperna and Volpe (2005) consisted of native English

speaking children. On the other hand, for the current study, the form of SSRS was a nonvalidated translation of the scale. In other words, validity studies have not been undertaken for the SSRS-student form. Even though the translation and the back-translation were compared so as to check the quality of the back-translation, it should be noted that this method does not always produce satisfactory results (Geisinger, 2003) and the reliability of this technique has been debated. In addition, when the length of the sentences is taken into consideration it is not so surprising not to confirm the original factor structure of the SSRS for the elementary level of students.

The results of the reliability analyses for the elementary level indicated that the internal reliability coefficients of the factors (subscales) range from .64 to .74. Similar results were obtained by the study conducted by Diperna and Volpe (2005) whose aim was to explore reliability evidence of scores on the SSRS-Student Elementary Form (SSRS-SEF) for children in grades three to five. Even though they found support for the use of total scale as a measure of student social behavior, they could not find supporting evidence for the subscales. According to Diperna and Volpe's (2005) study, the reliability coefficients of assertiveness, cooperativeness, empathy, self control and total scale were .56, .68, .72, .67 and .83, respectively. Diperna and Volpe (2005) claimed that even though the internal consistency for the total scale was high, internal consistency scores for all the subscales were less acceptable. They asserted that self control, empathy and cooperation were close to achieving an acceptable standard of internal consistency whereas the internal consistency of assertiveness was less acceptable. Likewise, in the current analyses, the assertiveness subscale was found to be less reliable than the other subscales. In addition to assertiveness, the internal consistency of self control was also found to be

low in the present study. On the other hand, the internal consistency coefficients of cooperativeness (.74) and communicative skills (.71) were found to be acceptable.

In contrast to the elementary form, secondary level data exhibited a clear factor structure similar to a four factor model found by Gresham and Elliot (1990). Cooperativeness, self control, assertiveness and empathy were the common dimensions perceived by the secondary students. In addition, the reliability coefficients of total scale and all of the subscales were found to be acceptable for the secondary level.

The fact that secondary level data supported the original factor structure of the SSRS put forward by Gresham and Elliot (1991) and similar reliability coefficients indicated that the SSRS, as a whole scale is a reliable measure to assess social skills. Even though the empathy subscale was not found for the elementary form, it is thought that if sixth graders had been given the elementary form as in Gresham and Elliot's study (1990) the empathy factor would have been found for the elementary level, too.

### Same-Sex Preference

The second goal of the study was to test age and sex-related differences in same-sex preference so as to determine developmental trajectories in this tendency for boys and girls. In line with Moreno (1953), same sex preference was found for both boys and girls. Since Kon and Losenoff, (1978) and Cohen, D'Heurle, and Widmark-Peterson, (1980) asserted that developmental factors in same-sex preference need to be taken into consideration, the aim of the current study was to investigate same-sex

preference at both the elementary and secondary level. Same-sex preference for boys and girls was observed at both the elementary and the secondary level.

## Social Skills

### Gender and Age Differences in Social skills

In line with most of the research in the literature (Akkuş, 2005; Erdoğan, 2002; Kara, 2003; Özbek, 2004) girls' social skills scores were observed to be somewhat higher than boys' social skills scores at both the elementary and the secondary level, although the differences were not significant at the elementary level.

In line with Gresham and Elliot (1990) the mean of girls' self control, assertiveness and cooperativeness scores were higher than boys for the elementary level. Similarly, girls had higher scores in self control, cooperativeness and empathy subscales at the secondary level. On the other hand, boys' assertiveness scores were found to be higher than those of girls at the secondary level. Gresham and Elliot (1990) explained this with the fact that the assertiveness subscale of secondary level "was originally labeled *Heterosexual Confidence* and some items in this subscale at the secondary level may reflect traditional male roles of students who have reached the dating age" (p. 126).

### Social Skills and Peer Acceptance

The third goal of this study was to test the relation between social skills and peer acceptance and analyze the indirect effects of gender and age on this relationship.

According to features theory, while attractive features such as prosocial behaviors result in being liked by peers, unattractive features lead to being disliked by peers (Newcomb, Bukowski, & Pattee, 1993). So, social skills are expected to be related to peer acceptance in the current study.

Mostow et al. (2002) claimed that there is an indirect effect of sex on peer acceptance. Due to the indirect impact of sex, different behaviors lead to acceptance among boys and among girls. In other words, different characteristics gain significance for boys and girls (Gifford-Smith, & Brownell, 2003). Mostow et al. (2002) detected that acceptance by cross-sex peers depends on social skills more than acceptance by same-sex peers. In line with Mostow et al. (2002), in the present study, boys are expected to have social skills to be accepted by peers, particularly by girls, at both the elementary and the secondary level. In accordance with the Similarity Theory, girls were found to accept boys who were similar to them. In other words, they tended to accept boys who were cooperative and had higher self control for the elementary level and who were empathetic for the secondary level.

On the other hand, no relation was found between girls' social scores and girls' acceptance among boys. Even though girls' social skill scores are higher than those of boys for both levels, the failure to find a relation between social skills and peer acceptance can only be explained by the "cross gender ignorance effect" . According to the study conducted by Dijkstra, Lindenberg and Veenstra (2007) results supporting cross gender ignorance effect were found. Even though helping is a social skill which increases peer acceptance among girls, it did not have the same impact among boys. In other words, the helping behavior of girls did not increase girls' acceptance among boys. Rather, it was found that boys were found to ignore helping in girls. Likewise, in the current study, boys may have thought social skills

as a part of “being a girl”, i.e. girlish, so the social skills of girls did not increase their acceptance among boys.

However, similar to acceptance among boys, girls’ social skills were found not to be related to acceptance among girls. The absence of the relation between girls’ social skills and acceptance among girls creates a new question mark in minds with regard to what other aspects can impact peer acceptance among girls.

Neckerman (1996) asserted that girls’ attributes in peer acceptance were observed to be more than those of boys. In other words, girls attach significance to more characteristics in peer relations than boys. So, some other individual characteristics such as academic motivation, physical attractiveness, and socioeconomic status may be related to peer acceptance among girls (Gifford-Smith, & Brownell, 2003).

#### Cooperation and Peer Acceptance

As a result of the current study, it was found that cooperative behaviors were positively correlated with peer acceptance at the elementary level in line with most of the research (e.g. Biermann, 2004; Coie & Dodge, 1988; Coie, Dodge, & Coppotelli, 1982; Coie, Dodge & Kupersmidt, 1990; DeBruyn & VandenBoom, 2005; Dekovic & Gerris, 1994; Denham & Holt, 1993; Dodge, Coie, Petit, & Price, 1990; Erwin, 1993; Hartup, 1992; Ladd, Price & Hart, 1988; Masters & Furman, 1981; Parke et al., 1997).

However, contrary to the study conducted by Coie, Dodge and Coppotelli (1982) which indicated the significance of cooperativeness both in middle childhood and adolescence, the relation between cooperativeness and peer acceptance was

found only for the elementary level. In this sense, it must be noted that cooperation is a multidimensional concept which may include sharing responsibilities, turn taking etc. In addition to helping others and sharing materials, the cooperativeness subscale in the SSRS included items with regard to complying with rules and directions. In other words, it was defined as cooperating with adults and obeying rules. Allen, Weissberg and Hawkins (1989) found a negative correlation between conforming to adult norms and peer status among seventh and eighth graders. So, in line with Allen, Weissberg and Hawkins's (1989) study, since cooperativeness was partly defined in the SSRS as cooperating with adults and obeying rules a correlation between peer acceptance and cooperativeness was not found for the secondary level.

Secondary level students were in the adolescent stage in which breaking the rules of adults is a part of finding identity. So, it was expected that rather than obeying rules, disobeying rules might be related to peer acceptance.

According to Similarity Theory, individuals tend to like others having similar characteristics to their own (Byrne, 1971). Dissimilarity results in being disliked by others (Rosenbaum, 1986; Nangle, Erdlay, Zeff, Stanchfield, & Gold, 2004). In the current study, the relation between boys' cooperativeness and acceptance among girls may be explained with the Similarity Theory. Since, as stated above, the mean of girls' cooperativeness scores were found to be higher than those of boys, they accept boys who are similar to them. In other words, girls were found to accept boys more who were cooperative like themselves. Boys' cooperativeness was also found to be related to acceptance by boys at the elementary level. This influence may be associated with the definition of cooperativeness in the present study. As stated above, the cooperativeness subscale includes items with regard not only to sharing and helping but also obeying rules and cooperating with adults. Duke (1978) alleged

that boys misbehave more than girls in school. For this reason, cooperativeness may have been a more important factor for boys' acceptance than for girls'.

### Assertiveness and Peer Acceptance

Rather than cooperativeness, assertiveness and empathy come forward as significant predictors of peer acceptance at the secondary level. Assertiveness was found to be associated with peer acceptance among secondary level students in accordance with most of the research (Asher, 1983; Coie, Dodge & Kupersmidt, 1990; Dekovic & Gerris, 1994; Denham & Holt, 1993; Denham, McKinley, Couchould, & Holt, 1990; Dodge, 1983; Dodge, Coie, Petit, & Price, 1990; Hartup, 1992; Parke et al., 1997).

In this study, assertiveness was defined as initiating behaviors, such as asking for information, introducing oneself, and responding to the actions of others. It was found to be crucial for boys to be accepted among girls at the elementary level. In line with Coie, Dodge and Kupersmidt, (1990); and Dodge, and Feldman, (1990) the significance of assertiveness increases in adolescence. As a result of this study, at the secondary level, assertiveness becomes significant to being accepted by both genders, particularly boys' assertiveness. The impact of boys' assertiveness on peer acceptance at the secondary level may be associated with the fact that the assertiveness subscale includes assertive behaviors towards the opposite sex such as praising the opposite sex, asking for a date, communicating with the opposite sex without feeling nervous. So, in line with some research in literature (e.g. Sebanc, Pierce, Cheatham, & Gunnar, 2003) boys' assertiveness was found to be crucial for peer acceptance among both boys and girls for the secondary level students.



### Empathy and Peer Acceptance

Since the empathy factor was not found for the elementary level, it was not possible to test the relation between empathy and peer acceptance for the elementary level. Failure to find the empathy factor in the elementary level form may stem from developmental differences in language between elementary level and secondary level. At the secondary level, students were between 12-14 years of age while elementary level students were between the ages of 9 and 11. So, the failure to find the empathy factors may be related to the use of self-report to assess social skills. Even though secondary level students have the ability to understand and use language more effectively, elementary level students may have more difficulty in understanding the statements of the scale. Although the researcher and the class teacher were in the class during the application and asked students to report when they do not understand the items and although all of the questions were answered, students may not have asked all of the questions in their mind or since the questionnaire includes 34 items and since the majority of the items concerning empathy are located after the 17<sup>th</sup> item (item 17, 20, 26, 27, 29, 34), which means that they are mostly located at the end of the scale, students may have become bored and rated items without understanding comprehensively.

On the other hand, since the language ability and the attention span of the secondary level students were more sophisticated compared to the elementary level students it was possible to find both the empathy factor in the secondary level form and the effect of empathy on peer acceptance for the secondary level students. In addition to the development in language ability and attention span, empathy also

develops with age, so, it is more likely that the effect of empathy will be seen for the secondary level when abstract thinking is settled.

Like cooperativeness, it is observed that the empathy level of boys was found to be significant to being accepted by girls. It may be explained in the same way as the impact of boys' cooperativeness on their acceptance among boys. In line with the Similarity Theory, girls like boys who are more empathetic like themselves.

### Self Control and Peer Acceptance

Self control was found to be significant for acceptance among girls for both the elementary and the secondary level. However, at the elementary level, particularly boys' self control was crucial for acceptance by girls. In order to understand the reason why girls attached importance to boys' self control it is necessary to get their point of views towards contexts shared with boys. Maccoby (2003) asserted that the elementary level boys are more likely to be "physical in their play than girls". (p.33). In other words, they tend to engage in more physically active games such as rough and tumble play. Whiting and Edwards (1988) asserted that the games of boys put them on the edge of aggression as if fighting will occur in case of any provocations. In addition to the roughness of boys' games, the time for turn taking in boys and girls' games differ. Turn taking is a crucial sign of acquisition of self control. Crombie and Desjardins (1993) claimed that 21% percent of girls' games consist of turn taking, whereas the time boys spend for turn taking during games is less than 1% (Maccoby, 2003). So, in a context with boys, all of these differences may make girls tense. In this situation, it is probable that they accept boys who have more self control than others. This result is also in accordance with the Similarity Theory. Girls

tend to accept those who have higher self control like themselves. However, this result contradicts with “the cross gender ignorance effect” which claims that girls will see aggression in boys as indicative of being a boy and ignore it as a special feature. Girls were not found to ignore lack of self control of boys by accepting it as a part of being a boy.

### Limitations and Future Directions

Several limitations of the present study require further investigation.

First, after Principal Component Analysis several items of the Social Skills Rating System were omitted, which might have caused to a limitation in the content of the instrument.

Participants included only private school students. This study should be repeated with students from different socio-economic levels.

In order to calculate peer acceptance scores, only peer rating method was used. In order to calculate peer acceptance scores, peer nomination method could also be used as well rating scale. The correlation coefficient between these two acceptance scores might have been calculated so as to provide evidence for the reliability of the peer acceptance scores (peer rating score, positive nominations, social preference, social impact etc.).

The aim of the current study was to examine the relationship between perceived social skills and acceptance by peers. As a consequence, Social Skills Rating System-student form was used but self report method may not provide reliable data for elementary level, particularly for third graders. Social Skills Rating System-Parent and teacher forms might have also been used to increase the reliability of the assessment of social skills. Especially, in the future research, expectations of

teachers may be investigated through the teacher form of the SSRS since it includes teachers' ratings of the importance of behaviors.

Since students from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade to 5<sup>th</sup> grade were accepted as elementary level and students from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade as secondary level, sixth graders were given secondary level form in this study. The reliability analysis and factors analysis could be done for elementary level in condition that six graders were provided elementary level form. In addition, secondary level form could be applied to high school students, i.e. 9<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> graders

Further research should include further examination of the validity and reliability of the scale. In particular, the scale might be compared to another established social skills scale.

Because of the lack of studies in Turkey with regard to social skills, particularly regarding subscales of the SSRS (cooperation, assertiveness, self control and empathy), this study was an exploratory research. Future research should focus on the results of the current study and investigate hypotheses extracted from the current study.

This study was crucial due to its an important contribution to social skills measures in Turkey. Even though SSRS has been used before in Turkey (e.g. SSRS-Teacher form for elementary level in Seven, 2006, Sucuoğlu & Özokçu 2005 and Sümer, 1999; the SSRS-student and parent form for the elementary level in Sümer,1999; the SSRS-teacher and parent form for preschool level in Kamaraj, 2004), it is in the current study that both the elementary and the secondary level forms of the SSRS-Student form were applied simultaneously to make age

comparisons, and reliability analyses of both the elementary and the secondary level have been done.

In addition to its contribution to social skills assessment in Turkey, this study was significant for taking into consideration factors underlying peer acceptance in Turkey. Even though many studies have been done on sociometric status of children in Turkey (e.g. Bař, 2003; Demir, 2006; Oral, 2007; Sümer, 1999; Yukay, 2003) not many studies focused on the factors underlying peer acceptance. This study was a contribution since it shed light on the direct and indirect effect of sex and age on peer acceptance.

One of the aims of the current study was to test psychometric properties of the SSRS. With this aim, reliability and factor analyses were conducted. Factor analyses of the secondary form supported the four factor model which was put forward by Gresham and Eliiot (1990). However, the empathy factor was not found for the elementary level. On the other hand, in line with Gresham and Elliot (1990) the Cronbach alpha coefficients of the secondary form were found to be acceptable whereas the Cronbach alpha coefficients of the assertiveness and self control subscales were found to be less acceptable. In the study conducted by Gresham and Elliot (1990), six graders were given the elementary form. However, in the current study, since the decrease in the age of the emerge of puberty and the fact that sixth graders are included in the secondary level in Turkish Education system was taken into consideration the sixth graders were given the secondary level form. However, it is thought that if the sixth graders are given the elementary form in future research both the Cronbach alpha coefficients of the subscales will increase and the empathy factor will be found for the elementary level.

The second goal of the study was to test age and sex-related differences in same-sex preference so as to determine developmental trajectories in this tendency for boys and girls. Results indicated same-sex preference for both boys and girls both at the elementary and the secondary level.

The third goal of this study was to test the relation between social skills and peer acceptance, and analyze the indirect effects of gender and age on this relationship. Cooperative behaviors were positively correlated with peer acceptance at the elementary level. Rather than cooperativeness, assertiveness and empathy come forward as significant predictors of peer acceptance at the secondary level.

Results indicated that boys are expected to have social skills to be accepted by peers, particularly by girls, at both the elementary and the secondary level. In other words, girls expected boys to have social skills to accept them whereas girls' social skills did not impact their acceptance level among either same-sex or cross-sex peers. In accordance with the Similarity Theory, girls were found to accept boys who were similar to them. In other words, they tended to accept boys who were cooperative and had higher self control for the elementary level and who were empathetic for the secondary level. However, that girls' social skills did not affect their acceptance among boys can be explained with the fact that boys may have thought social skills as a part of "being a girl", i.e. girlish, so social skills of girls did not increase their acceptance among boys.

## APPENDIX A: AKRAN KABULÜ ÖLÇEĞİ

İlköğretim formu

Öğrenciye ait bilgiler


Okulu: \_\_\_\_\_


Sınıfı: \_\_\_\_\_


Erkek \_\_\_\_\_ Kız \_\_\_\_\_ Doğum Tarihi: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*




Bu formda sınıfınızda bulunan bütün arkadaşlarınızın ismi bulunmaktadır. Lütfen ilk önce bu listeden kendi isminizi siliniz. Sonra da her bir arkadaşınızla ne kadar oynamak istediğinize karar veriniz.

Eğer bu arkadaşınızla hiç oynamak istemiyorsanız, 'ın

Eğer bu arkadaşınızla oynayıp oynamamak sizin için önemli değilse  'in

Eğer bu arkadaşınızla oynamak istiyorsanız  in

ALTINA BİR ÇARPI İŞARETİ koyunuz

				
No	İSİM	1	2	3
1.				
2.				

## APPENDIX B: AKRAN KABULÜ ÖLÇEĞİ

Ortaöğretim formu

Öğrenciye ait bilgiler

Okulu: \_\_\_\_\_

Sınıfı: \_\_\_\_\_

Erkek \_\_\_\_\_ Kız \_\_\_\_\_

Doğum Tarihi: \_\_\_\_\_

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Bu formda sınıfınızda bulunan bütün arkadaşlarınızın ismi bulunmaktadır. Lütfen ilk önce bu listeden kendi isminizi siliniz. Sonra da her bir arkadaşınızla ne kadar vakit geçirmek istediğinize karar veriniz.

Eğer bu arkadaşınızla birlikte vakit geçirmek istemiyorsanız






Eğer bu arkadaşınızla birlikte vakit geçirip geçirmemek sizin için önemli değilse



Eğer bu arkadaşınızla birlikte vakit geçirmek istiyorsanız



ALTINA BİR ÇARPI İŞARETİ koyunuz.

				
No	İSİM	1	2	3
1.				



APPENDIX C: Sosyal Davranış Ölçeği -Öğrenci Formu

İlköğretim formu

Gresham & Eliot (1990)

Öğrenciye ait bilgiler

Okulu: \_\_\_\_\_

Sınıfı: \_\_\_\_\_

Erkek \_\_\_\_\_ Kız \_\_\_\_\_

Doğum Tarihi: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Bu formda sizin yaşınızdaki bir çok öğrencinin yapabileceği bir çok davranış liste halinde sunulmaktadır. Lütfen her cümleyi okuyup kendinizi düşününüz. Sonra da belirtilen davranışı ne kadar sıklıkla yaptığınıza karar veriniz.

Eğer bu davranışı hiç yapmıyorsanız, 0'ı daire içine alın

Eğer bu davranışı bazen yapıyorsanız, 1'i daire içine alın

Eğer bu davranışı sık sık yapıyorsanız, 2'yi daire içine alın

Aşağıda iki örnek verilmiştir:

	Ne kadar sıklıkla?		
	Asla	Bazen	Sık sık
Sınıf arkadaşlarımla muhabbeti ben başlatırım	0	1	2
Sıramı temiz ve düzenli tutarım	0	1	2

Bu öğrenci sık sık sınıf arkadaşlarıyla muhabbeti kendisi başlatıyor ve sırasını bazen temiz ve düzenli tutuyor.

Eğer cevabınızı değiştirirseniz, tamamen sildiğinizden emin olun. Lütfen bütün soruları işaretleyiniz. Bitirdiğinizde kağıdınızı ters çevirip öğretmeninizin kağıdınızı toplamasını bekleyiniz.

Eğer ne yapacağınızı anlamadıysanız mutlaka sorunuz. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap bulunmamaktadır. Sadece bu davranışları ne kadar sıklıkla yaptığınıza dair düşüncelerinizi belirtiniz.

Başlamak için öğretmenin talimatını bekleyiniz.

	Ne kadar sıklıkla?		
	Asla	Bazen	Sık sık
1. Kolay arkadaşlık kurarım.	0	1	2
2. Genellikle tanıdığım insanlara selam veririm	0	1	2
3. Diğer insanların eşyalarını kullanmadan önce onlara sorarım.	0	1	2
4. Sınıfta insanları güldürmek için komiklik yapan çocukları görmezden gelirim.	0	1	2
5. Başlarına kötü bir şey geldiğinde diğer insanlar için üzülürüm	0	1	2
6. İnsanlara kızgın olduğumda kızgınlığımı söylerim.	0	1	2
7. Yetişkinlerden farklı düşüncelerimi, kavga etmeden onlara söylerim.	0	1	2
8. Sıramı temiz ve düzenli tutarım.	0	1	2
9. Okulda spor faaliyetlerine veya kulüplere katılmayı severim.	0	1	2
10. Ödevlerimi zamanında yaparım	0	1	2

11. Tanımadığım insanlar, ismimi sormadan da onlara kendi ismimi söyleyebilirim	0	1	2
12. Diğer insanlar bana kızgın olduğu zaman öfkeme hakim olabilirim.	0	1	2
13. Yanlış olduğunu düşündüğüm kuralları uygun bir dille sorgularım.	0	1	2
14. Arkadaşlarıma, onları sevdiğimi söyler ve gösterir, bunu bilmelerini sağlarım	0	1	2
15. Yetişkinler benimle konuşurken onları dinlerim	0	1	2
16. Takdir edilmekten hoşlandığımı arkadaşlarıma gösteririm.	0	1	2
17. Sorunları hakkında konuşurken arkadaşlarımı dinlerim	0	1	2
18. Arkadaşlarımla birlikte yetişkinlerle aramda bir sorun yaratacak şeyler yapmam	0	1	2
19. Anne babamla tartışmalarımı sakın bir şekilde bitirebilirim.	0	1	2
20. Bir şeyi iyi yaptıklarında insanlara güzel sözler söylerim	0	1	2
21. Ders anlatılırken öğretmeni dinlerim	0	1	2
22. Sınıfta yapmam gereken ödevleri zamanında bitiririm	0	1	2
23. Sınıf arkadaşlarımla sohbeti ben başlatırım	0	1	2
24. Yetişkinler hoşlandığım bir şeyi yapınca, onlara söylerim	0	1	2
25. Öğretmenin istediklerini yaparım.	0	1	2
26. Arkadaşlarım kızgın veya üzgün olduklarında neler hissettiklerini anlamaya çalışırım	0	1	2

27. Sorunlarım olduğunda arkadaşlarımdan yardım isterim	0	1	2
28. Çocuklar benimle dalga geçer veya bana isimler takarlarsa onları önemsemem.	0	1	2
29. İnsanlardaki farklılıkları da kabul ederim	0	1	2
30. Boş zamanlarımı iyi değerlendiririm	0	1	2
31. Sınıf arkadaşlarımı bir aktiviteye veya oyuna katılması için davet ederim.	0	1	2
32. Sınıftaki tartışmalarda sesimi yükseltmem.	0	1	2
33. Çocuklar bana vurduğu veya beni ittiği zaman yetişkinlerden yardım isterim	0	1	2
34. Sınıfta bir sorun olduğu zaman arkadaşlarımla konuşurum	0	1	2

Durun. Lütfen bütün soruları işaretlediğinizden emin olun.

APPENDIX D: Sosyal Davranış Ölçeği -Öğrenci Formu

Ortaöğretim formu

Gresham & Eliot (1990)

Öğrenciye ait bilgiler

Okulu: \_\_\_\_\_

Sınıfı: \_\_\_\_\_

Erkek \_\_\_\_\_ Kız \_\_\_\_\_

Doğum Tarihi: \_\_\_\_\_

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Bu formda sizin yaşınızdaki bir çok öğrencinin yapabileceği bir çok davranış liste halinde sunulmaktadır. Lütfen her cümleyi okuyup kendinizi düşününüz. Sonra da belirtilen davranışı ne kadar sıklıkla yaptığınıza karar veriniz.

Eğer bu davranışı hiç yapmıyorsanız, 0'ı daire içine alın

Eğer bu davranışı bazen yapıyorsanız, 1'i daire içine alın

Eğer bu davranışı sık sık yapıyorsanız, 2'yi daire içine alın

Aşağıda iki örnek verilmiştir:

	Ne kadar sıklıkla?		
	Asla	Bazen	Sık sık
Sınıf arkadaşlarımla muhabbeti ben başlatırım	0	1	2
Sıramı temiz ve düzenli tutarım	0	1	2

Bu öğrenci sık sık sınıf arkadaşlarıyla muhabbeti kendisi başlatıyor ve sırasını bazen temiz ve düzenli tutuyor.

Eğer cevabınızı değiştirirseniz, tamamen sildiğinizden emin olun. Lütfen bütün soruları işaretleyiniz. Bitirdiğinizde kağıdınızı ters çevirip öğretmeninizin kağıdınızı toplamasını bekleyiniz.

Eğer ne yapacağınızı anlamadıysanız mutlaka sorun. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap bulunmamaktadır. Sadece bu davranışları ne kadar sıklıkla yaptığınıza dair düşüncelerinizi belirtiniz.

Başlamak için öğretmenin talimatını bekleyiniz.

	Ne kadar sıklıkla?		
	Asla	Bazen	Sık sık
1. Kolay arkadaşlık kurarım.	0	1	2
2. Bir şeyi iyi yaptıklarında insanlara güzel sözler söylerim	0	1	2
3. Diğer çocuklar bana vurduğu veya beni ittiği zaman yetişkinlerden yardım isterim	0	1	2
4. Karşı cinsle görüşmelerimde kendime güvenirim.	0	1	2
5. Arkadaşlarım kızgın veya üzgün olduklarında nasıl hissettiklerini anlamaya çalışırım	0	1	2
6. Yetişkinler benimle konuşurken onları dinlerim	0	1	2
7. Diğer çocuklar benimle dalga geçtiklerinde ve ya bana isimler taktıklarında onları görmezden gelirim	0	1	2
8. Dertlerim olduğunda arkadaşlarımdan yardım isterim	0	1	2
9. Diğer insanların eşyalarını kullanmadan önce onlara	0	1	2

sorarım.			
10. Kavga etmeden veya tartışmadan yetişkinlere onlarla aynı fikri paylaşmadığımı belirtebilirim	0	1	2
11. Diğer arkadaşlarımla birlikte yetişkinlerle aramda bir sorun yaratacak şeyler yapmaktan kaçınırım	0	1	2
12. Başlarına kötü bir şey geldiğinde insanlar için üzülürüm	0	1	2
13. Ödevlerimi zamanında yaparım	0	1	2
14. Sıramı temiz ve düzenli tutarım.	0	1	2
15. Anne babam için yardım istemeden ev işlerinde onlara yardım etmek gibi güzel şeyler yaparım.	0	1	2
16. Okulda spor faaliyetlerine veya kulüplere katılmayı severim.	0	1	2
17. Sınıfta yapmam gereken ödevleri zamanında bitiririm	0	1	2
18. Farklı düşüncelere sahip olduğumuzda öğretmenler veya anne babamla ortak noktada buluşabilirim	0	1	2
19. Sınıfta insanları güldürmek için şaklabanlık yapan çocukları görmezden gelirim.	0	1	2
20. Hoşlandığım birisine çıkma teklif ederim	0	1	2
21. Dertleri hakkında konuşurken arkadaşlarımı dinlerim	0	1	2
22. Anne babamla tartışmalarımı sakın bir şekilde bitirebilirim.	0	1	2
23. Karşı cinsten arkadaşlarıma iltifat ederim	0	1	2
24. İyi bir şeyler yaptıklarında insanlara bunu söylerim	0	1	2

25. Genellikle tanıdığım insanlara selam veririm	0	1	2
26. Heyecanlanmadan karşı cinsten arkadaşlarımla muhabbeti başlatabilirim	0	1	2
27. Sinirlenmeden yetişkinlerin verdikleri cezaları kabul ederim	0	1	2
28. Arkadaşlarıma onları sevdiğimi söyleyerek ve göstererek bunu bilmelerini sağlarım	0	1	2
29. Haksız bir yere eleştirildiklerinde arkadaşlarımı savunurum.	0	1	2
30. Arkadaşlarımı sosyal faaliyetlere çağırırım.	0	1	2
31. Boş zamanlarımı iyi değerlendiririm	0	1	2
32. Diğer insanlar bana kızgın olduğu zaman öfkeme hakim olabilirim.	0	1	2
33. Utanmadan karşı cinsten birinin dikkatini çekebilirim	0	1	2
34. Kızmadan annemin ve babamın eleştirilerini kabul ederim	0	1	2
35. Öğretmenin benden yapmamı istediklerini yaparım.	0	1	2
36. Sınıfta bir şey tartışırken hoş bir ses tonu kullanırım	0	1	2
37. Arkadaşlarımdan yardım isterim	0	1	2
38. Sınıf arkadaşlarımla muhabbeti ben başlatırım	0	1	2
39. Bir problem ya da bir tartışma olduğu zaman sınıf arkadaşlarımla konuşurum	0	1	2



APPENDIX E: Items Loading on the Obtained Factors and Original Factors for the Elementary Form

Obtained factor	Original factor	Item no	Item
Factor 1 <i>Assertiveness</i>	Empathy	29	İnsanlardaki farklılıkları da kabul ederim
	Empathy	20	Bir şeyi iyi yaptıklarında insanlara güzel sözler söylerim
	Empathy	5	Başlarına kötü bir şey geldiğinde diğer insanlar için üzülürüm
	Assertiveness	11	Tanımadığım insanlar, ismimi sormadan da onlara kendi ismimi söyleyebilirim
	Assertiveness	31	Sınıf arkadaşlarımı bir aktiviteye veya oyuna katılması için davet ederim.
	Assertiveness	1	Kolay arkadaşlık kurarım.
	Cooperativeness	30	Boş zamanlarımı iyi değerlendiririm
	Cooperativeness	3	Diğer insanların eşyalarını kullanmadan önce onlara sorarım.
	Cooperativeness	22	Sınıfta yapmam gereken ödevleri zamanında bitiririm
	Cooperativeness	21	Ders anlatılırken öğretmeni dinlerim
Factor 2 <i>Cooperativeness</i>	Cooperativeness	10	Ödevlerimi zamanında yaparım
	Cooperativeness	8	Sıramı temiz ve düzenli tutarım.
	Cooperativeness	25	Öğretmenin istediklerini yaparım.
	Cooperativeness	15	Yetişkinler benimle konuşurken onları dinlerim
	Assertiveness	9	Okulda spor faaliyetlerine veya kulüplere katılmayı severim.
	Self Control	7	Yetişkinlerden farklı düşüncelerimi, kavga etmeden onlara söylerim.

Obtained factor	Original factor	Item no	Item
	Empathy	27	Sorunlarım olduğunda arkadaşlarımdan yardım isterim
	Empathy	26	Arkadaşlarım kızgın veya üzgün olduklarında neler hissettiklerini anlamaya çalışırım.
	Empathy	2	Genellikle tanıdığım insanlara selam veririm
	Empathy	34	Sınıfta bir sorun olduğu zaman arkadaşlarımla konuşurum
Factor 3 <i>Communication skills</i>	Empathy	17	Sorunları hakkında konuşurken arkadaşlarımı dinlerim
	Assertiveness	24	Yetişkinler hoşlandığım bir şeyi yapınca,onlara söylerim
	Assertiveness	16	Takdir edilmekten hoşlandığımı arkadaşlarıma gösteririm.
	Assertiveness	14	Arkadaşlarıma, onları sevdiğimi söyler ve gösterir, bunu bilmelerini sağlarım
	Assertiveness	23	Sınıf arkadaşlarımla sohbeti ben başlatırım
	Cooperativeness	32	Sınıftaki tartışmalarda sesimi yükseltmem.
	Self Control	18	Arkadaşlarımla birlikte yetişkinlerle aramda bir sorun yaratacak şeyler yapmam
Factor 4 <i>Self control</i>	Self Control	28	Çocuklar benimle dalga geçer veya bana isimler takarlarsa onları önemsemem.
	Self Control	12	Diğer insanlar bana kızgın olduğu zaman öfkeme hakim olabilirim.
	Self Control	19	Anne babamla tartışmalarımı sakın bir şekilde bitirebilirim.
	Assertiveness	13	Yanlış olduğunu düşündüğüm kuralları uygun bir dille sorgularım.

APPENDIX F: Factor Structure of the SSRS-Student Form for the Elementary Level

Item	Factor Content	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
29	İnsanlardaki farklılıkları da kabul ederim	.62			
1	Kolay arkadaşlık kurarım.	.56			
20	Bir şeyi iyi yaptıklarında insanlara güzel sözler söylerim	.54			
5	Başlarına kötü bir şey geldiğinde diğer insanlar için üzülürüm	.46			
11	Tanımadığım insanlar, ismimi sormadan da onlara kendi ismimi söyleyebilirim	.45			
31	Sınıf arkadaşlarımı bir aktiviteye veya oyuna katılması için davet ederim.	.40			
30	Boş zamanlarımı iyi değerlendiririm	.35			
3	Diğer insanların eşyalarını kullanmadan önce onlara sorarım.	.33			
22	Sınıfta yapmam gereken ödevleri zamanında bitiririm		.63		
21	Ders anlatılırken öğretmeni dinlerim		.60		
10	Ödevlerimi zamanında yaparım		.58		
8	Sıramı temiz ve düzenli tutarım.		.56		
25	Öğretmenin istediklerini yaparım.		.52		
15	Yetişkinler benimle konuşurken onları dinlerim		.43		
9	Okulda spor faaliyetlerine veya kulüplere katılmayı severim.		.42		
7	Yetişkinlerden farklı düşüncelerimi, kavga etmeden onlara söylerim.		.35		
27	Sorunlarım olduğunda arkadaşlarımdan yardım isterim				
24	Yetişkinler hoşlandığım bir şeyi yapınca,onlara söylerim			.61	

Item	Factor Content	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
16	Takdir edilmekten hoşlandığımı arkadaşlarıma gösteririm.			.57	
17	Sorunları hakkında konuşurken arkadaşlarımla dinlerim			.51	
14	Arkadaşlarıma, onları sevdiğimi söyler ve gösterir, bunu bilmelerini sağlarım			.46	
26	Arkadaşlarımla kızgın veya üzgün olduklarında neler hissettiklerini anlamaya çalışırım			.41	
2	Genellikle tanıdığım insanlara selam veririm			.39	
34	Sınıfta bir sorun olduğu zaman arkadaşlarımla konuşurum			.39	
23	Sınıf arkadaşlarımla sohbeti ben başlatırım			.38	
32	Sınıftaki tartışmalarda sesimi yükseltmem.				.71
18	Arkadaşlarımla birlikte yetişkinlerle aramda bir sorun yaratacak şeyler yapmam				.56
28	Çocuklar benimle dalga geçer veya bana isimler takarlarsa onları önemsemem.				.53
12	Diğer insanlar bana kızgın olduğu zaman öfkeme hakim olabilirim.				.48
19	Anne babamla tartışmalarımı sakın bir şekilde bitirebilirim.				.37
13	Yanlış olduğunu düşündüğüm kuralları uygun bir dille sorgularım.				.36
Percent of variance explained		16.50	6.39	5.22	4.64
Total percentage variance explained		32.81			
Cronbach's Alpha		.65	.74	.71	.64

APPENDIX G: Items Loading on The Obtained Factors and Original Factors for the Secondary Level Form

Obtained factor	Original factor	Item no	Item
Factor 1 <i>Cooperativeness</i>	Cooperativeness	17	Sınıfta yapmam gereken ödevleri zamanında bitiririm.
	Cooperativeness	14	Sıramı temiz ve düzenli tutarım.
	Cooperativeness	13	Ödevlerimi zamanında yaparım
	Cooperativeness	35	Öğretmenin benden yapmamı istediklerini yaparım.
	Cooperativeness	6	Yetişkinler benimle konuşurken onları dinlerim
	Cooperativeness	31	Boş zamanlarımı iyi değerlendiririm
	Cooperativeness	9	Diğer insanların eşyalarını kullanmadan önce onlara sorarım.
	Cooperativeness	11	Diğer arkadaşlarımla birlikte yetişkinlerle aramda bir sorun yaratacak şeyler yapmaktan kaçınırım
	Empathy	12	Başlarına kötü bir şey geldiğinde insanlar için üzülürüm
	Empathy	2	Bir şeyi iyi yaptıklarında insanlara güzel sözler söylerim
Factor 2 <i>Empathy</i>	Empathy	8	Dertlerim olduğunda arkadaşlarımdan yardım isterim
	Self Control	15	Anne babam için yardım istemeden ev işlerinde onlara yardım etmek gibi güzel şeyler yaparım.
	Empathy	39	Bir problem ya da bir tartışma olduğu zaman sınıf arkadaşlarımla konuşurum
	Empathy	29	Haksız bir yere eleştirildiklerinde arkadaşlarımla savunurum.
	Empathy	21	Dertleri hakkında konuşurken arkadaşlarımla dinlerim

Obtained factor	Original factor	Item no	Item
Factor 2 <i>Empathy</i>	Empathy	5	Arkadaşlarım kızgın veya üzgün olduklarında nasıl hissettiklerini anlamaya çalışırım
	Empathy	28	Arkadaşlarıma onları sevdiğimi söyleyerek ve göstererek bunu bilmelerini sağlarım
	Empathy	25	Genellikle tanıdığım insanlara selam veririm
	Assertiveness	30	Arkadaşlarımı sosyal faaliyetlere çağırırım.
	Cooperativeness	37	Arkadaşlarımdan yardım isterim
Factor 3 <i>Self Control</i>	Self Control	34	Kızmadan annemin ve babamın eleştirilerini kabul ederim
	Self Control	22	Anne babamla tartışmalarımı sakın bir şekilde bitirebilirim.
	Self Control	32	Diğer insanlar bana kızgın olduğu zaman öfkeme hakim olabilirim.
	Self Control	27	Sinirlenmeden yetişkinlerin verdikleri cezaları kabul ederim
	Self Control	19	Sınıfta insanları güldürmek için komiklik yapan çocukları görmezden gelirim.
	Self Control	18	Farklı düşüncelere sahip olduğumuzda öğretmenler veya anne babamla ortak noktada buluşabilirim
	Self Control	7	Diğer çocuklar benimle dalga geçtiklerinde veya bana isimler taktıklarında onları görmezden gelirim
	Self Control	10	Kavga etmeden veya tartışmadan yetişkinlere onlarla aynı fikri paylaşmadığımı belirtebilirim.

Obtained factor	Original factor	Item no	Item
Factor 3 <i>Self Control</i>	Assertiveness	3	Diğer çocuklar bana vurduğu veya beni ittiği zaman yetişkinlerden yardım isterim.
	Cooperativeness	36	Sınıfta bir şey tartışırken hoş bir ses tonu kullanırım.
	Assertiveness	23	Karşı cinsten arkadaşlarıma iltifat ederim
	Assertiveness	33	Utanmadan karşı cinsten birinin dikkatini çekebilirim
	Assertiveness	20	Hoşlandığım birisine çıkma teklif ederim
Factor 4 <i>Assertiveness</i>	Assertiveness	4	Karşı cinsle görüşmelerimde kendime güvenirim.
	Assertiveness	38	Sınıf arkadaşlarımla muhabbeti ben başlatırım
	Assertiveness	26	Heyecanlanmadan karşı cinsten arkadaşlarımla muhabbeti başlatabilirim
	Assertiveness	1	Kolay arkadaşlık kurarım.
	Assertiveness	16	Okulda spor faaliyetlerine veya kulüplere katılmayı severim.

APPENDIX H: Factor Structure of SSRS-Student form for the Secondary Level

Item	Factor Content	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
17	Sınıfta yapmam gereken ödevleri zamanında bitiririm	.63			
14	Sıramı temiz ve düzenli tutarım.	.62			
13	Ödevlerimi zamanında yaparım	.62			
35	Öğretmenin benden yapmamı istediklerini yaparım.	.57			
6	Yetişkinler benimle konuşurken onları dinlerim	.57			
12	Başlarına kötü bir şey geldiğinde insanlar için üzülürüm	.56			
9	Diğer insanların eşyalarını kullanmadan önce onlara sorarım.	.46			
11	Diğer arkadaşlarımla birlikte yetişkinlerle aramda bir sorun yaratacak şeyler yapmaktan kaçınırım	.43			
2	Bir şeyi iyi yaptıklarında insanlara güzel sözler söylerim	.41			
15	Anne babam için yardım istemeden ev işlerinde onlara yardım etmek gibi güzel şeyler yaparım.	.36			
31	Boş zamanlarımı iyi değerlendiririm.	.33			
8	Dertlerim olduğunda arkadaşlarımdan yardım isterim		.70		
30	Arkadaşlarımı sosyal faaliyetlere çağırırım.		.64		
37	Arkadaşlarımdan yardım isterim		.63		
39	Bir problem ya da bir tartışma olduğu zaman sınıf arkadaşlarımla konuşurum		.63		
29	Haksız bir yere eleştirildiklerinde arkadaşlarımı savunurum.		.56		
21	Dertleri hakkında konuşurken arkadaşlarımı dinlerim		.52		
5	Arkadaşlarım kızgın veya üzgün olduklarında nasıl hissettiklerini anlamaya çalışırım.		.47		



Item	Factor Content	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
28	Arkadaşlarıma onları sevdiğimi söyleyerek ve göstererek bunu bilmelerini sağlarım.		.38		
25	Genellikle tanıdığım insanlara selam veririm.		.32		
34	Kızmadan annemin ve babamın eleştirilerini kabul ederim.			.66	
3	Diğer çocuklar bana vurduğu veya beni ittiği zaman yetişkinlerden yardım isterim.			.60	
22	Anne babamla tartışmalarımı sakın bir şekilde bitirebilirim.			.59	
32	Diğer insanlar bana kızgın olduğu zaman öfkeme hakim olabilirim.			.58	
27	Sinirlenmeden yetişkinlerin verdikleri cezaları kabul ederim.			.56	
19	Sınıfta insanları güldürmek için şaklabanlık yapan çocukları görmezden gelirim.			.55	
18	Farklı düşüncelere sahip olduğumuzda öğretmenler veya anne babamla ortak noktada buluşabilirim.			.50	
36	Sınıfta bir şey tartışırken hoş bir ses tonu kullanırım.			.48	
7	Diğer çocuklar benimle dalga geçtiklerinde veya bana isimler taktıklarında onları görmezden gelirim.			.39	
10	Kavga etmeden veya tartışmadan yetişkinlere onlarla aynı fikri paylaşmadığımı belirtebilirim			.36	
23	Karşı cinsten arkadaşlarıma iltifat ederim.				.75
33	Utanmadan karşı cinsten birinin dikkatini çekebilirim				.73
20	Hoşlandığım birisine çıkma teklif ederim.				.73
4	Karşı cinsle görüşmelerimde kendime güvenirim.				.56
38	Sınıf arkadaşlarımla muhabbeti ben başlatırım.				.43
26	Heyecanlanmadan karşı cinsten arkadaşlarımla muhabbeti başlatabilirim.				.38

Item	Factor Content	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
1	Kolay arkadaşlık kurarım.				.35
16	Okulda spor faaliyetlerine veya kulüplere katılmayı severim.				.30
Percent of variance explained		21.23	7.69	5.33	4.07
Total percentage variance explained		38.34			
Cronbach's Alpha		0.78	0.74	0.74	0.64

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