



## Investigation Of Preschool Children's Interpersonal Problem Solving Skills

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### Abstract

The aim of the study was to determine preschool children's interpersonal problem solving skills and the factors affecting these skills in detail. For this purpose, quantitative and qualitative research methods were used conjunctively and the research was planned in accordance with "screening model". This research is a descriptive research that enquired the current situation. The study group was comprised of 152 children selected from 10 kindergartens attached to the Ministry of Education in the province of Giresun. The children participating in the study were chosen by random sampling method. To collect data of the study, Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory (IPSI) developed by Özdil (2008) was used. A semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher was used to make interviews with teachers and parents. In this research, data were collected from three different participants, namely from pre-school children in the case of quantitative data analysis and from teachers and families in the case of qualitative data analysis. After analyzing the data from Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory, the children who got the lowest score were determined based on the results of the analysis. Then, interviews were conducted with classroom teachers and parents of these children to obtain in-depth information. Content analysis and the ANOVA test were used to analyze qualitative and quantitative data of the research, respectively. Considering the results of the study, it is apparent that quantitative and qualitative data are consistent with each other. Significance was detected as a result of the statistical analysis performed between time spent by children watching TV and their parental structures and their interpersonal problem-solving skills, while teachers and parents of children were found to focus on their parental structure and time spent by them watching TV. Teachers expressed their views about behavioral problems of children with interpersonal problem solving problem as aggression, verbal threats, not sharing, not participating in group activities, crying and maternal/paternal dependency, and the parents expressed their views under themes of aggression, verbal threats, crying and maternal / paternal dependency.

### Keywords

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## Introduction

When the literature is examined, it is clear that the problem concept has many definitions. According to Bingham (1998), problem is an obstacle with which a person's current powers collected to reach an intended target come across (Bingham, 1998). Kneeland (2001) defines problem as the difference between the state something has to be in and the current state, while Morgan (2000) defines problem as a conflict situation where an individual comes across with prevention while trying to reach a goal. Although the problem concept has many definitions, common features of a problem are as follows: (1) That the problem is a challenge for the person faced with it (2) That the person needs to solve it (3) That the person hasn't encountered it before and doesn't have any preparations related to the solution. However, these features lead to some limitations associated with the concept of problem. These limitations are that a situation once encountered and solved is no longer a problem when encountered again, that a situation which is a problem for some people is not a problem for others, that a solution does not suddenly emerge and that it requires effort (Dağlı, 2004). When someone says problem, what first comes to mind is problems in the area of mathematics, however, an individual encounters many problems throughout his/her life and these problems require solution (Cüceloğlu, 2003; Koray & Azar, 2008). First of all, individuals should be aware that every problem has a specific solution and s/he should have some problem-solving skills to reach the solution (Kahney, 1993). Therefore, it is essential that individuals have problem-solving skills. Problem solving skill is defined as "what we do when we have a purpose and don't know how to reach it" (Düzakin, 2004). Solutions to encountered problems vary depending on type and complexity of the problem. Some of the problems can be solved through logic, while some can be solved by emotional maturity and some by looking at events with a new perception. The common point in solving a problem is to impede the barrier that prevents reaching a target (Cüceloğlu, 2003). In other words, problem solving is a process which may help a person find the way by which s/he can most effectively reach his/her desire.

Problem solving is a condition not only seen in adults but in all ages. The complexity of the world we live in make children often confront with problems which need to be resolved so learning problem-solving constitutes the most critical point in early childhood education (Aydoğan & Ömeroğlu, 2003). Developing children's problem-solving skills as from pre-school period is very important in terms of adaptation to real life. Problems provide children with the opportunity to discover their own style, while they help to maintain a balance between newly acquired behaviors and experiences (Zembat & Unutkan, 2005). Problem-solving skills help individual and group adapt to the environment in which they live. Therefore, individuals have to learn solving problems to efficiently adapt to the environment they live in (Senemoğlu, 2005). Problem solving skills is a characteristic that can be learned (Güçlü, 2003). Without being aware, individuals develop their own personal problem-solving methods using their own personality, upbringing and what they learned at school (Arnold, 1992). One of the most important places for the development of children's problem-solving skills is the school. A teaching method that will support children's problem-solving skills at school should be introduced. In this way, schools will achieve the goal of raising individuals who will successfully adapt to life. Therefore, it is important to include problem solving method in education. It should help children collect necessary information while solving problems, compare and evaluate such information, draw conclusions and assess them. Thus, it will be easier for an individual to adapt to life because in this way the child will have already gained skills, courage and strength to solve problems s/he will encounter in life, at the time s/he was at school (Sevinç, 2005).

Human relationships are the source of both our happiness and unhappiness. Therefore, one of the most common problems encountered in life are those arising from interpersonal relationships. Such problems may lead to the emergence of personal distress (Eskin, 2009). Interpersonal problem-solving skill is defined as that people solve their problems arising from differences between their thoughts, beliefs, values or requirements and ensure social and emotional adaptation (Pellegrini & Urbain, 1986). Interpersonal problem-solving process is a process in which an individual creates new ways, new solutions, new ideas to to the problems s/he is faced with. The important point here is that

individuals find solutions to their problems through peaceful ways that will contribute to their development, instead of traditional methods such as ignoring the problem and evading the issue, resorting to violence, displaying aggressive behaviors, etc. (Terzi, 2003). Interpersonal problem-solving skill is a skill the foundations of which are laid at an early age. In studies conducted on the subject, it is stated that as early as 4 years of age, children may gain problem solver way of thinking through an appropriate education (Shure 2001; Schweinhart & Weikart, 1998). When the children are given opportunities to solve their own problems, their cognitive skills such as observation, comparison, organizing information, assessment improve as well as their democratic attitude and demeanor also develop (Goffin & Tull, 1993). During their researches, Kendall & Fischler (1984) revealed that individuals with interpersonal problem-solving skills are more sensitive to interpersonal problems, can bring alternative solutions to problems, can clearly express the methods necessary to perform the solution, can think about possible consequences of the individual's social behaviors and evaluate other people's behaviors, emotions and thoughts.

Children experience their first interpersonal problems in preschool institutions where they enter into the process of socialization (Cüceloğlu, 2003). In this period, although children establish very good friendships, they can sometimes experience conflicts with each other. However, these conflicts can be destructive or harmful as well as considered a self-development process. For sustainability of group games and peer interaction, children are required to use effective social problem-solving skills when they are faced with conflicts or problems (Deutsch 1994; Pickover, 2006). In pre-school educational institutions, children come together with their peers and become involved in interaction and communication with their friends. In this way, pre-school education institutions create a natural environment for the emergence of interpersonal problems. Therefore, pre-school education programs should be based on multi-dimensional education programs that will provide interpersonal problem-solving skills (Anliak & Dinçer, 2005). In a pre-school educational environment, children are given interpersonal problem-solving skills through drama, listening and telling stories, games, music, individual and group activities, etc. (Yoleri, 2010). In this training process where interpersonal relationships are taken as primary goals, the purpose is to facilitate socialization, ensure that the children establish healthy relationships with their peers and adults, and help them develop listening, comprehension, verbal and nonverbal communication skills (Temel, 1996; Açıkgöz, 2002). The ability to skillfully solve interpersonal problems gained in the early stage will be reflected in the relationships in later years and will continue to develop as skills that can be used throughout the entire life (Bingham, 1998).

One of the most important factors on children's problem-solving skills is the family. Therefore, the family environment in which the child is raised is extremely important. Problem behaviors are more common in children lacking support from adults, coming from a stressful home environment, compared to children who get support from people around them. Problem behavior, including extreme shyness, aggressive behaviors, incompatibility with peers, etc. is seen in children who grew up in adverse home conditions. Because they learn social interaction with adults they live with (Dinçer, 1995). There are differences in attitudes of families towards their children. Some families can be more repressive, some more democratic and some more tolerant. All of these attitudes are effective on the child's personality as well as his/her interpersonal problem-solving skills because of his/her social development (Yavuzer, 1998). In view of the literature, it is indicated that there is a relationship between the children's skills to cope with problems and parental attitudes and family relationships (McDowell & Parke, 2000; Arı, Çağdaş & Seçer, 2002; Hortaçsu, 2003; Ulupınar, 2004). Children learn ways to deal with problems they may encounter, in the family. A positive family environment will contribute greatly to development of healthy and positive personality in children (Aşkın, 2006). Especially the mother's level of social skills has an impact on development of social skills in her child. Results of Özabacı (2006)'s research are also in line with this information. The mother's level of social skills was shown to have an impact on the child's social skills, ability to maintain friendships or social relationships.

One of the factors affecting children's interpersonal problem-solving skills is television and computer use. Today, children spend time watching TV and playing computer games without communicating with each other, rather than playing among themselves on the street. With the widespread use of the Internet, even in the villages, children prefer to spend time in front of the computer, rather than playing outside (Khambekar, 2003). When the literature is examined, it is seen that watching TV and computer use also affect the relationships of children with each other, and their behavior. A child who has spent excessive amount of time in front of TV in preschool period may have difficulty in establishing social and emotional communication (Ertürk & Gül, 2006). What the child watches is also said to be important. Children may take cartoon characters on TV as a model and seek solution to interpersonal problems in physical violence (Ünver, 2002). In a study by Gülay (2011) in which the relationship between social behavior, aggressive behavior habits and computer usage time of children aged 5-6 years was investigated, a relationship was determined between children's level of aggression and computer usage time. Similarly, Kadan (2010) suggested that children aged 4-6 years watching too much TV show more aggressive behavior than those watching less TV. For all these reasons, the purpose of this study was to set forth preschool children's interpersonal problem-solving skills.

For this purpose, answers were sought for the following problems:

1. Do preschool children's interpersonal problem-solving skills show statistically significant difference with respect to perceived parental structure?
2. Do preschool children's interpersonal problem-solving skills show statistically significant difference with respect to time spent watching TV?
3. Do preschool children's interpersonal problem-solving skills show statistically significant difference with respect to number of siblings?
4. What do teachers think about the type of behavioral problems children with interpersonal problem-solving problems show?
5. What do parents think about the type of behavioral problems children with interpersonal problem-solving problems show?
6. What do teachers and parents think about the source of problems of children with interpersonal problem-solving problems?

## Method

### *Model of the research*

The aim of the study was to determine preschool children's interpersonal problem solving skills and the factors affecting these skills in detail. For this purpose, quantitative and qualitative research methods were used conjunctively and the research was planned in accordance with "screening model". This research is a descriptive research that enquired the current situation. Screening model was utilized to establish preschool children's interpersonal problem-solving skills. In descriptive screening model, answers are sought to the research problem by analyzing data obtained from numerous subjects and objects within a specified period of time (Arseven, 2001, Büyüköztürk, 2006; Karasar, 2010).

Verma & Mallick (2005) reported in the same research that utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods is quite common. Data collected via quantitative method provide access to numerous participants, while data obtained using qualitative methods such as observation, discussion, etc. allow in-depth investigation of the research subject (Green, Krayder & Mayer, 2005). By combined use of such type of qualitative and quantitative research methods, defects of a poor method can be remedied by another method, researcher may answer research questions in a wider and more complete manner since s/he is not limited by a single method, numeric data can be used to clarify words, pictures or events, reveal different opinions and insights that might go unnoticed in a study, provide strong evidence for results by looking at precision and accuracy of the findings and generate more accurate and complete information about theories and practices (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

### *Study group*

The study group was comprised of 152 children selected from 10 kindergartens attached to the Ministry of Education in the province of Giresun. The children participating in the study were chosen by random sampling method. 70 children in the study group are 5 years old, and 82 children are 6 years old; 63 children are girls and 89 are boys. The children participating in the study were chosen from 10 different kindergartens. In order to obtain in-depth information about the study, a total of 10 children who got the lowest scores from data collection tool was determined from each kindergarten. Then, interviews were conducted with classroom teachers and parents of these children. A total of 10 teachers and parents were interviewed.

**Table 1.** Information About 10 Children Who Got The Lowest Score From Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory

		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10
Gender	Boys	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓
	Girls			✓			✓		✓	✓	
Perceived parental structure	Democratic				✓					✓	
	Repressive			✓					✓		✓
	Protective	✓	✓			✓		✓			
	Indifferent						✓				
Time spent watching TV	0-1 hours										✓
	1-2 hours								✓		
	2-3 hours	✓									
	3-4 hours			✓		✓		✓		✓	
	More than 4 hours		✓		✓		✓				
Number of siblings	No siblings		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
	One	✓			✓		✓				✓
	Two										
	Three										
Year at kindergarten	1 <sup>st</sup> year	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	2 <sup>nd</sup> year					✓					✓

Considering Table 1, it is clear that genders of children who got the lowest score from interpersonal problem solving inventory were girls (n=4), boys (n=6); that their perceived parental structures were democratic (n=3), repressive (n=2), protective (n=4), indifferent (n=1); that time spent by them watching TV was 0-1 hr (n=1), 1-2 hrs (n=1), 2-3 hrs (n=1), 3-4 hrs (n=4), more than 4 hrs (n=3); that the number of their siblings was none (n=6), one sibling (n=4) and the number of children at year 1 and 2 in kindergarten were (n=8) and (n=2), respectively.

#### ***Data collection tools:***

To collect data of the study, Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory (IPSI) developed by Özdil (2008) was used. Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory (IPSI) was developed to measure interpersonal problem solving behaviors of preschool children. Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory is a 4-point Likert scale, consisting of 24 items. Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory was used as a single dimension. The scoring of the scale was 1: Never, 2: Sometimes, 3: Usually, 4: Always. Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was referred to in order to establish reliability of this study. As a result of the statistical analysis, Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was found as .87. Tezbaşaran (1997) stated that a reliability coefficient deemed satisfactory in a likert-type scale should be close to 1 as much as possible. According to these results, reliability of the scale can be said to be at a high level.

A semi-structured interview form was developed to make interviews with teachers and parents. While preparing the interview form, the researcher paid attention to that the questions are open-ended but not multi-dimensional, that they do not orientate the participants, and that they can be easily understood by the participants. The prepared form was submitted to lecturers (5 Lecturers) who specialized in and have experience on the subject for their opinions, and its scope and validity were analyzed. Face validity represents what a measurement tool seems to measure, rather than what it measures. Face validity of a scale is that the scale seems to measure a quality it wants to measure (Ercan and Kan, 2004). Question form was finalized before preliminary application on the basis of feedbacks. Preliminary application of the question form was conducted by 5 preschool teachers and 3 questions which were not understandable and coherent were corrected. After preliminary application, 3 questions about children's interpersonal problem-solving skills were included in the study.

Parents were asked to give information about time spent by children watching TV, perception of their parental structure and number of siblings. In order to establish perceived parental structure, the children's mothers and fathers were individually asked how they perceive their parental structures. 128 parents gave the same answer; different answers were finalized by referring to the opinion of the teacher in 24 parents.

#### ***Data collection***

During the investigation, three different partners, namely children, parents and teachers, were utilized to collect data on preschool children's interpersonal problem-solving skills. Teachers and parents provided qualitative data, while children's teachers provided quantitative data. Teachers were given information about the contents of the research in September. Teachers were asked to observe the children in class for 4 months and complete Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory for every child. The completed forms were retrieved from teachers in January. After analyzing the data from Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory, the children who got the lowest score were determined based on the results of the analysis. Then, interviews were conducted with classroom teachers and parents of these children to obtain in-depth information. One-to-one semi-structured interviews were made with teachers by researchers. Before each interview, the interviewee was given preliminary information about the subject and an appointment was made to be able to perform the interview in the place and at the time specified by the interviewee. The interviews lasted 20-30 minutes. Teachers' answers were recorded using a tape recorder.

### *Data analysis*

ANOVA test was conducted with average scores obtained for each sub-dimension of the scale for statistical comparisons. In the case of variables with non-related two or more sub-categories, "one-way variance analysis (ANOVA)" was used to test significance of intergroup difference. As a result of ANOVA, "Tukey HSD Multiple Comparison Test" was conducted to determine between which groups there were significant differences. Arithmetic mean and significance values were considered based on the results of the analysis while interpreting inter-group differences (Büyüköztürk, 2006).

During the process of evaluation of interview records, "content analysis", one of the methods used in qualitative data analysis, was utilized to examine the resulting data in more detail, and the resulting data was analyzed by individually coding for every teacher and parent. The aim of the research was taken into account while performing coding, and accordingly codes were developed. Codes were created with open coding method. The resulting codes were first tabulated and then interpreted. While creating themes (categorization), either themes previously developed by others are taken or where this cannot be done, a new theme system can be developed (Bilgin, 2006). During the research, the researchers individually examined the interviewees' statements in terms of the themes specified, and performed inter-rater reliability analysis. In this process, the formula, Inter-rater Reliability =  $[\text{Consensus} / (\text{Consensus} + \text{Dissidence})] \times 100$  (Miles and Huberman, 1994) was utilized, and the percentage of inter-rater reliability was calculated as 84%. According to Kabapınar (2003), if consistency between two codings is 80% and above, analyses in the research, thus, the research is said to be reliable. In this context, since the percentage of consistency obtained from the study is above 80%, the resulting data is considered to be reliable. In a study, in which descriptive analysis is used, it is essential for validity that direct quotations from the interviewees and the results based on these quotations are included (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). In addition to this, data was described in detail and supported with direct quotations in places in order to convey results obtained. The real names of the participants were kept secret in the case of direct quotations and direct quotations were expressed as T1, T2, ... Researchers quoted sections they deem important to them as quotations in the research, and statements given by different people are given in combined form.

## Results

- 1. Findings regarding the first problem situation:** Do preschool children's interpersonal problem-solving skills show statistically significant difference with respect to perceived parental structure?

**Table 2.** Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory ANOVA Results With Respect To Perceived Parental Structure

Perceived parental structure	N	$\bar{x}$	Variance Source	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean of Squares	F	P	Significant Difference
Democratic	65	46.42	Inter-group	478.16	3	159.38	1.51	.04*	Democratic-protective
Repressive	21	42.28	Intra-group	15663.51	148	105.83			
Protective	39	38.70	Total	16141.68	151				
Indifferent	27	41.05							

\*p<0.05

In view of Table 2, it is clear that there is a statistically significant difference between parental structure and the children's interpersonal problem solving skills ( $p < 0.05$ ). As a result of the statistical analysis, this difference between democratic parents ( $\bar{x}=46.42$ ) and protective parents ( $\bar{x}=38.70$ ) was found to exist in favor of democratic parents. In other words, the level of interpersonal problem-solving skills of the children from a democratic family was found to be better than that of the children from a protective family.

- 2. Findings regarding the second problem situation:** Do preschool children's interpersonal problem-solving skills show statistically significant difference with respect to time spent watching TV?

**Table 3.** Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory ANOVA Results With Respect To Time Spent Watching TV

Time spent watching TV	N	$\bar{x}$	Variance Source	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean of Squares	F	P	Significant Difference
0 to 1 hr	14	46.76	Inter-group	1798.96	4	449.74	4.61	.01*	(0 to 1 hr/2 to 3 hrs)
1 to 2 hrs	46	46.17	Intra-group	14342.72	147	97.57			(0 to 1 hr/more than 4 hrs)
2 to 3 hrs	54	40.50	Total	16141.68	151				
More than 4 hours	38	38.62							

\*p<0.05

In view of Table 3, it is clear that there is a statistically significant difference between time spent watching TV and the children's interpersonal problem solving skills ( $p < 0.05$ ). As a result of the statistical analysis, this difference yielded between children watching TV for 0 to 1 hr ( $\bar{x}=46.76$ ) and children watching TV for 2 to 3 hrs ( $\bar{x}=40.50$ ) was found to be in favor of children watching TV for 0 to 1 hr, and the difference yielded between children watching TV for 0 to 1 hr ( $\bar{x}=46.76$ ) and children watching TV for 4 hours and more ( $\bar{x}=38.62$ ) was found to be in favor of children watching TV for 0 to 1 hr. In other words, the level of interpersonal problem-solving skills of the children watching TV for 0 to 1 hr was found to be better than that of the children watching TV for more than 4 hrs.

- 3. Findings regarding the third problem situation:** Do preschool children's interpersonal problem-solving skills show statistically significant difference with respect to number of siblings?

**Table 4.** Interpersonal Problem Solving Inventory ANOVA Results With Respect To Number Of Siblings

Number of siblings	N	$\bar{x}$	Variance Source	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean of Squares	F	P
No siblings	55	43.70	Inter-group	39.35	4	9.84	0.90	.23
One sibling	72	43.47	Intra-group	16102.32	147	109.54		
Two siblings	17	44.70	Total	16141.68	151			
Three siblings and more	8	44.50						

In view of Table 4, it is clear that there is no statistically significant difference between number of siblings and the children's interpersonal problem solving skills ( $p > 0.05$ ).

**4. Findings regarding the fourth problem situation:** What do teachers think about the type of behavioral problems children with interpersonal problem-solving problems show?

**Table 5.** Teachers' Opinions With Respect To Behavioral Problems Shown By The Children With Interpersonal Problem Solving Problems

	Aggression (hitting, pushing, etc.)	Verbal threat (I'll beat you, break that)	Not sharing	Not participating in group activities	Crying	Maternal/paternal dependency
T1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
T2	✓					✓
T3	✓		✓	✓	✓	
T4	✓	✓		✓		
T5		✓			✓	
T6						✓
T7	✓	✓			✓	
T8	✓	✓		✓		
T9	✓			✓	✓	
T10	✓	✓		✓		✓

Teachers expressed their views about behavioral problems of children with interpersonal problem solving problem in 6 categories, including aggression, verbal threats, not sharing, not participating in group activities, crying and maternal/paternal dependency, Teachers were seen to usually face behavioral problems such as aggression, verbal threats and not participating in group activities. Teachers expressed their views as follows:

Teachers' views about aggression are as follows: (T1) *...she cannot explain her problem with her other friends to her friends so she tries to solve a problem by pushing or applying physical contact to her friends...* (T2, T5, T8) *... he chooses to push things further to solve a problem, rather than talking about it...* (T3, T10) *... he thinks, he can use anything he likes, while he thinks his friends can only use items to the extent he allows them to... this situation sometimes turn into physically harmful behaviors towards the person he faces...*

Teachers' views about verbal threat are as follows: (T1, T4, T9) *...additionally, children without this skill at a satisfactory level say threatening words to a person she faces... e.g. if you don't give it, I'll break it, I won't give this to you any more, etc....* (T7) *... she uses expressions to a child sitting in her place at dining table, such as "if you don't get up, I'll tell my teacher", rather than talking to her...*

Teachers' views about not participating in group activities are as follows: (T4, T8)... *actually, the largest problem occurs in group activities, they interfere in the other children so they can be excluded from activities ....* (T10)... *they try to lead the process as they want it to be during group activities...*

Teachers' views about crying are as follows: (T3) *...the problem they especially come across is that they display extreme crying behavior when the problem doesn't result in the manner they want it to; in that case, what they want is usually done so they reflect this to their entire behavior...* (T5, T7) *... but where they cannot solve their problems with the person they are faced with, actually they are asking for help from people around them (teacher, etc.) by displaying behavior such as crying loudly and by shouting...* (T2, T6, T10) *... actually it is a matter of maternal dependency... when his mother comes to school, he complains to his mother and says things like "mum, she takes my stuff"...*

**5. Findings regarding the fifth problem situation:** What do parents think about the type of behavioral problems children with interpersonal problem-solving problems show?

**Table 6.** Parents' Opinions With Respect To Behavioral Problems Of The Children With Interpersonal Problem Solving Problems

	Aggression (hitting, pushing, etc.)	Verbal threat (I'll beat you, break that)	Crying	Maternal/paternal dependency
P1		✓	✓	
P2	✓	✓	✓	✓
P3			✓	
P4	✓	✓		
P5		✓	✓	
P6	✓		✓	✓
P7	✓	✓	✓	
P8	✓	✓		
P9			✓	
P10	✓	✓	✓	✓

Parents expressed their views about behavioral problems of children with interpersonal problem solving problem in 4 categories, including aggression, verbal threats, crying and maternal/paternal dependency. Parents were seen to usually face behavioral problems such as aggression, verbal threats and crying. Teachers expressed their views as follows:

Parents' views about aggression are as follows: (P2, P4, P10) ... *if she doesn't get what she wants, she throws away anything that she can get his hands on...* (P7)... *actually this situation causes a feeling of failure so she gets ill-tempered and she sometimes reflects this by shouting or hitting...*(P8)... *he is an only child so he doesn't have much sense of sharing and for this reason, she can get aggressive especially when someone asks for her toys or when someone doesn't give her what she wants...*

Parents' views about crying are as follows: (P1, P3, P7) ... *if a problem she faces with isn't solved in the way she wants, she cries until what she wants is done... she may use crying against us because we do what she wants...* (P10) ... *especially in the case of me(mum), she cries extremely... she expects me to solve the problem... she says things to his friends like "I'll tell mum"...*

Parents' views about verbal threat are as follows: ...(P1, P2, P4, P5, P10)... *"if you don't give it to me" or "if you don't do it this way, I'll go and tell my mum/dad" or "I'll hit", "I'll break" ... or "I'll never play with you"...*

**6. Findings regarding the sixth problem situation:** What do teachers and parents think about the source of problems of children with interpersonal problem-solving problems?

**Table 7.** Teachers' And Parents' Opinions About The Causes Of Interpersonal Problem- Solving Skill Deficit

	Watching too much TV	Playing PC games, etc.	Absence of a friend/sibling	Parents' repressive / wrong attitude	Behaviors they see around them
P1	✓		✓		✓
P2			✓		
P3	✓	✓			
P4			✓		✓
P5	✓	✓			
P6	✓				✓
P7					
P8	✓		✓		
P9	✓				
P10	✓				✓
T1	✓			✓	✓
T2	✓		✓		
T3		✓			
T4	✓		✓	✓	✓
T5				✓	
T6	✓			✓	✓
T7			✓	✓	
T8	✓				✓
T9				✓	
T10		✓		✓	

In view of Table 7, it is apparent that parents' opinions concentrated on the items of watching too much TV, absence of a friend/sibling and behaviors they see around them, whereas teachers' opinions concentrated on the items of watching too much TV and parents' attitudes.

Parents' views about watching too much TV are as follows: (P1, P3, P7)... *unfortunately, we cannot separate him/her from TV... this sometimes relieves us but I think it causes harm to the child in her social relationships... she doesn't need anyone while watching TV... (P3, P9)... nowadays, children don't play games on the street, they don't play games as a group so they don't come across problems and naturally, the skill to solve them doesn't develop either... (P10) ... The fact that she is at home while she's watching TV or playing PC games makes us feel that she is safe but we isolate him from real life...*

Teachers' views about watching too much TV are as follows: (T2, T7)... *if the children don't go to school, they almost won't have any opportunity to socialize... even during home visits, we can see that children are stuck on TV... which is also reflected on interpersonal problem-solving skills... (T2)... sometimes parents give a cartoon CD to their children and send them to school, which I guess explains many things...*

Teachers' views about parents' wrong attitudes are as follows: ... (T3, T6) ... *parents can be very protective, they interfere in everything, in which case, the child asks for help from her parents whenever she faces a problem ... (T8) ...the child isn't allowed to make mistakes... they get angry with the child or criticize him/her and in that case, the child doesn't take risks to solve a problem...*

## Conclusion and Discussion

Considering the results of the study, it is apparent that quantitative and qualitative data are consistent with each other. Significance was detected as a result of the statistical analysis performed between time spent by children watching TV and their parental structures and their interpersonal problem-solving skills, while teachers and parents of children were found to focus on their parental structure and time spent by them watching TV. The results of the study reveal that parents' and teachers' opinions about behavioral problems of children with poor interpersonal problem-solving skills coincide with each other and unite under common themes. Teachers expressed their views about behavioral problems of children with interpersonal problem-solving problem as aggression, *verbal threats, not sharing, not participating in group activities, crying and maternal/paternal dependency*, and the parents expressed their views under themes of *aggression, verbal threats, crying and maternal / paternal dependency*. This sets forth that both parents and teachers observed behavioral problems in children with poor interpersonal problem-solving skills. In other words, there is a correlation between children's behavioral problems and their interpersonal problem-solving skills. It is seen that a child who fails to solve a problem with other individuals by communication tries to solve the problem by aggression, verbal threats or asking for help from people around him. This results in being unable to participate in group activities especially in education environment and being cast out from group activities. There are reports in the literature which support the results of the study. It was observed that the children who fail to show problem-solving skills in peer relationships remain ineffective socially, demonstrate aggressive behavior (Frey, Hirschstein & Guzzo, 2000; Önder, 2005; Öğülmüş, 2006) as well as verbal threatening behavior (Frey, Hirschstein & Guzzo, 2000; Taştan, 2006).

Similarly, Malik, Balda & Punia (2006) stated that the children with poor social problem-solving skills are more aggressive, impatient and emotional, and revealed that these children offer different strategies to a lesser extent in the case of social problems and concluded that aggressive, emotional and impatient children rather exercise power, force strategies. In a study by Hune & Nelson (2002) which investigated that teaching problem-solving strategies to preschool children with behavioral problems allows these children generate alternative solutions to social interaction conflicts, and to what extent they will generalize these skills to preschool environment, it was stated that as a result of the education provided, as the children's problem-solving skills improved, their aggressive responses declined and their prosocial responses increased.

In view of the results of this study, it is clear that teachers' and parents' opinions about the causes of poor problem-solving skills in children concentrated on the items of *watching too much TV, absence of a friend/sibling and parental attitudes*. When demographic data of these children are examined, they seem to be in line with teachers' and parents' opinions. Considering these data, it is seen that the children with poor interpersonal problem-solving skills watch TV for more than 3 hrs, that they don't have any siblings, and that they have a repressive or protective parental structure. However, as a result of the qualitative analysis, it was concluded that there is no significant difference between the number of siblings and interpersonal problem-solving skill. It was reported in the literature that there is a relationship between parental structure and the children's interpersonal problem-solving skills (McDowell & Parke, 2000; Arı, Çağdaş & Seçer, 2002; Hortaçsu, 2003; Ulupınar, 2004), and that the children learn ways to manage problems they may face, from their parents, thus, this will contribute greatly to development by the children with a positive family environment of a healthy and positive personality (Aşkın, 2006). In a study by Spivack & Shure (1977) which investigated mothers' problem-solving skills and their behaviors towards their children, it was indicated that the mothers' mentality and their child rearing attitudes have an influence on their children's interpersonal cognitive problem-solving skills. In the study, the children of mothers who received interpersonal cognitive problem-solving training were found to have improved interpersonal cognitive problem-solving skills (Anlılak, 2004). A study conducted by Terzi (2003) on 194 students investigated interpersonal problem-solving skill perceptions in terms of socio-economic level, parental attitude, gender and number of siblings. The results of the study revealed that the students' interpersonal cognitive problem-solving skill

perceptions were different with respect to their parental attitudes and socio-economic levels, but such perceptions were not different with respect to their gender and number of siblings. Similarly, problem behaviors are more common in children lacking support from adults, coming from a stressful home environment, compared to children who get support from people around them. Problem behavior, including extreme shyness, aggressive behavior, incompatibility with peers, etc. is seen in children who grew up in adverse home conditions (Dinçer, 1995). Results of Özabacı (2006)'s research are also in line with this information. The mother's level of social skills was shown to have an impact on the child's social skills, ability to maintain friendships or social relationships. The results of the study showed that the children without interpersonal problem-solving skills have difficulty in participating in group activities. However, in a pre-school educational environment, group activities are seen to be influential on development of interpersonal problem-solving skills (Yoleri, 2010). When the literature is examined, it is reported that friendly relations during childhood play a great role on solving interpersonal problems in a skilful manner, and learning how to manage conflicts and angry feelings, and how to get on with other people without hurting them (Anlıak, Dinçer, 2005). As a result of a study in which Terzi (2003) investigated his students' interpersonal problem-solving skill perceptions, he concluded that the number of siblings does not affect interpersonal problem-solving skill.

In both quantitative and qualitative data of this study, it is seen that watching TV influences children's interpersonal problem-solving skills, which can be associated with time spent watching TV as well as the program watched. This finding is supported by information given in the literature. What the child watches is also said to be important. Children may take cartoon characters on TV as a model and seek solution to interpersonal problems in physical violence (Ünver, 2002). In a study by Gülay (2011) in which the relationship between social behavior, aggressive behavior habits and computer usage time of children aged 5-6 years was investigated, a relationship was determined between children's level of aggression and computer usage time. Similarly, Kadan (2010) suggested that children aged 4-6 years watching too much TV show more aggressive behavior than those watching less TV. In light of this information, our recommendations are as follows:

- When the results of the study are examined, parental attitudes are found to be effective on the children's interpersonal problem-solving skills. Therefore, it is recommended that parents are informed about parental attitudes and their effects on the children's interpersonal problem-solving skills through activities, including seminars, congresses, etc., that such situation is remedied by conducting scientific studies on changing incorrect parental attitudes,
- It is apparent that watching too much TV is effective on the children's interpersonal problem-solving skills. Therefore it is recommended that the parents are informed about the types of activities they may carry out with their children and the children are provided with facilities for socialization outside school,
- That training on how teachers can carry out activities for children who cannot show interpersonal problem-solving skills, how children can participate in such activities and how children can solve their behavioral problems is provided by respective universities or in-service training.

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