

THE EFFECT OF PEER HELPING TRAINING PROGRAM
ON PEER HELPERS' PERSONAL AND SOCIAL COMPETENCY

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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECT OF PEER HELPING TRAINING PROGRAM ON PEER HELPERS' PERSONAL AND SOCIAL COMPETENCY

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The present study aimed to investigate the effect of a peer helping training program on peer helpers' personal and social competency. The study, which employed a matching-only pretest-posttest control group quasi experimental design, was implemented in a public middle school in Eskişehir. Non-parametric statistical tests were used to analyze the quantitative data, the results of which revealed that, subsequent to the implementation of the peer helping training program, the aggressiveness post-test scores of the experimental group (n=16) were significantly lower than those of the waiting list control group (n=21). In addition, the aggressiveness post-test scores of the waiting list control group were significantly different from their pre-test scores. Finally, the problem-solving post-test scores of the experimental group were significantly higher than their pre-test scores. Hence, it can be deduced that the peer helping training program improved the experimental group participants' problem-solving skills, while preventing the negative escalation in their aggressive behaviors. Moreover, the findings of the qualitative data analysis indicated that students in the training group improved their conflict resolution skills, communication skills, and prosocial behaviors. The training group participants also stated that they were satisfied with the training program and recommended their

friends to participate in the peer helping training program. These findings have been discussed in terms of the related literature, the implications of the program for school counseling services have been outlined and finally recommendations have been made for future studies.

Keywords: Peer helping, peer mediation, conflict resolution, empathy, self-esteem.

ÖZ

AKRAN YARDIMCILIĞI EĞİTİM PROGRAMININ AKRAN YARDIMCILARIN KİŞİSEL VE SOSYAL YETERLİKLERİNE ETKİSİ

Taşkın, Dilanur

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Bu çalışma, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının akran yardımcıların kişisel ve sosyal yeterliklerine etkisini incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Eşleştirilmiş ön-test son-test kontrol gruplu yarı deneysel tasarımı kullanan çalışma, Eskişehir ilindeki bir devlet ortaokulunda uygulanmıştır. Nicel verileri analiz etmek için parametrik olmayan istatistiksel testler kullanılmıştır; sonuçları, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının uygulanmasının ardından deney grubunun (n=16) saldırganlık son-test puanlarının bekleme listesi kontrol grubundakilerden (n=21) anlamlı derecede düşük olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, bekleme listesi kontrol grubu saldırganlık son-test puanları ön-test puanlarından anlamlı derecede farklıdır. Son olarak, deney grubu problem çözme son-test puanları ön-test puanlarından anlamlı derecede yüksektir. Bu nedenle, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının deney grubu katılımcılarının problem çözme becerilerini geliştirirken, saldırgan davranışlarındaki olumsuz artışı önlediği sonucuna varılabilir. Ayrıca, nitel veri analizinin bulguları, eğitim grubundaki öğrencilerin çatışma çözme becerilerini, iletişim becerilerini ve olumlu sosyal davranışlarını geliştirdiklerini göstermiştir. Eğitim grubu katılımcıları ayrıca eğitim programından memnun olduklarını belirtmiş ve arkadaşlarına akran yardımcılığı eğitim programına katılmalarını tavsiye etmişlerdir. Bu bulgular ilgili alanyazın

açısından tartışılmış, okul rehberlik servisleri için programın etkileri belirtilmiş ve son olarak gelecekteki çalışmalar için önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Akran yardımcılığı, akran arabuluculuğu, çatışma çözümü, empati, benlik saygısı.

To my Parents
&
To my Beloved Husband

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ	vi
DEDICATION	viii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xi
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	xvi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xviii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background to the Study.....	1
1.2. Purpose of the Study	6
1.3. Research Questions and Sub-Questions	7
1.4. Hypotheses.....	8
1.5. Significance of the Study	8
1.6. Definition of Terms	13
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	15
2.1. Development of the Term “Peer Helping”	15
2.2. Theoretical Framework.....	17
2.2.1. Developmental Theories.....	18
2.2.2. Social Learning Theory	20
2.2.3. Social Interdependence Theory	21
2.3. Distinct Types of Peer Helping Programs	22
2.3.1. Peer Mediation	24
2.3.1.1. <i>The relationship between peer mediation and conflict resolution</i> <i>education programs</i>	30

2.4. Empirical Studies Regarding the Effectiveness of Peer Helping Programs	33
2.4.1. Effectiveness of Peer Helping Programs for School Environment, Peer Helpees, and Peer Helpers.....	33
2.4.2. Effectiveness of Peer Helping Programs in Turkey	44
2.5. Summary of the Literature Review	52
3. METHODOLOGY	53
3.1. Research Design.....	53
3.2. Participants and Sampling.....	55
3.3. Data Collection Instruments	57
3.3.1. The Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behaviors	57
3.3.2. The Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents – Turkish Form.....	58
3.3.3. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.....	59
3.3.4. Peer Helping Training Program Evaluation Form-Peer Helpers.....	59
3.4. Training Program	59
3.4.1. Selection of the Training Program	59
3.4.2. Training Procedure	61
3.4.3. Summary of the Sessions	62
3.4.3.1. <i>Session 1</i>	62
3.4.3.2. <i>Session 2</i>	63
3.4.3.3. <i>Session 3</i>	64
3.4.3.4. <i>Session 4</i>	65
3.4.3.5. <i>Session 5</i>	66
3.4.3.6. <i>Session 6</i>	67
3.4.3.7. <i>Session 7</i>	68
3.4.3.8. <i>Session 8</i>	69
3.4.3.9. <i>Session 9</i>	70
3.4.3.10. <i>Session 10</i>	71
3.4.3.11. <i>Session 11</i>	72
3.4.3.12. <i>Session 12</i>	73
3.4.3.13. <i>Session 13</i>	74

3.4.3.14. <i>Session 14</i>	76
3.4.3.15. <i>Session 15</i>	77
3.4.3.16. <i>Session 16</i>	78
3.4.3.17. <i>Session 17</i>	79
3.4.3.18. <i>Session 18</i>	80
3.5. Data Collection Procedure	81
3.6. Description of Variables	82
3.7. Data Analysis	82
3.8. Limitations of the Study	83
4. RESULTS	85
4.1. Quantitative Analyses	85
4.1.1. Preliminary Analyses	85
4.1.1.1. <i>Results related to the comparisons of the pre-tests scores of the training and waiting list control groups</i>	86
4.1.2. Results Related to the Conflict Resolution Scale Scores	87
4.1.2.1. <i>Results related to the aggressiveness subscale scores</i>	88
4.1.2.2. <i>Results related to the problem-solving subscale scores</i>	90
4.1.3. Results Related to the Empathy Scale Scores	92
4.1.4. Results Related to the Self-Esteem Scale Scores	94
4.2. Qualitative Results / Peer Helpers' Program Evaluation	96
4.2.1. Peer Helpers' Competency	96
4.2.1.1. <i>Topics about which peer helpers believe to be helpful</i>	96
4.2.1.1.1. <i>Academic support</i>	96
4.2.1.1.2. <i>Support for conflict resolution (mediation)</i>	96
4.2.1.1.3. <i>Support for solving personal problems</i>	97
4.2.1.1.4. <i>Emotional support</i>	97
4.2.1.2. <i>Peer helpers' knowledge about their roles, skills, and responsibilities</i>	98
4.2.2. Benefits of the Training Program	99
4.2.2.1. <i>Development of peer helpers' interpersonal relationships</i>	100
4.2.2.1.1. <i>Friendship skills</i>	100

4.2.2.1.2. <i>Conflict resolution skills</i>	100
4.2.2.1.3. <i>Communication skills</i>	100
4.2.2.2. <i>Personal competency of peer helpers</i>	101
4.2.2.2.1. <i>Personal satisfaction</i>	101
4.2.2.2.2. <i>Personal gains</i>	101
4.2.3. <i>Peer Helpers' Evaluation of the Training Program</i>	102
4.2.3.1. <i>Opinions about the instructional methods of the training program</i>	102
4.2.3.2. <i>Opinions about the content of the training program</i>	102
4.2.3.3. <i>Emotions felt during the training</i>	103
4.2.3.4. <i>Challenges that peer helpers faced through the training process and their suggestions</i>	104
4.2.3.4.1. <i>Challenges</i>	104
4.2.3.4.2. <i>Suggestions</i>	105
4.2.3.5. <i>Peer helpers' recommendation to their friends about being a peer helper</i>	106
4.3. <i>Summary of the Quantitative and Qualitative Findings</i>	106
5. <i>DISCUSSION</i>	108
5.1. <i>Discussions of the Research Findings</i>	108
5.1.1. <i>Discussions of the Quantitative Findings</i>	108
5.1.1.1. <i>Discussions regarding conflict resolution skills</i>	108
5.1.1.2. <i>Discussions regarding empathy skills</i>	111
5.1.1.3. <i>Discussions regarding self-esteem scores</i>	113
5.1.2. <i>Discussions of the Qualitative Findings Regarding the Evaluations of the Peer Helpers</i>	114
5.2. <i>Implications for Practice and Research</i>	116
5.3. <i>Recommendations for Future Research</i>	117
REFERENCES	121
APPENDICES	
A. <i>The Teacher Suggestion Form / Öğretmen Öneri Formu</i>	139
B. <i>Sociometric Test / Sosyometrik Test</i>	140

C. Parent Invitation Letter / Veli Bilgilendirme Mektubu	141
D. Parent Consent Form / Veli İzin Formu	142
E. Informed Consent Form / Bilgilendirilmiş Onam Formu	143
F. The Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behaviors / Çatışma Çözme Davranışlarını Belirleme Ölçeği	144
G. The Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents-Turkish Form / Çocuklar ve Ergenler için Empati Ölçeği-Türkçe Form	145
H. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale / Rosenberg Benlik Saygısı Ölçeği.....	146
I. Peer Helping Program Evaluation Form-Peer Helpers / Akran Yardımcılığı Program Değerlendirme Formu-Akran Yardımcılar	147
J. Group Logo	148
K. Approval Letter from Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee	149
L. Turkish Summary / Türkçe Özet.....	150
M. Tez İzin Formu / Thesis Permission Form.....	167

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLES

Table 4.1 The Mean Ranks of the Experimental and Waiting List Control Groups for Pre-test Scores.....	87
Table 4.2 The Mean Ranks of the Experimental and Waiting List Control Groups for Post-test Aggressiveness Scores.....	88
Table 4.3 The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Aggressiveness Scores of the Experimental Group.....	89
Table 4.4 The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Aggressiveness Scores of the Waiting List Control Group.....	89
Table 4.5 The Mean Ranks of the Experimental and Waiting List Control Groups for Post-test Problem-Solving Scores.....	90
Table 4.6 The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Problem-Solving Scores of the Experimental Group.....	91
Table 4.7 The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Problem-Solving Scores of the Waiting List Control Group.....	91
Table 4.8 The Mean Ranks of the Experimental and Waiting List Control Groups for Post-test Empathy Scores.....	92
Table 4.9 The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Empathy Scores of the Experimental Group.....	93
Table 4.10 The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Empathy Scores of the Waiting List Control Group.....	93
Table 4.11 The Mean Ranks of the Experimental and Waiting List Control Groups for Post-test Self-Esteem Scores.....	94

Table 4.12 The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Self-Esteem Scores of the Experimental Group.....	95
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Table 4.13 The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Self-Esteem Scores of the Waiting List Control Group.....	95
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FIGURES

Figure 1.1 Research Design of the Study.....	54
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APA	American Psychological Association
ASCA	American School Counselor Association
CRE	Conflict Resolution Education
CRPM	Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation
MONE	Ministry of National Education
NPHA	National Peer Helpers Association

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Children are supported and educated by their family from the very beginning of their life. However, later in life, other children have greater influence on the development of a child. Especially, peers become more effective with the onset of puberty and throughout the adolescence years (Myrick, 1997). Aladağ (2005) and Tindall (1995) have stressed that peers are usually the most effective agents in shaping one's behaviors. Tindall (1995) has also stated that they may grasp their peers' problems more easily, create a more trustworthy impression in the eyes of their peers, and be more approachable when their peers encounter a struggle. Thus, young people may become more eager to receive help from their peers.

Previous studies indicated that aggressive actions (Vasquez-Neuttall & Kalesnik, 1987) and interpersonal problems of individuals (Kulaksızoğlu, 2011) emerge especially at middle school years. Uz-Baş (2009) also found that school counselors reported behavioral problems as the most important problems in primary and secondary schools. Hence, school counselors need to address these problems in their schools by using preventive and remedial strategies of the comprehensive developmental counseling models. Peer helping is one of the strategies of these programs. According to the ASCA (2015), peer helpers support the counseling process at school and provide expansion of services, so peer helping is an indispensable part of the comprehensive school counseling program.

Peer helping programs provide school counselors with the opportunity to handle certain problems related to low academic grades, the feeling of loneliness, drug addiction, conflict, and bullying at schools by reaching all students and helping them

to acquire basic skills. Myrick, Highland, and Sabella (1995) defined peer helping implementation as a process in which peer helpers, who are not professional at mental health services, are taught the basic communication and helping skills via a specific training program and receive supervision after the training. There are various forms of peer helping programs based on students' concerns and undertaken roles, namely peer tutoring, peer education, peer counseling, peer mentoring, special friend, peer leader, and peer mediation (Beitel, 1997).

There are several reasons for implementing the peer helping programs in schools. Firstly, peers are of utmost importance since they can create an environment in which other students feel a sense of closeness and have a chance to handle their concerns and to express their emotions. A study conducted with more than 5,000 young people among thirteen nations revealed that if the young people encountered a problem situation, they would initially choose to receive help from their friends; subsequently, they would prefer one of their parents, and lastly their teachers (Gibson-Cline, 1996). Furthermore, pupils may prefer to mention their concerns to their peers, who also have some common experiences and viewpoints, rather than mentioning them to an adult (Topping, 1996). They can express their personal and shameful experiences to their peers (Klein, Sondag, & Drolet, 1994). Thus, students have a greater influence on their peers' lives – either formally or informally (Sharp, 2001). Furthermore, Boxford (2006) claimed that school, after the family, is the most crucial agent in which individuals can socialize with their peers. Schools have a crucial impact on the development of children and adolescence by educating and preparing them for adult life (Öğülmüş, 2006). At schools, students also have the opportunity to acquire certain skills that shape their personalities besides their academic performance (Smith et al., 2002).

Nevertheless, some problem behaviors like violence at schools have increased substantially as it was pointed out in some studies (Aküzüm & Oral, 2015; Öğülmüş, 2006). Bullying among pupils has also been found prevalent across various school environments (Oliver & Candappa, 2003; Salmivalli, 2002; Smith et al., 2008;

Tindall, 1995). Moreover, gang problems, aggression, and provocative action, along with violence and bullying are widespread problems at schools (Tindall, 1995). These incidents may create negative impressions about the school environments and deteriorate the learning processes in schools. Besides, high rates of bullying and violence incidents in schools prevent teachers from delivering effective instruction and students from learning efficiently (Cowie & Smith, 2010). Furthermore, Türk (2018) stressed that both physical and psychological development of students may be negatively affected by destructive or violent actions at schools. Thus, aggressive and violent behaviors in schools are striking issues that need to be dealt with attentively and effectively.

In a study conducted by Smith et al. (2002), it was reported that students have difficulty in dealing with and handling disputes constructively if they do not receive education about the conflict resolution process. Students are probably believed to be creating problem situations in the eyes of their family, instructors, friends, school administration, and community in general if they are always inclined to display aggressive actions in order to solve their disputes. Thus, students need to learn how to solve their conflicts constructively (Leimdorfer, 1995). In other words, they should learn to find win-win solutions that satisfy both parties of a dispute (Schrumpf, Crawford, & Bodine, 1997). Peer mediation, which is a type of peer helping program, may provide a win-win solution for disputing parties. According to Johnson and Johnson (2006), there are two main reasons for implementing a peer mediation program at schools. Firstly, it provides a trustful school environment; and secondly, students have an opportunity to acquire some fundamental life skills that they can benefit from both in school and in their daily lives.

As stated by Cowie and Jennifer (2008), peer mediators can be trained on helping strategies and support their peers who have both emotional and social disturbances. Moreover, student interaction is of utmost importance since individuals want to be comforted when felt unhappy, listened to with empathy, and respected; they also would like to share their feelings (Sharp & Cowie, 1998). Since they are social

entities, human beings need to be accepted, need to express their thoughts and feelings to others, they need to listen and help others, and to solve their interpersonal problems effectively. To do so, they are supposed to develop the essential social skills (Yelpaze & Özkamalı, 2015). Additionally, Johnson and Johnson (2006) mentioned that pupils who lack interpersonal, conflict resolution, and negotiation skills probably engage in destructive acts. This view also has its roots in a study which states that one should focus on and question students' social skills if rates of violent events in schools increase enormously (Gillespie & Chick, 2001). Besides, students might suffer from psychological problems, delinquency, and substance use if they cannot improve their social and interpersonal communication skills (Tindall, 1995). The arguments given above prove that especially primary and secondary school years are the foundations of social development. As an indispensable part of social development, pupils can enhance their skills of empathy and communication, their strategies to handle anger, and their problem-solving skills if they gain conflict resolution skills (Lane-Garon, 2000). One of the ways to reach these goals is to implement peer helping programs at schools.

School is also essential for pupils as it is a place where they can develop their coping strategies and social skills. Thus, they can take responsibility for their own behaviors by handling disputes on their own (Smith et al., 2002). Peer helping programs can be applied to provide more supportive and cooperative school environment in which students take responsibility for their own behaviors. While dealing with interpersonal conflicts, students are expected to take responsibility both for themselves and others (Sharp & Cowie, 1998).

Furthermore, empathy is considered to be one of the most crucial components of and requirements for cognitive and social development (Attili, 1990). Empathic understanding improves the interaction among people and provides people with more close relationships. People feel more important when they are understood and empathized with (Dökmen, 1995). Thus, empathy is required to develop self-esteem and positive psychological well-being and to construct healthy relationship with

others (Yüksel, 2015). Prosocial behaviors are also greatly affected by empathy (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990) and required for developing helping skills. Strayer (1980) argued that children and adults who have empathic understanding are more prone to develop helping skills. It was also stated that the person who shows empathy as a communication skill can become a model for others in time (Hopkins, 2004).

Thus far, empirical findings have indicated that peer helping programs are effective in various aspects. To begin with its effect on peer helpers, the results of a meta-analysis study revealed that this program provided peer helpers themselves with the opportunity to acquire conflict resolution and mediation skills (Johnson & Johnson, 2001b). Chittooran and Hoenig (2005) also stated that peer mediators can direct their own lives and resolve their disputes constructively. Related studies in Turkey also revealed that peer mediation programs improved peer mediators' self-esteem (Çetin, Türnüklü, & Turan, 2014; Kaçmaz, 2011; Türnüklü, 2011), self-confidence (Kaçmaz, 2011; Türnüklü, 2011), empathy skills (Türnüklü, 2011; Türnüklü et al., 2009a), conflict resolution skills (Kaçmaz, 2011; Taştan & Öner, 2008; Türnüklü, 2011; Türk & Türnüklü, 2016a), communication skills, relationship with their peers (Çetin et al., 2014; Kaçmaz, 2011; Türnüklü, 2011), social skills (Yıldız, 2017), constructive problem-solving (Çetin et al., 2014; Koruklu & Yılmaz, 2010; Sezen & Bedel, 2015), and anger management skills (Sezen & Bedel, 2015). On the other hand, it significantly decreased peer mediators' level of aggression (Türk & Türnüklü, 2016a), destructive behaviors (Koruklu & Yılmaz, 2010), and interpersonal conflicts (Kaçmaz, 2011; Türnüklü, 2011).

If peer helpers acquire necessary conflict resolution and empathy skills and increase their self-esteem via peer helping training programs, the school environment and other students would probably take advantage of this program as well. There are several empirical studies that support this claim. In terms of the effects of peer helping programs on other students (peer helpee) and school environment, Varenhorst (1992) concluded that peer helping programs can be effective for increasing academic standards, for preventing stress, suicide attempts, loneliness and

some health related problems such as AIDS, teen pregnancy, addiction, and eating disorder, and for solving problems caused by cultural bias. According to the survey conducted by Thompson and Smith (2011), peer helping was found among the most widespread techniques used to prevent bullying at schools in the United Kingdom. In addition, Stacey (1996) expressed that peer mediation led to a significant decline in the frequency of aggressive acts. Further studies reached similar results revealing that school-based prevention programs, including peer mediation, have great influence on aggressive behaviors (Wilson, Lipsey, & Derzon, 2003; Wilson & Lipsey, 2007). Moreover, peer mediation programs improve the school climate, diminish rates of dropout from the school, discipline incidents, and violence. Additionally, peer mediation equips pupils with mediation skills, which assist them to resolve their disputes with their families, siblings, and peers. It constructs the pupil's social identity by developing their communication skills, interpersonal skills, and self-esteem (Sandy & Boardman, 2000). According to Johnson and Johnson (2001a), mediation skills further promote the society and the world in general.

In summary, as an age appropriate strategy, peer helping programs need to be implemented in secondary schools to support social skill development, problem-solving, conflict resolution skills, empathy and self-esteem of peer helpers. It can be claimed that implementing peer helping programs would prevent violence, bullying, conflicts, and aggression at school. Since peers have a great influence on one's life, they can be role models for their friends as well. Thus, as a starting point, peer helping training programs can support peer helpers' personal and social competency such as conflict resolution and empathy, which in turn can increase their self-esteem in order to serve as a model for their peers in conflict situations.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the current study was to examine the effectiveness of the peer helping training program on middle school peer helpers' conflict resolution skills (i.e., aggressiveness and problem-solving), empathy, and self-esteem.

1.3. Research Questions and Sub-Questions

This study aimed to test the effectiveness of the peer helping training program on the competency levels of conflict resolution skills (aggressiveness and problem-solving scores), empathy, and self-esteem of peer helpers selected from among 6th and 7th graders in one of the secondary schools in Mahmudiye-Eskişehir. Accordingly, both quantitative and qualitative research questions can be stated respectively as follows:

- 1.** What is the effect of a peer helping training program on peer helpers' conflict resolution skills (aggressiveness scores and problem-solving skills), empathy, and self-esteem scores?
 - 1.1.** Is there a significant difference between the pre-test scores of the experimental group and those of the waiting list control group on the Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behavior including the Aggressiveness and Problem-Solving Subscales, the Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents, and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale?
 - 1.2.** Is there a significant difference between post-test scores of the experimental group and those of the waiting list control group on the Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behavior including the Aggressiveness and Problem-Solving Subscales, the Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents, and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale?
 - 1.3.** Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group (trained peer helpers) on the Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behavior including the Aggressiveness and Problem-Solving Subscales, the Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents, and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale?
 - 1.4.** Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the waiting list control group members on the Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behavior including the Aggressiveness and Problem-Solving Subscales, the Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents, and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale?
- 2.** How do the participants in the experimental/training group (i.e., peer helpers) assess the peer helping training program on the evaluation form?

1.4. Hypotheses

Based on the quantitative research questions of the study, the hypotheses can be stated as follows:

1. The aggressiveness, problem-solving, empathy, and self-esteem pre-test scores of both the experimental and waiting list control groups will not show a significant difference before the implementation of the peer helping training program.
2. The problem-solving, empathy, and self-esteem post-test scores of the participants in the experimental group will be significantly higher than those of the participants in the waiting list control group, whereas the aggressiveness post-test scores of the experimental group will be significantly lower than those of the participants in the waiting list control group after the implementation of the peer helping training program.
3. The problem-solving, empathy, and self-esteem post-test scores of the experimental group will be significantly higher than their pre-test scores, whereas the aggressiveness post-test scores of the experimental group will be significantly lower than their pre-test scores after the implementation of the peer helping training program.
4. The aggressiveness, problem-solving, empathy, and self-esteem post-test scores of the waiting list control group will not be significantly different from their pre-test scores after the implementation of the peer helping training program.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Secondary school students do not prefer to mention the bullying they encounter to their family or teachers (Whitney & Smith, 1993). However, peers can be regarded as a source of help and support for subjective wellbeing, and students may have the inclination to choose to talk with a friend when they have problems (Schwartz & Sendor, 1999; Sharp, 2001) since they are almost in the same age range (Baginsky, 2004). In these regards, peers might have a great influence in the lives of their friends especially in terms of disclosing and solving their problems during adolescence.

Thus, the peer helping program emerges as an effective strategy to shape individuals' lives.

Previous studies revealed that peer helping programs are effective for other students (peer helpees), the school climate, counseling service, and peer helpers. To begin with its effects on other students in schools, peers may help peer helpees to get rid of their feelings of loneliness and anxiety, to develop their personality, and to deal effectively with problems of puberty (Widdicombe & Wooffitt, 1995). Peer helping can provide peer helpees with personal growth (Dearden, 1998). In addition, bullying may not be a problem if the student has close friends (Salmivalli et al., 1996) and those who need assistance or protection can be supported by means of peer helping (Sharp & Cowie, 1998). Thus, peer helping intervention may provide students who feel social isolation in schools with support. Related with these gains, peer led approaches are of utmost importance since students who have difficulty in socializing, those who are excluded or new to their school, and those who not attending school for a long time can socialize and adapt to the environment more easily via the peer support systems (Sharp, 2001). In short, it can be concluded that peer helping programs support children who have social problems. Additionally, peer helping programs may improve students' interpersonal skills such as listening and empathy in order to help them resolve their conflicts constructively (Baginsky, 2004; Sharp & Cowie, 1998). Thus, peer helping is influential for the development of interaction among students and is required for experiencing conflict resolution skills in vivo at schools.

Furthermore, peer mediation is a type of peer helping and conflict resolution education program. It may help students to perceive problems as something normal and as a way to learn and grow. It can be considered more influential than punishment in developing positive behaviors, and it can improve skills to handle one's own problems effectively (Schrumpf et al., 1997). It also provides students with possible solutions to a problem or conflict; they decide on an action plan among these alternatives. Moreover, students have the opportunity to become involved in

disciplinary processes at school and may feel more responsible for the decisions and agreements made throughout this process. As a result, it is expected that students develop higher responsibility for their own actions and consequences (Schellenberg, Parks-Savage, & Rehfuss, 2007). They also improve self-discipline, locus of control, self-regulation, self-efficacy, and self-management (Thompson, 1996). In short, it can be stated that peer mediation implementation strengthens individuals since they have the chance to take decisions themselves about the situations that shape their lives (Maxwell, 1989).

With regards to its effect on the school environment, in the long run, if peer helping program is sustained and becomes a part of the school policy, it provides a school culture in which the control mechanism is shifted from a teacher-oriented structure to a student-oriented perspective. Moreover, rather than devoting a great amount of time to dealing with disruptive students in classrooms, teachers need to focus on their curriculum (Amsler & Sadella, 1987). By means of peer helping programs, teachers can allocate most of their time to instruction rather than disruptive actions in class (Hart & Gunty, 1997; Johnson & Johnson, 2001a), and the referral rates of problem situations to teachers may decrease (Schrumpf et al., 1997; Sellman, 2002). Furthermore, educators might be more satisfied with their own roles, and the academic success of the students might increase, whereas the rates of conflicts in classroom environments might decrease. Although it is not investigated in this study, peer helping programs may improve students' academic success in the long run (Bandura, 1986).

Moreover, since the rates of violence, bullying, and conflicts are currently increasing in school settings, peer helping programs are needed to reduce violent actions during break or lunchtime in schools and to contribute to the positive atmosphere of the school climate (Burrell, Zirbel, & Allen, 2003; Lane-Garon & Richardson, 2003; Welsh, 2000). It also decreases rates of bullying incidences (Lines, 2005; Palladino, Nocentini, & Menesini, 2012), aggression, vandalism, absenteeism, and dropout rates within schools (Bowman & Myrick, 1987; Myrick & Folk, 1999; Schrumpf et al.,

1997). Besides, some behaviors of students, like dismissal from school and expulsion, decrease (Bell, et al., 2000). The most influential technique to diminish bullying rates at schools was defined to be a program which includes the involvement of peers and in which the whole school is informed about the general rules of the implementation (Lee, Kim, & Kim, 2015). Additionally, peer helping programs make the school district safer (Hart & Gunty, 1997) and more beneficial (Cowie & Smith, 2010), and support understanding among students, teachers, and others in the school culture (Schrumpf et al., 1997).

In general, there is an increasing demand for violence prevention programs at schools to handle aggression, bullying, and other destructive behaviors; while improving fundamental life skills such as empathy, self-esteem, and self-regulation. These might require great time and energy for school counseling services. Furthermore, regarding preventive strategies, modern counseling programs expect that school counselors should improve students' personal, social, and academic growth/development. However, since there is a great demand for counseling and the resources are limited, school counselors might experience difficulty themselves in meeting students' needs. Thus, they might need the support of the administration, teachers, parents, and other students. Since peers prefer to receive help from their friends and peer helpers can provide support for daily problems, school counselors might choose peer helping programs as a preventive strategy in secondary school level (Foster-Harrison, 1995). Uysal and Nazlı (2010) also suggested that peer helping should be perceived as a requirement at schools since the number of school counselors cannot meet the needs of both students and schools. After receiving effective training and supervision, peers might provide their friends with support as helping agents and construct a powerful connection between other students and school counselors (Aladağ, 2005; Downe, Altmann, & Nysetvold, 1986). Hence, peer helping intervention has developed and drawn more attention recently.

In terms of the effect of peer helping training programs on peer helpers, studies in the available literature have revealed that peer helpers benefit from the advantages of

training programs, namely by improving their communication (Taştan, 2004) and interpersonal skills (Nazlı, 2003), developing some skills such as leadership, becoming acquainted with oneself and others, developing self-efficacy, and enhancing academic performance and positive attitudes toward school (Bowman, 1986; Myrick, 1997). They are also found to attach importance to and enjoy the program (Bowman & Myrick, 1987). Peer mediation programs are also revealed to improve peer mediators' responsible actions, make them feel socially useful, and increase their social skills, and willingness to help (Smith & Sharp, 1994). Furthermore, peer mediators defined the school as a more reliable and advantageous place and significantly used several methods to resolve disputes (Cassinerio & Lane-Garon, 2006). Additionally, peer helpers state their satisfaction with the program (Taştan, 2004), improve their level of self-confidence and prosocial behaviors, and start to consider others more (Cowie & Smith, 2010). Furthermore, conflict resolution and peer mediation improve peer mediators' empathy, communication, anger management skills, interaction with peers, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and a perspective which is against violence (Türnüklü & Çetin, 2015). Peer mediation is stated as one of the programs through which individuals can develop their conflict resolution skills and levels of self-efficacy can be enhanced (Klepp, Halper, & Perry, 1986). In general, peer mediators can learn how to provide help to others and how to resolve conflicts with a win-win solution, and develop their empathy, self-regulation, and self-esteem. Therefore, as supportive resources and effective role models, they can help their friends resolve their conflicts constructively and can model conflict resolution skills and empathetic attitudes as well.

In the present study, the effect of the peer helping training program on peer helpers in a secondary school were tested empirically. In this respect, researchers or school counselors can take precautions against the challenges met during the training process, benefit from the recommendations and methods found effective in the current study to plan and implement their own studies and modify their training program in future research. Thus, it is assumed that the peer helping training program used in the study will provide support for the implementation of peer helping models

in Turkish schools. As part of the comprehensive counseling model, peer helping programs might support school counselors and students, and might work as a preventive strategy to equip students receiving peer helping training with some fundamental life skills.

1.6. Definition of Terms

Peer Helping: Peer helping is defined as interpersonal helping behaviors provided by nonprofessionals who assumed a helping role with others (Tindall, 1995). It begins with the training of the peer helpers or the peer facilitators, followed by provision of supervision. Peer helpers support other students in academic and social areas in order to help them clarify their opinions and feelings, to find possible solutions, to provide a supportive environment, and to find alternatives (Myrick et al., 1995).

Peer Helping Program: Peer Helping Program is an implementation to choose, educate, and supervise the peer helpers so as to make them competent in supporting peers (Tindall, 1995). In the present study, peer mediation was selected as an appropriate type of peer helping program to train and supervise peer helpers in helping skills and problem-solving steps. The peer helping training program used in this study was developed by Uysal and Nazlı (2010) to train peer helpers for their roles as special friends and special assistants at middle schools. In the present study, it was aimed to train peer helpers in their roles, communication skills, basic helping skills, advanced helping skills, ethical principles and boundaries of peer helpers (referral process), problem-solving steps, and effective studying techniques.

Peer Helper: Peer helpers are regarded as non-paraprofessionals who are trained in communication skills. They may help professional counselors or may provide services independently (Tindall, 1995).

Peer Helpee: Peer helpee can be defined as the person who receives support from peer helpers (Tindall, 1995).

Peer Helping Professional: These individuals assume roles during the implementation in order to educate, supervise, and assist peer helpers and manage the program (Tindall, 1995).

Conflict Resolution: Conflict resolution is defined as a process through which disputes can be converted into mutual agreements. One of the aims of the Peer Helping Program is to equip pupils with the essential skills to resolve their problems without behaving aggressively (Jones, 2004).

Aggressiveness: Aggressiveness is a way of conflict resolution behaviors and explained as an inclination or behavior through which people prefer violent actions and assault to solve disputes rather than trying to talk about and resolve conflicts (Uysal, 2006).

Problem Solving: Problem solving is a method of conflict resolution and is defined as the method by which disputing parties cooperatively resolve their conflicts without blaming or harming each other (Uysal, 2006).

Empathy: Empathy can be defined as an affective responsiveness to emotional state of another person and as affective perspective-taking (Feshbach, 1987).

Self-Esteem: Self-esteem is defined as a person's feeling of self-worth (Rosenberg, 1965).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, development of the term “peer helping”, theoretical foundations of the peer helping programs, distinct types of peer helping programs, peer mediation program and its connection with conflict resolution education programs, the results of the previous studies investigating the effectiveness of peer helping programs for school environment, other students, and peer helpers, the effectiveness of peer mediation programs in Turkey, and summary of the literature review are presented. In addition, the details of the peer mediation program are also presented since it was decided to implement peer mediation as a type of peer helping programs in the current study.

2.1. Development of the Term “Peer Helping”

The founding of Alcoholic Anonymous in 1935 was become the first model of peer helping program. Throughout the end of the 1960s, paraprofessional helping movement developed and was called as a “revolution” in the mental health service. In many organizations (i.e., prisons, schools, hospitals etc.), even though not receiving training, lay helpers started to support their working environments within the helping professions (Pitts, 1996).

At the end of the 1970s, nonprofessional helping movement has developed especially in the field of education as peer counseling in groups for the students with low academic achievement. In every settings of helping professions, counselors have started to use this recent term “peer counselor” instead of the term paraprofessional. Also, peer counseling has started to be regarded as a crucial resource for school counseling services. Most of the previous research related to the peer counseling

investigated the effect of peer tutoring especially on academic performance of the college students (Downe et al., 1986).

Later in 1980s, peer helping movement changed its direction toward more affective and interpersonal issues rather than academic problems (Downe et al., 1986). Furthermore, in 1978, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) recommended that peer counseling should be implemented as part of the school counseling services (ASCA, 2015). In 1984, the ASCA position statement used the concept of peer facilitators instead of peer counselors (Myrick et al., 1995). Myrick (1997) also stated that the term peer facilitator has been used since it exactly describes the limited roles of peers in the helping process. Subsequently, National Peer Helper Association (NPHA), an organization established in 1984, accepted the term peer helping in 1987 as an appropriate term since it reflects the exact meaning of this implementation (as cited in Aladağ, 2005).

Additionally, Sharp and Cowie (1998) stated that the terms like peer helpers and peer facilitators were preferred rather than peer counseling which may mean more clinical practices. Also, instead of using the term peer counseling, the term peer support has also started to be used in order to prevent any possible dilemma about the professional counseling process and involved befriending and peer mentoring. Myrick and Folk (1999) also recommended the usage of the term peer helping program as suitable concept.

The ASCA position statements related to the peer helping were regularly reviewed in 1984, 1993, 1999, 2002, 2008, and 2015. In the last revision of the ASCA position statement (2015), “peer support programs” or “peer helper” were used and it was also presented that peer support programs improve the effectiveness of the school counseling services by expanding students’ awareness of counseling process. Nazlı (2016) also mentioned that although there exists various names such as peer tutors, helping hands, peer supporters, peer counselors, peer facilitators, and peer educators

in the literature, the terms “peer helping” and “peer facilitator” are the most preferred.

Moreover, for Tobias and Myrick (1999), nonprofessional helping movement has started as an implementation prevalent in high schools and universities, and later it emerged in primary education settings. According to Cartwright (2005), peer mentoring has emerged in Canada and in the USA during the 1970s, whereas the peer counseling and peer mediation models in Europe have been applied in the mid-1980s mostly for educational aims. It was also mentioned that in order to support emotional, social, and academic development of children; to give them opportunity for self-actualization; to develop empathy and problem-solving ability instead of referring problems directly to educators, peer support systems might have been preferred in schools. Cartwright (1996 as cited in Cartwright, 2005) also said that to prevent bullying and provide stress-management, peer support programs are implemented in schools. In addition, Tindall (1995) stated that peer helping programs can be applied in elementary, middle, and high schools and in higher education. These programs have also started to be effective for specific populations such as elderly, disabled, hospital patients, prisoners, veterans, parents, and business people.

All in all, school counselors need supports of teachers and other students as the number of students has been increasing at schools. Thus, peer helping emerged as one of the developmental counseling models which aim to reach all the students at school and teach them some fundamental life skills. Peer helpers are students who take part in the peer helping program to provide supervised assistance to other students in schools (Myrick, 1997).

2.2. Theoretical Framework

After reviewing the related literature about peer helping, it was realized that peer helping programs are not based on a specific theory; however, some theories are used to explain peer helping program regarding the purpose of the study in different research. In general, these theoretical approaches can be used to explain the reasons,

principles, and psychosocial process of peer helping and might be associated with peer helping relationship or with peer helping training programs. Additionally, the aim of taking a particular approach as theoretical explanation in the studies is not to test its effectiveness, but to discuss its contributions. Thus, in any research related to the peer helping, theoretical approaches are decided regarding the aim of that specific study (Aladağ & Tezer, 2007).

Aladağ (2005) stated that peer helping interventions need theory-based explanations, and one or more theory can be selected to lay the foundation of these programs. However, it is somewhat difficult to attribute the peer helping program to just one single theory. In the relevant literature, some theories have been presented as explanation of peer helping programs regarding the types and aims of these programs. In this regard, in order to explain the development and foundations of peer helping programs, the most preferred theoretical aspects can be mentioned as follows: firstly, according to Aladağ and Tezer (2007), and some other researchers (Aladağ, 2005; Frost, 2012; Kolan, 1999) peer helping programs can be based on developmental theories; secondly, social learning theory is another theoretical framework used to clarify the roots and aims of the peer helping programs (Aladağ, 2005; Cardoza, 2013; Noaks & Noaks, 2009; Poortvliet & Darnon, 2014); lastly, in some studies (Cardoza, 2013; Kolan, 1999), social interdependence theory was presented as theoretical perspective especially related to the peer mediation program.

2.2.1. Developmental Theories

Peer helping program is mostly dependent on developmental theories, firstly Piaget's stage theory about children's cognitive development. According to Piaget (1983) children realize that they need schemas and categories to grasp the environment and the world around them. Through their experiences, they might need to accommodate new information into new thoughts and opinions. Berger (1994) also claimed that if individuals' former way of responding no longer works, they construct new cognitive structures to handle novel and troublesome situations. While teaching students new

behaviors such as conflict resolution skills, they also experience cognitive restructuring in classrooms.

With the onset of adolescence, close friends become highly important for adolescents' psychological development and their well-being. Friendship also meets some social needs in a person's life such as secure attachment, intimacy, and social acceptance. Satisfying these needs is required to support individual's emotional well-being. Also, friendship improves peers' personal-worth and they need each other more to fulfill these basic needs throughout the developmental process (Sullivan, 1953). Furthermore, Myrick and Folk (1999) stated that before mentioning their problems to their families, teachers, or school counselors, adolescents first choose to disclose their feelings and concerns to their peers. They believe that their peers understand them since they share similar experiences, so they listen to each other more willingly and model each other's behaviors.

According to Aladağ (2005), developmental psychology and the roles of peers in an individual's life construct the roots of the peer helping. Especially, in order to explain the needs for and effects of peer interaction during adolescence, developmental psychology might have been needed. Particularly, regarding the five stages of psychosocial development, Erikson (1968) concluded that friendship is an important factor through the process of identity development and the feeling of identity provides a sense of well-being. Also, it was stated that the more peer relationships broaden, the more opportunity to test the self-concept. Furthermore, in every phase of life, peers impact individuals' personal, emotional, and social development. Adolescents believe that adults have difficulty in understanding or appreciating some of their thoughts and concerns, so they mostly affected by their peers. Getting approval from and belonging to peer groups are of utmost importance (Santrock, 1997). Tate (2001) also stated that during adolescence, peers affect the development of students' problem-solving skills.

By means of peer helping program which educates peers about certain communication skills, it is aimed to make this natural helping relationship occur among friends more effectively (Myrick et al., 1995). In some studies, it was concluded that peer helping is effective and improve students' friendship skills (Çetin et al., 2014; Kaçmaz, 2011; Myrick & Folk, 1999; Türnüklü, 2011; Uysal & Nazlı, 2010). It was also pointed out that if they could not improve these abilities, the rates of offensive actions, addiction, and psychological disorders might increase (Tate, 2001). In conclusion, peer helping programs can be described as preventive and developmental programs, as an example of psychological education, which help individuals to undergo healthy developmental processes and improve the role of peers in their lives (Foster-Harrison, 1995).

2.2.2. Social Learning Theory

In Bandura's Social Learning Theory, cognitive factors throughout the process of learning and performing are important. He stressed the importance of observational learning as the corner stone of one's personality development. Individuals probably model behaviors of those who are more alike them (Bandura, 1977). It is also easier to model a behavior performed by peers who undergo similar or close social, physical, and cognitive development rather than copying the behaviors of an adult (Downe et al., 1986). Moreover, Aladağ (2005) assumed that students with high self-esteem may become a better model for their peers and those with high self-acceptance might accept others and give them opportunity for modeling. Additionally, Noaks and Noaks (2009) stated that peer helping interventions can be helpful for modeling desired behaviors and in return decrease delinquency among pupils. They claimed that social learning theory also shaped the peer mediation with its perspective that modeling the expected behaviors can decrease the likelihood of delinquent actions.

In that perspective, Bandura (1986) also pointed out that people construct their identity by monitoring others' behaviors and feelings and by modeling them rather than just by imitating. According to Cardoza (2013), especially the roots of peer

mediation training program are based on social learning theory. With the implementation of this program, pupils may acquire the essential skills to resolve conflicts by observing peer mediators, modeling them, and applying the skills when needed. In short, it can be said that learning through observing constitutes the basis of the peer mediation process.

Maxwell (1989) also stressed the importance of social learning theory which supports the idea that students can learn some skills, resolve their own disputes, and develop their relationships without the help of adults by means of conflict resolution, mediation, and mentoring methods. Besides, it was emphasized that peer mediation program is based on social relationship and cognitive process to resolve conflicts successfully. It is perceived as a social-cognitive process. Thus, it is also supported that students perceive their peers as friends rather than seeing them as opponents if the peer mediation program helps the disputing parties to manage their conflicts (Johnson & Johnson, 2006). Also, Bandura (1986) stressed the importance of cognitive development, which is also regarded as a part of peer mediation education (Cardoza, 2013). It aims students to acquire problem-solving and mediation skills to resolve disputes as parts of the cognitive improvement. To conclude, students can acquire conflict resolution and problem-solving skills through observational learning which is defined as an essential theoretical explanation of the peer mediation.

2.2.3. Social Interdependence Theory

It is believed that peer mediation has been forthrightly shaped through the social interdependence theory (Johnson & Johnson, 2001a), which stresses the point of view that conflict is a natural phenomenon in a person's life and the resolution process can be affected by the feature of social interdependence. As a result, if disputing parties try to decide on a satisfying agreement cooperatively and find effective solutions for the benefit of both parties; conflicts are managed constructively and their relationships improve. On the other hand, in a competitive environment, students cannot reach a constructive and useful resolution (Deutsch,

1973; Johnson & Johnson, 2001a). Thus, cooperation is found essential for constructive peer mediation (Deutsch, 1973).

Deutsch (1973) also mentioned that conflict is an inevitable fact during one's life, so the aim should be to resolve it constructively rather than avoiding all conflict situations. Conflict resolution process can be also affected by one's selection of competitive or cooperative manner. If people resolve conflict in a constructive manner, they would probably decide on mutually satisfying agreement and rapport among them would be enhanced. They reach the solution through constructing empathy, discussing an agreement, and deciding satisfying steps for both parties. Thus, it supports democratic view, caring, and improvement. To implement an effective conflict resolution process, disputing parties need to follow four steps; constructing a safe and confidential rapport among disputing parties, deciding to use efficient problem-solving strategies, reaching a mutual agreement by undergoing a group process, and acquiring the essential knowledge about the problems. Also, Deutsch (1973) stated that during the conflict resolution education, pupils should implement the learned skills. Learning about just theoretical part of conflict resolution is not sufficient, it is also fundamental to practice the skills. Furthermore, the social-cultural context in which students live is of utmost importance and should be paid attention during the implementation of these skills. They also need to get feedback about their usage of skills. Thus, after receiving the required training and supervision, and while providing the learned skills, implementing peer mediation program in a cooperative school setting would probably enhance its effectiveness.

2.3. Distinct Types of Peer Helping Programs

Peer helping programs can be classified into two categories based on their aims: first, it may contain emotional support (befriending, mediation / conflict resolution, and counseling-based approaches); and second, it may include education and information giving (peer tutoring, peer education, and mentoring) (Cowie & Wallace, 2000). Correspondingly, Aladağ (2005) stated that peer helping is an umbrella term that contains all types of peer implementations such as peer tutoring for academic

development; peer mediation for conflict resolution; peer counseling for one-to-one helping; and peer education for informing others about health-related issues such as AIDS, addiction or pregnancy. Likewise, Taylı (2006) stated that special friends, peer leaders, resident counseling, and orientation as the other types of peer helping. Peer tutoring can be defined as a program in which students are educated to help their peers with low academic achievement or learning disability. Peer counseling is defined as one to one counseling through which students suffering from some problems prefer to share their problems with their peers. Resident counseling aims to provide students who live in dormitories information about the conditions there and to help them construct required relationships. Peer leaders are needed to help school counselors to carry out some projects at school while special friends are trained to support and help those who feel alone and excluded to develop their friendship skills (Taylı, 2007, as cited in Nazlı, 2016). Sharp (2001) defined the term befriending as a process in which those who feel isolated are included in groups in the playground. For instance, one school constructed a technique named as friendship bus-stop which peer befrienders help those sitting lonely under the bus-stop sign to participate in groups. Circle of friends is another technique used to improve social involvement in peer groups (Newton, Taylor, & Wilson, 1996).

Peer educators give educational information to and plan support programs for students mostly on college campuses (Brack, Millard, & Shah, 2008). In a study conducted by Badura et al. (2000), the results showed that after the implementation of peer education training, peer educators acquired more leadership skills, relevant information to educate their peers, and information about some health behaviors. Another study found that peer education training improved students' self-confidence and their self-expression (Backett-Milburn, & Wilson, 2000).

Furthermore, peer mentoring can be defined as a program in which older students support new comers about required information, general school policy and procedures (Taylı, 2007, as cited in Nazlı, 2016). According to Cartwright (2005), peer mentoring can be provided in two ways at schools; buddy system through which

trained older students are matched with new students to inform them about school, and another type requires constructing rapport, resolving conflicts by listening one or two mentees. These two mostly overlap. James, Smith, & Radford (2014) stated that peer mentoring in general aims to support mentees who need help in some points such as private or interpersonal issues and school adaptation. Karcher (2009) defined the cross-age mentoring as a developmental approach through which high school pupils assist their younger friends as mentors by providing guidance or social support and both have the chance to meet their developmental needs. In a study conducted by Karcher (2005), it was found that cross age peer mentoring helped the mentees to develop a positive inclination toward their peers or schools and their interpersonal skills. Cross-age peer mentoring was also found effective for mentors' academic improvements and self-esteem (Karcher et al., 2010). Moreover, Karcher (2009) claimed that the rate of students who are supposed to benefit from the developmental guidance program may be doubled if students themselves served in the guidance lessons to help their peers grasp some topics; thus he saw cross-age peer mentoring as a part of comprehensive developmental guidance program in his study. Peer mentoring model was found crucial and effective since it helps the school counselors allocate their time, energy, and resources in order to deal not only with those at risk but also with those in need of academic or social guidance. In a study carried out by Thompson and Smith (2011) to evaluate anti-bullying techniques, students stated that problems were solved out by peer mentors and they helped the victims who were involved in bullying. It was also found that mentors had the chance to improve their interpersonal skills, problem-solving abilities, their level of self-confidence, and resiliency.

2.3.1. Peer Mediation

Peer mediation can be defined as a process through which a neutral third-party tries to help their peers who have a problem or conflict to reach peaceful and mutually agreeing solutions (Cohen, 1995; Daunic et al., 2000). Smith et al. (2002) also explained the peer mediation as a program in which peer mediators help their peers to find their own solutions and to solve their disputes by following preset steps. Peer

mediation is also defined as a process through which students try to solve their disputes in a helpful manner by empowering themselves in interpersonal and psychological aspects (Türnüklü, 2006).

Cardoza (2013) pointed out that peer mediation programs based on empirical evidence first emerged during the 1960s in the form of Teaching Students to Be Peacemakers Program. That program which is based on the social interdependence theory, aims to educate pupils about the concept of conflict, mediation process, and resolving conflicts. Thus, pupils have served as mediators in their classes and schools in general. Johnson and Johnson (2006) also explained that as a preliminary mediation program, an implementation to educate pupils about resolving disputes emerged during the 1960s. Additionally, they stated that peer mediation program was implemented in San Francisco, Chicago, and New York City at the beginnings of the 1980s, whereas Canada applied this program in 1987. Moreover, Cigainero (2009) stated that peer mediation programs initially emerged over the 1980s and 1990s to diminish the rates of violence in schools. Through this program, students were trained to serve as mediators when their friends dispute. Also, it aims to equip students with conflict resolution skill, problem-solving ability, reasoning, and critical-thinking skills.

Peer mediation is especially proper and age appropriate to implement in secondary schools (Cowie & Wallace, 2000) since secondary school students turn to their peers for getting social and emotional support rather than their families or instructors. Furthermore, they use common language and better understand each other's point of view while resolving conflict situations. Guanci (2002) also pointed out that peer mediation programs need to be applied when two or more students have difficulty in managing their conflicts on their own. Peer mediation should be a voluntary process. Peer mediators help their peers decide on a mutual agreement by giving them opportunity to implement effective conflict resolution and mediation skills. Students learn to show respect, understand and admit others' perspectives. This implementation supports relationships, critical thinking and conflict resolution skills

among students. Based on these, educators and school administration can deal with their basic roles, instruction, rather than handling disputes among pupils. In a study, Cowie and Smith (2010) claimed that peer mediation programs supported students' psychological development and increased school safety to prevent bullying in schools.

Schrumpf, Crawford, and Bodine (2007) claimed that peer mediation is the first and most prevalent type of conflict resolution education program; together they construct the bases of preventive programs at schools. Moreover, it was also expressed by Daunic et al. (2000) that some methods are required and crucial to support school discipline process because of the substantial rates of destructive student actions. They also stated that peer mediation assists students to acquire certain skills, thus students can manage their own conflicts by using interpersonal skills and respecting the diversities. Furthermore, peer mediators try to support conflicting students to decide on a peaceful solution without blaming or putting pressure on them. Even though peer mediators start the mediation process, those who are in conflict lead the process, decide on alternative solutions, and evaluate the steps taken. To support this view, it can be also presented that conflict resolution programs reach their aims if all parties grasp the process, follow the same procedure, and engage in the resolution of disputes (Jones, 2004). Additionally, it was stressed that all the disputing parties should admit involving in the negotiation process and decide on the confidentiality of the issues (Bickmore, 2002).

In relation to the purpose of this study, Cardoza (2013) also stated, after reviewing the literature, that implementation of the peer mediation helps to encourage pupils to take more responsibility, enhance their self-esteem and support their problem-solving abilities. In addition, the idea that conflicts are inevitable parts of our lives, but that they should not turn into violence which is undesirable can be taught to the students. Disputing parties also develop respect to themselves more and schools start to be more secure places by students. Above all, pupils improve their communication and cooperation skills. Lastly, depending on the decline in the suspension and expulsion

incidents at schools, the rates of participation in lectures increase. On the other hand, it was presented also that peer mediation is not suitable if one of those who involve in negotiation has a serious emotional disturbance, they use violence, and they could not take advantage from a mediation process before. Moreover, Türk and Türnüklü (2016b) mentioned that peer mediation program gives opportunity to disputing parties to express their emotions and wishes and to decide on a mutual and peaceful solution. Students can manage their conflicts and disputes without using violence. Indeed, it improves students' social and emotional development if they express themselves without violent actions, resolve their conflicts constructively, and manage interpersonal problems without the support of adults.

Peer mediation programs can be implemented in two distinct formats; a cadre approach which requires deciding a certain student group to take the training, and student body approach (school-based peer mediation program) which requires educating all the students at school. The latter requires the supports of all the staff members, so it might create a challenging situation during the implementation periods. It was also stated that it would be probably compulsive to implement this program if school staffs in general do not support the program (Cremin, 2002). Another reason for failures of the school-based approaches is about the class-based training which requires teachers to spend enough time for instruction about the peer mediation as well as their curriculum. Furthermore, economic constraints may create a problem while implementing the program all over the school. In contrast, some studies stressed the importance of cadre approach regarding the whole school approach if it is effectively planned and applied (Schrumpf et al., 1997). Thus, in the present study the cadre approach was implemented as a peer mediation strategy.

Before implementation of training program, several methods can be applied to design the mediator group (to select peer mediators). Firstly, students may volunteer to become a peer mediator. Secondly, they may be recommended by their friends, instructors, or administrators or may be selected by their classmates. Most of the peer mediators are chosen by the school staff (educators and administrators) among those

students who have the necessary social and cognitive skills required to provide successful mediation process (Smith et al., 2002).

Additionally, peer mediators should possess some characteristics such as the skills of rational evaluation, leadership, and social competence (Smith et al., 2002). The peer mediators should help disputants to find their way rather than offering them direct solutions and judging. Selected group should consist of students who are popular among their friends but not getting the highest exam scores or do not always have perfect behaviors. In addition, listening skill, reflecting thoughts and feelings, interpreting body language, and questioning are the skills required to become a peer mediator (Sharp, 2001). Cowie and Wallace (2000) also stated that peer mediators are expected to work as a team and to provide problem-solving strategies to other students who are quarreling by introducing them with a win-win solution. They should not blame anyone and be fair to both sides by introducing some ground rules to disputing parties like as listening to each other, not judging or interrupting the other while expressing their emotions about the event. Later, disputing parties decide on a plan and the time to follow-up through a step-by-step approach.

Furthermore, in order to assist disputants to resolve their conflicts, the peer mediators should perform their roles as the followings; observing the conflict resolution process, protecting the privacy, being objective and considerate, and constructing empathy. Also, they need to take almost 20 hours of education including the topics of mediation, cooperation, problem solving, and social skills. Since it requires great efforts and time for students to involve in the education and negotiation process, the permissions from families need to be taken at the beginning. Furthermore, peer mediators should regularly participate in sessions. If they do not attend the session, they should feel responsible to complete the homework of that session. It is also stated that the researchers think peer mediators as a source to become effective role models for other students. On the other hand, peer mediators should refer the issues to competent persons if the issues exceed their limits. For example, these problems which are not proper to apply peer mediation may be related with abusive actions,

vandalism, self-destructive or criminal behaviors, and other offenses (Cardoza, 2013). Additionally, Barkley, Wilborn, and Towers (1984) stated that “social interest”, the term developed by Adler, could clarify the peer helper roles. While constructing social interest among high school students, peer helpers also enhance their well-being because helping other people provides connection and interdependence with others.

During implementation process of a peer mediation program, a confidential and calm place should be preferred before starting the negotiation process. If not, disputing parties may have difficulty in focusing on the matter and feel ashamed. Later, peer mediator states that disputing parties together should decide on a mutual plan to resolve their situations and that they should show respect each other. During the negotiation process, some ground rules need to be constructed (Wandberg, 2001 as cited in Cardoza, 2013). According to some other researchers, in the first place, peer mediators introduce the program and mention the general rules. Then, they collect information about the issue by giving opportunity to the disputing parties to express their story. After summarizing the conflict situation, peer mediators remind the brainstorming rules and then support disputing parties for brainstorming about potential solutions which need to be written. It is crucial that peer mediators should not give suggestions but help disputants to find a mutually satisfying resolution. After evaluating the possible solutions, one or more ways to resolve the problem are decided and written on a form. Lastly, those who dispute agree upon the action plan and sign the form before starting implementation (Davidson & Wood, 2004). For some researchers, seating arrangements during negotiation are crucial and there are different models; round table, distance model, and the living room setup. Round table is required to create more equitable atmosphere. Distance model puts the mediators between disputing parties and is essential for them to feel safe. The living room setup provides a comfortable environment since the participants sit closer to each other. However, this model should not be preferred if disputing parties feel insecure (Beer & Stieff, 1997).

2.3.1.1. The relationship between peer mediation and conflict resolution education programs

Literature review indicated that there are bulk of studies which examined the effectiveness of peer mediation and conflict resolution education programs together. Daunic et al. (2000) also stated that these programs are frequently implemented to handle and resolve interpersonal conflicts, and peer mediation was accepted as the most common conflict resolution program in schools. Additionally, peer mediation was defined as a type of conflict resolution education programs, aiming to improve students' mediation skills (Türk, 2018). Furthermore, there are other types of conflict resolution education programs including different formats: direct instruction about skills, peer mediation, or embedded curriculum (Garrard & Lipsey, 2007). Regarding the emergence of these programs, it can be mentioned that researchers who were experts about the topic of conflict management, supporters of nonviolence, anti-nuclear war activists, and parts of the legal profession have pioneered the development of these programs (Johnson & Johnson, 2001a).

During the conflict resolution education (CRE), students are taught the concept of conflict, its reasons, power dynamics, and various reactions caused by difference in cultural structure. These programs aim to transform schools into more reliable environments and to diminish the rates of violence, bullying, racism, dismissal, and absenteeism in schools (Jones, 2004). Additionally, it was stated by Cardoza (2013) that CRE is of utmost importance to provide students efficient atmosphere to learn. By applying these programs, pupils would express their emotions and thoughts in classes without hesitation and educators would try to enhance charity and cooperation among their pupils. CRE programs also support the student-oriented discipline rather than authoritarian discipline systems. Peer mediation also gives pupils opportunity to experience effective communication and to control their behaviors. All in all, pupils need to develop the skills of self-discipline, self-control, and self-regulation rather than being directed or controlled by the extrinsic rewards and penalties. Additionally, a study conducted with college students showed that social skills of the students have developed through a program based on peer

mediation and conflict resolution (Ergül, 2008). In a meta-analysis study, Garrard and Lipsey (2007) concluded that conflict resolution programs, if implemented effectively, had a moderate effect on the antisocial actions. Conflict resolution and peer mediation programs also improve students' self-regulation (Maxwell, 1989), self-esteem (Türnüklü, 2011), and communication skills (Kaçmaz, 2011), while decreasing the level of aggression (Jones, 2004) in schools. Furthermore, Lane-Garon et al. (2012) stressed the importance of conflict resolution education as a way to introduce and equip students with social-emotional skills.

Furthermore, Cardoza (2013) mentioned that, before starting to implement the CRE in schools, it is essential and fundamental to grasp the principles and philosophy behind it. Firstly, cultural tenderness is required for peer mediation and conflict resolution programs to be effective and useful. In order to achieve cultural sensitivity, individuals should realize that people grow up in different ethos and are affected by their own culture. Bickmore (2002) also stated that the skills taught during the peer mediation training are relevant to and appropriate for all cultures. Additionally, peer mediators need to be selected among diverse groups for the peer mediation programs to be successful. If peer mediators have distinct characteristics, they can be assigned to handle various issues related to the diverse needs of others. This implementation is not just for meeting the needs of certain student groups. Also, it helps to grasp and resolve the problems of all students in schools. All in all, groups may consist of students who have distinct level of academic achievement, different social background, and gender; also, by means of this structure, the program would probably become more influential and beneficial.

Secondly, skills aimed to be taught to peer helpers/mediators should be well planned and structured. Program implementers should decide on what kind of program they would implement, which objectives the training program would have, and which target group would be selected. After deciding the program type, they should organize the structure/content of the training program and should explain these to students before beginning the training (Taylı, 2010). For instance, it was pointed out

by some researchers (Lupton-Smith & Carruthers, 1996; Townley, 1994) that conflict resolution and peer mediation programs should involve topics which help to improve students' empathy skills, and they should enable them to practice and role play these skills actively. Developing these skills might help students to acquire conflict resolution skills more easily, by this means; they can also improve their empathy skills.

Additionally, Johnson and Johnson (2001a) stated that searching the background of conflict is of utmost importance since it impacted the developmental process of CRE and Peer Mediation Program. According to Hayhurst (2000), the concept of conflict is grouped into five categories: intrapersonal (one's inner conflicts), interpersonal (conflicts among two parties), intergroup (conflicts among two groups), international (conflicts among one or more nationalities), and societal (conflicts about a society itself). Before grasping and acquiring conflict resolution skills, people should admit that conflicts are essential part of their lifelong learning. Students in the middle schools can feel satisfied with their lives, also feel qualified, and develop friendship skills if they learn and perform effective conflict resolution skills. Also, adolescents can make reliable friends, decide about some crucial issues related to their lives, determine their purpose in life, and realize their responsibilities with the help of conflict resolution strategies and peer mediation program (Sandy & Boardman, 2000).

Furthermore, conflict is perceived as an inevitable part of individual's life (Uline, Tschannen-Moran, & Perez, 2003). The concept of conflict can be explained as a situation in which one person's attitudes toward achieving his/her goals compete with or inhibit another person's attitudes toward achieving his/her goals (Deutsch, 1973). For personal and relational development, conflict is essential (Johnson & Johnson, 2006). People may face a conflict situation when their aims contradict with others' aims. Since it is regarded as an essential part of everyday life, conflict is mostly not perceived as disruptive. Thus, people should improve their skills to handle conflicts (Nathan, 1998). Additionally, the concept of conflict should not be

confused with violent actions. Conflict is a kind of dispute and might be caused by misunderstanding of another person's perspectives or attitudes. If this controversy is not successfully resolved, conflict may turn into violence. Vandalism, bullying, indignity, misinterpretation, racism, sexism, and lacking friendship skills are among the prevalent types of conflict (Rue, 2001). In order to decrease the rates of aggression in schools, the most effective method is determined as handling and resolving conflicts before they convert into aggressive actions through educating pupils about mediation skills (Guanci, 2002). Wolowiec (1994) stated that most of the students prefer violent actions in order to handle conflicts rather than determining constructive solutions and do not feel disturbed about the aggression. According to Johnson and Johnson (2006), if teachers and pupils get more informed about the nature of conflict, they may acquire more essential skills to handle their disputes constructively. Bickmore (2002) explained this situation by stating that even though interpersonal problems are inherent and inevitable in a school environment, they might be turn into deterioration and injury, and damage administrative, learning, and instructional time and effort if they are not resolved constructively.

2.4. Empirical Studies Regarding the Effectiveness of Peer Helping Programs

In this part, initially effectiveness of the peer helping programs regarding school environment, peer helpers, and other students was mentioned. Subsequently, effectiveness of the peer helping programs in Turkey was presented.

2.4.1. Effectiveness of Peer Helping Programs for School Environment, Peer Helpees, and Peer Helpers

Close inspection of the literature regarding the effectiveness of peer helping programs revealed that previous studies used various types of peer helping programs (especially peer mediation) for various purposes and entitled them differently rather than peer helping (peer support) at different grade levels by using various methods.

In a longitudinal study conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the peer mediation program at secondary schools, 323 students were recruited from two secondary schools; one of which implemented the mediation program, whereas the other did not. Also, 17 teachers were selected as participants. Self-reports, peers, and teachers were used as sources of data. Data were collected from experimental group (students at school with mediation) and control group (students at school with no mediation) in two periods. The results showed that the students at the school with peer mediation program showed higher pro-victim attitudes rather than those at the schools without mediation. It was observed that conflict among students-teachers and the rate of fights decreased in the school applying the peer mediation program. Students' relationship with their friends and their friends' opinions about them were also improved. The six months follow-up study indicated that attitudes toward the victims and school climate improved in the school implementing mediation. In contrast, undesirable roles of the bully's followers ascended, whereas expected roles of the victim's defenders decreased in the school with no mediation (Usó, Villanueva, & Adrián, 2016).

In order to investigate the effects of peer mediation on the rates of school violence and undesirable behaviors, an experimental study was conducted in three secondary schools with 750 pupils from the same school district. Tardiness, absenteeism, truancy, severe issues (such as physical touch or substance usage which need suspension) or trivial issues (such as language, hand gestures, spitting, and intimidations without physical touch), and infractions were among these undesirable behaviors. Through the reports and the surveys implemented to the teachers (30 teachers from school one, 15 teachers from school two, and 26 teachers from school three; 71 in total), both quantitative and qualitative data were collected before and after the program implementation. The findings revealed that all the six disruptive actions have lessened after applying the peer mediation program as a result of the evaluation of all three schools in combination. The results showed a significant decline in undesirable actions. Additionally, after comparing the study findings with the State data, it was found that there was a significant decrease in the rates of severe

issues, trivial issues, and infractions; whereas there was no significant improvement in the rates of absenteeism, truancy, and tardiness incidents. Lastly, it was found that no significant relationship exists between a decline in these six negative behaviors and a decline in violence incidence after implementing the peer mediation program. In conclusion, the researcher claimed that violence rates and unacceptable actions might be decreased after implementing the peer mediation program in the secondary schools (Cigainero, 2009).

In another research conducted with the elementary school students by Lane-Garon (1998), the impacts of peer mediation program and practice on mediators' cognitive and affective perspective taking were investigated after providing them peer mediation education during one academic year. The researcher determined 62 students as mediators and 50 students as non-mediators. The study group consists of 55 boys and 57 girls, selected from among 4th through 8th graders. For evaluating the variables of perspective taking and empathy, the data were collected before and 6 months after the training. The results showed that after peer mediation training was provided to the peer mediators, all groups (mediators and non-mediators; males and females) got significantly higher scores in cognitive perspective taking. Thus, there was not any significant change between the peer mediators' cognitive perspective taking pre-test and post-test scores. The mean affective perspectives taking scores of both groups (mediators and non-mediators) acquired before and after the training were found similar. In general, it was concluded that both groups had an opportunity to develop their perspective taking through the peer mediation.

A study (Bell et al., 2000) involving 6th through 8th graders to become peer mediators after getting 6 weeks conflict resolution training demonstrated that 30 peer mediators applied the steps of peer mediation they have learnt during the training to solve problems among their peers. Further, researchers evaluated the mediation skills retention tests during the pre-test, post-test or follow up periods. It was found that out of 34 conflict situations, 32 (94%) cases were mediated successfully by the peer mediators. Also, according to the school-wide measures, it was observed that the

percentages of immoral behavior, disruptive conduct, and total suspension declined from the previous year during the year peer mediation training was applied. It was also found that peer mediators needed significantly lower rate of office referrals rather than those in control group.

Moreover, Salmivalli (1999) differentiated participant roles (victims, bully, assistant, reinforcer, outsider, defender, and no clear role) among children and adolescents from 6th (n = 573) and 8th (n = 316) graders and concluded that peer helping intervention assists peer helpers to be mediators and to develop listening, counseling, and helping skills.

Lane-Garon, Yergat, and Kralowec (2012) investigated the effectiveness of Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) and Conflict Resolution Education (CRE) on the improvement of school security. In an elementary school, students from the 4th, 5th and 6th grades received the conflict resolution education to become peer mediators. Also, 54 students were determined as sample, 27 of these students were decided as mediators and took 2 days of peer mediation education. PBIS aims to develop expected and acceptable behaviors through modeling. Based on the results of this study, the researchers concluded that PBIS resulted in regular attendance, positive school climate and decrease in the disturbing actions reported both by the students themselves and the teachers. Also, CRE reached the same results and provided more productive learning environment. Consequently, the results revealed that peer mediators' awareness about the opinions and feelings of others after getting the training were found significantly different from those before getting the training. Also, the pre-test subscale scores of those who were educated as mediators and those who were grouped as non-mediators were not found significantly different from each other. In comparison to the general population, the scores of the peer mediators demonstrated statistically significant difference in both scales after getting the education; meaning that peer mediators became more prone to care and pay attention to the viewpoints of others rather than the general population after the training education. This study generally concluded that CRE improved pupils' conflict

resolution skills in positive aspects and helped peer mediators to consider others' feelings and opinions significantly compared to those who are not mediators.

Furthermore, a study carried out in an elementary school was aim to investigate whether peer mediation decreases the rates of violence at school. The Peace Pal Program was implemented to 3rd through 5th graders and to 825 students in total for three years. Study findings revealed that suspension rates of the school significantly diminished. There were positive significant changes in the knowledge levels of mediators about leadership ability, positive manner, and some other characteristics (i.e., collaboration, benevolence, being considerate, compassion) concerning negotiation, conflict resolution, and conflict. It was also observed that these benefits were sustained over 3 months follow up study. Besides, the school climate improved and the students took the responsibility of their actions. The participants and the peer mediators stated that they found the peer mediation program precious and all the negotiation sessions ($n = 34$) reached its aims. After carrying out the Peace Pal education, the results revealed that the knowledge about disputes, conflict resolution, and negotiation showed 43 % increment from pre-tests to post-tests and 42% from pre-test to follow up test. Overall, the results showed that the program was effective for mediators and school environment (Schellenberg et al., 2007).

Another study using survey method was conducted in 51 secondary schools in U.K. and investigated both the teachers' and students' perceptions and practices ($n = 3213$) about the peer support programs. The results showed that peer counseling decreases the level of stress and the rates of reporting bullying. In addition, 82 % of the students evaluated the program as helpful or very helpful and the program created socio-emotional care climate (Naylor & Cowie, 1999). Also, the multiple baseline research design was carried out to search for the effectiveness of conflict resolution program on primary school playground aggression. After peer mediators (5th graders) received the training, mediation process was introduced in three schools. As a result, it was found that the program worked as an effective strategy to decrease the rates of the aggressive behaviors in schools which suffer from high level of aggression. Also,

follow-up results showed that the impacts of the program endured for one year (Cunningham et al., 1998).

In another study conducted in a kindergarten, it was aimed to educate pupils aged between 2 and 6 about the conflict resolution skills and in the aspects of social, psychological, and cognitive development. Sandy and Boardman (2000) developed and investigated a program called Peaceful Kids Early Childhood Education Social-Emotional curriculum, as a conflict resolution program. After training the pupils and their families about the conflict resolution skills with the help of the teachers; the analyses of the data collected from 18 classrooms between the years of 1997 and 1999 demonstrated that aggression levels significantly diminished, conflict resolution skills, collaborative actions, and social skills of the training group significantly developed, as opposed to the group trained without the support of their families and those group who took no training. Although this study was carried out in a kindergarten, the results approved the effectiveness of the conflict resolution programs.

In a study conducted by Frost (2012), the impacts of the bullying prevention, peer mediation, and conflict resolution programs on suspension rates in secondary schools were investigated in Kansas State in the USA. This study focused on several implementation types for bullying prevention rather than just one implementation and aimed to inquire the following research questions: which program for handling violence is implemented in secondary schools in Kansas State; what kind of relationship exists between bullying prevention programs and the rates of violence including suspensions in schools; whether a relationship exist between the ratio of counselor-pupil and violence including suspensions; whether there exist relationships between the duration of the training period and distinct implementation ways of the programs, and violence rates (school suspension); and lastly, whether there exist relationships between bullying prevention programs and counselor-pupil rates, the duration of the training, and distinct implementation ways. The researcher implemented two methods to collect data about independent (program types, school

size, counselor-pupil ratio, duration of the training, and implementation methods) and dependent variables (suspension rates). Among the 231 schools, 129 schools admitted participating in this study, but only 122 schools completely answered all the surveys including questions about type of prevention program they use and how they implement. The data about school suspension rates during the years of 2008-2011, was reached through Kansas State Department of Education. About the first research question, it was found that the most widespread program (49%) were the bully prevention program, whereas 39 % of the schools were implementing no program ($n=47$). On the other hand, peer mediation was applied by only five schools and conflict resolution program was used in 10 schools. Also, it was reached that the suspension rates in those schools carrying out bully prevention program were not significantly different from those of schools in which no program was implemented, for each of the three academic years. However, it was concluded that the schools in which counselor-pupil ratio was less than 1:500 experienced lower level of suspensions than those in which this ratio was more than 1:500 during each academic year. The duration of the training (none, fewer than 10 lessons, and 10 or more lessons) and the implementation methods (none, counselors and staff, and only counselors) did not significantly impact the suspension rates for each academic year separately. Finally, there was no interaction effect of program types (bullying prevention program versus no program) compared to school size, counselor-pupil ratio, duration of the training, and implementation methods, separately.

Another study collected data through three distinct phases. In 2002, focus groups from two schools were used to measure pre-and-post intervention results; two groups were selected in each school with six students in each group. In 2006, a questionnaire was applied to teachers ($n = 17$) from four schools to learn their opinions and feelings toward the program. Later, in 2007 students answered a checklist in three schools. According to the results of this study conducted in primary school settings, teachers reported that playground communications were supported, and school climate changed positively through the Playground Peacemaker program based on peer mediation. The intervention increased students' self-confidence and improved

their locus of control. Also, the time allocated to conflict resolution decreased, whereas the time allocated for other school relevant implementations increased (Noaks & Noaks, 2009).

In a study conducted by Baginsky (2004), seven primary and seven secondary schools implementing the peer-support programs were selected as sample. At the beginning of the study, a questionnaire was applied in these 14 schools. Those who answered the previous questionnaire were interviewed in-depth by the researcher nearly one year later. The aims of this research were to investigate these schools' reasons for implementing the peer support programs, to evaluate the usefulness of these implementations, and to determine their advantages for pupils and for school in general. It was found that two of the primary schools demonstrated the program as a way to increase students' self-esteem, whereas two other stressed its importance for improving their problem-solving ability. Also, the benefits of the peer support services for the students at the primary schools were presented as follows; it always provides an opportunity for children suffering a problem to be listened and ground rules for the implementation of helping process; it supports pupils' self-government and conflict-resolution skills; students take the responsibility of their actions in discipline process; they work better as a team; they had chance to mention their problems and get support; and it provides support for students' challenges without judging them. Additionally, some common points were determined through analyzing the interview results of the secondary schools; three of the participants stated that some of their students would prefer to mention their concerns to their peers and peer supporters in their program acquired some benefits such as empathy, skill acquisition, self-growth, and being a part of support system. In the second place, the benefits of the peer support programs for schools were presented; five primary schools pointed out that they would create a positive school environment by increasing respect among students and improving students' behaviors. Further, they stated that it encourages resolving problems, supports the development of citizenship identity, and decreases the rates of bullying. Lastly, seven secondary schools mentioned the programs' benefits for school as follows; it makes the school more

supportive and responsible place, it diminishes alienation, supports those who felt disturbed, creates a belief that bullying can be handled, and problems can be resolved at the beginning.

In a study with repeated measure design, peer helpers were selected from among five high schools. Training group consisted of 13 students aged between 12-14 years. After comparing the results of the pre-tests, post-tests, and the 3 months follow-up tests it was concluded that the skill for helping suicidal peers was found significantly different in post-test than the pre-test scores and did not change during three months. Also, attitudes toward and knowledge about suicide prevention significantly improved after training and were maintained over three months. As a result, it was concluded that peer helpers were found supportive for suicide preventions in schools with the help of additional peer gatekeeper training (Stuart, Haelstromm, & Waalen, 2003).

In order to investigate the effects of peer mediation in a suburban public-school district including pupils from different ethnicity, a descriptive study was carried out. The researcher did not apply any standardized instrument, rather a survey was developed, and structured interviews were carried out. Among 21 schools, it was observed that only 13 high schools have been conducting operational peer mediation program. During the nine weeks, there were observed 120 students suffered from conflict situations. Only 111 of them decided on a mutual agreement and were surveyed. The findings from this study demonstrated that 93 % of the mediations were resolved through a written agreement, which shows a success; the rates of incidents resolved with a written agreement were found higher for those referred by administration than those referred by security; 83 % of these 111 successful mediation endured during following 5 or 7 days; 73 % of these 111 students found the mediation process useful for them; 67 % of the 89 disputants thought mediation was valuable for others; 88 % of the students found the agreements fair for both parties. Additionally, the researcher categorized the students' answers about the types of their disputes into four categories; quarrel, verbal conflicts, gossips, and

property. It was also found that 89 % of the students who suffered from conflict situations stated the resolution after 5 or 7 days and 82 % of the disputants stated they would prefer to receive help from mediators later. There was no significant interaction between the duration of the successful mediations and the types of disputes. Also, there was no significant relationship between the endurance of successful mediations and separately between the grade level, age, gender, culture, attendance, grade point average, receiving special education, disputants' acquaintance, relationship among them before the mediation, and their previous utilization of the program. After evaluating the interviews conducted with 24 randomly selected disputants, competence about mediation process, skill to control the process, treating fairly to both sides, and allocating equivalent time for listening to them were determined as factors that impact the success of the mediation (Kolan, 1999).

Boulton (2014) carried out a study to examine the high school students' opinions and evaluations about the peer counseling programs. From each of the two schools implementing the peer counseling program to handle bullying during almost two years; 5 girls and 5 boys (aged between 12-16 years) were chosen among 7th through 11th graders on a random basis. Peer counselors were educated on counseling skills. In the study, actual sample consisting of 99 participants (49 girls and 50 boys) was interviewed. After the content analysis of the students' responses, it was found that 40.4% of the students stated the aims of the peer counseling service as to handle bullying in their school; 23.2% of the students defined the peer counseling program as counseling by peers; 18.2% of the students stated helpers as someone to talk, and 12.1% of the participants pointed out that it provides help. Also, 6.1% of the students were not sure about the programs' aims. Additionally, it was noticed that students preferred to receive help in a situation of continuous bullying rather than as a result of a single event. The most common type of incidences for which participants were inclined to receive help from peer counselors and that took place only once was about the physical bullying. Furthermore, participants stated other common issues respectively as follows; being hit or kicked, left out, and called nasty names.

A study conducted by Thompson (1996) searched the effectiveness of the peer mediation program on school climate or safety, students' responsible behavior, self-esteem, interpersonal skills, and on the rates of referrals to administration. In the study, 25 middle school students were selected as participants and took education about the roles of peer mediators, disputes, interpersonal skills, listening, and the procedures to solve conflicts. After the training, peer mediators were supervised during the program implementation and this provided a continuous evaluation process. According to the results, peer mediation program decreased the rates of fights and complaints to the teachers; whereas it enhanced self-esteem, problem-solving skills, and positive school climate. Furthermore, results demonstrated that suspension rates diminished almost 18.5% during the first year and almost 50% during the first and second years; 90% of the incidents were handled during the first and second years; and 92% of the educators found peer mediation program effective and helpful for school environment.

Another study conducted in two elementary schools investigated the impacts of peer mediation training on social competence, resiliency, and self-esteem levels of the students selected from the 3rd through 5th grades. This mixed-method design study carried out surveys with pupils, focus group interviews with educators, and meetings with administrators to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The sample of this study involved 2 administrators, 12 educators, and 108 pupils; 24 of these students were assigned as mediators and formed the groups of School-A mediators, School-A non-mediators, and School-B non-mediators. Time is constructed into two periods as pre-test and post-test; whereas grade levels are decided as 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders. The findings of this study demonstrated that the mean self-esteem score (by time and grade) significantly decreased from pre-test to post-test, whereas the mean resiliency, social competence (by time and grade), and conflict resolution (by time, treatment, and grade) scores significantly increased from pre-test to post-test. It was also claimed that those who took peer mediation training begin the process by making lower improvements, but later their conflict resolution skills greatly developed than the nonmediators. Consequently, there was a significant time effect

within groups and effects of all the interactions related with time were significant. On the other hand, no significant difference was found between groups. In short, the quantitative findings demonstrated that the scores of resiliency, social competence, and conflict resolution have improved. The qualitative findings revealed that peer mediators developed their conflict resolution skills and social competence after the training. Moreover, school staff said that they believe in peer mediation program, the training diminished the rates and intensity of disputes, and the program supported the mediators. As a result of their experience as mediators, peer mediators developed their academic vocabulary; started to dispute less; and they also believed that they affected their school climate and the conflict rates in the playground decreased. They learnt to assist their friends to resolve problems without using violence. In addition, teachers stated in post-interviews that “the playground appeared more positive” (Cardoza, 2013, p. 111). In general, researcher found peer mediation education as a crucial way to support pupils’ problem-solving and empathy skills without an adult help.

2.4.2. Effectiveness of Peer Helping Programs in Turkey

In an experimental study conducted by Yıldız (2017), the effectiveness of peer mediation on high school students’ social skills was tested. After implementing pre-test to the study group (n = 72), volunteer students formed experimental group (n = 35) and tried to resolve their conflicts with the help of peer mediators trained by the researcher before. Results indicated that peer mediation program have a significant effect on experimental group participants’ social skills.

Yelpaze and Özkamalı (2015) investigated the effectiveness of the social skill training program via peer guidance on aggression levels of secondary school students (6th, 7th, and 8th graders). The researchers carried out a quasi-experimental design using experimental group with pre- and post-tests. In that study, 11 eighth grade peer helpers were selected and trained via social skills program for 8 weeks, and then they implemented the program to 56 students who constituted the experimental group. It

was found that the social skill program via peer guidance significantly decreased the rate of the aggression among secondary school students.

Furthermore, Sezen and Bedel (2015) carried out a quasi-experimental study to investigate the effectiveness of negotiation and mediation training on adolescents' problem-solving skills and aggression levels. Experimental group consisted of 14 boys who took the training, whereas control group included 14 boys, and their average age was 17. The results showed that negotiation and mediation training significantly increased problem-solving abilities, insistent-persevering orientation, and anger management skills of the experimental group. However, it has no significant effect on trait anger scores of the experimental group.

In a mixed method study, Koruklu and Yılmaz (2010) investigated the impacts of conflict resolution and mediation training on 6 years old children's problem-solving skills. In the study, quantitative data were collected through a scale (interpersonal problem-solving scale) applied to the teachers; researchers evaluated each student's behaviors in class through observation. Qualitative data were reached through video recordings. After educating children in the experimental group ($n = 11$), it was found that the training has significant effect on problem-solving skills of children rather than the control group ($n = 15$). In addition, their destructive actions diminished, whereas constructive behaviors improved after the training.

Türnüklü et al. (2009a) conducted a quasi-experimental study in order to determine whether conflict resolution and peer mediation training programs effect elementary school students' empathy skills. The study sample consisted of 585 students from three elementary schools among 4th and 5th graders (aged between 10-11 years), including experimental ($n = 336$) and control ($n = 249$) groups. In the study, school-wide reception of the program was applied and teachers were educated before training the students in their schools. Findings indicated that there was a significant difference between the pre- and post-test empathy scores of experimental group.

Also, post-test empathy scores of the boys in the experimental and control groups were found significantly different, whereas no such difference for girls was observed.

Türnüklü et al. (2010a) also searched for the effectiveness of CRPM training on elementary school students' aggression levels in another similar quasi-experimental study. The study sample included 10-11-year-old primary school students from three elementary schools and consisted of the experimental (n=347) and control groups (n=328). The student-body approach has been carried out in these schools. After analyzing the data reached through the Aggression Scale, the findings indicated that students' aggression scale scores decreased after the training. Additionally, the researchers stated that boys took advantage from the training more than girls. Also, it was concluded that since CRPM training decreases the rates of aggression among students and provides more constructive environment in classrooms and school, it might enhance academic success and create safer school climate.

Similarly, in another pretest-posttest quasi-experimental study carried out by Türnüklü et al. (2010b), 591 students (aged between 10 and 11) from three elementary schools were selected as sample in order to test the effectiveness of CRPM training program. The whole-school-based study (student-body approach) has been implemented in these schools. The experimental (n=326) and control groups (n=265) answered a self-report questionnaire named as the Conflict Resolution Strategies Scale including four subscales as constructive, smoothing, forcing, and avoidance. The results indicated that through the CRPM training, students significantly developed their constructive conflict resolution strategies and decreased their forcing and avoidance strategies. On the other hand, there were found no significant differences regarding the smoothing strategy. In the study, boys improved their constructive conflict resolution strategy whereas their forcing strategy reduced after the training. However, CRPM training did not have a significant effect on girls' scores.

In a longitudinal study carried out by Göğebakan-Yıldız (2016), for three years period at a secondary school, it was aimed to search the effects of a conflict resolution and peer mediation (CRPM) training program. In this case study, for three years, 194 students (from 20 classes) in total took the peer CRPM training. Also, regular meetings were planned with the teachers, administrators, students, and their parents at the school. During the implementation phase, 154 conflicts have been tried to be resolved. After analyzing the forms filled by mediators, the most common reasons for conflicts were specified such as game quarrels, misconstruction, making gossips, and envying. Additionally, it was determined that 96.6 % of the conflicts (n =144) were managed, whereas 10 conflicts could not. Document analyses also showed that 46% of the conflicts emerged among boys, and most of the conflicts were resolved by girl mediators (60%). In conclusion, the researcher claimed that CRPM training programs have an effect on conflict resolution process in middle schools.

Moreover, Türk and Türnüklü (2016b) conducted a study in a high school to evaluate the peer mediation process considering the perspectives of disputing students by using semi-structured interviews. After training, the peer mediators helped the pupils who had problems with their friends to find a constructive solution. Later, the researchers interviewed the disputing parties (n = 41) who involved in mediation process at least once. According to their evaluations, peer helpees reported that they were satisfied with the mediation and developed their relationships with their friends by resolving conflicts constructively. The researchers concluded that peer mediation is an effective way to resolve disputes among pupils peacefully.

In the light of a meta-analysis study carried out by Türk (2018), the impact of conflict resolution education, peace education, and peer mediation on pupils' conflict resolution skills were investigated. The researcher analyzed 23 experimental and quasi-experimental studies carried out in primary education institutions, high schools, and universities in Turkey. It was found that the general effect size was calculated as 1.256 and showed quite large effect of conflict resolution, peace

education, and peer mediation training on pupils' conflict resolution ability. Secondly, the effect sizes of peace education, conflict resolution, and peer mediation trainings were not found significantly different from each other. Thirdly, the results showed that the effect sizes of the studies carried out at different educational levels (primary schools, high schools or universities) were not significantly different. Lastly, it was found that applying the programs either with a selected group or with all class did not significantly impact the effect sizes.

Furthermore, Eryılmaz (2015) conducted a mixed design study to examine the effectiveness of peer helping program on subjective well-being of university students. Three groups (intervention recipients, peer helpers, and control group) were constructed and there were 30 members in each group. The quantitative results showed that the peer helping program improved subjective well-being of the intervention recipients. There was a significant increase in positive affect and life satisfaction and a significant decrease in negative affect from pre-test to post-test and post-test to follow-up test. Regarding the qualitative findings, peer helpers stated that the program was beneficial for the experimental group, improved their interpersonal relationships, level of competence and awareness, and provided them happiness. Likewise, experimental group participants mentioned that peer helping improved their relationships, self-regulation skills, increased their awareness, happiness, strength, and optimism.

Aladağ (2005) carried out a study with university students in order to develop, implement, and evaluate a peer helping program. An experimental design with a pre-test post-test control group was performed with 31 students (training group consists of 15 students and control group from 16 students). Training lasted 46 hours and 20 week for the experimental group. To evaluate the long-term impact of the training program, a follow-up test was implemented six months later. Then, during the implementation process, 33 students took support from the peer helpers. Findings demonstrated that communication skills of both groups did not significantly changed throughout the pre, post, and follow-up tests. On the other hand, experimental group

participants developed their empathy level after taking the training as compared to the waiting list control group. Also, they took higher scores on measure about reflection skills than the control group. According to the results related to the self-growth, self-esteem scores of the experimental group significantly increased from pre-test to follow-up test, whereas their self-acceptance scores significantly increased from pre-test to post-test period. In general, peer helping implementation met the needs of the peer helpers and developed their helping skills.

Türk and Türnüklü (2016a) carried out an experimental study to explore whether the peer mediation training had impact on conflict resolution, empathy, and aggression levels of high school students. The study sample included 57 students selected from among the 9th graders at two high schools in Denizli. The participants were assigned into experimental (n = 27) and control (n = 30) groups. The findings of this study demonstrated that conflict resolution skills of the experimental group participants who took training significantly increased and their aggression levels significantly decreased; lastly no significant differences between the experimental and control groups regarding their pre- and post-test empathy scores were found.

In an experimental study conducted by Taştan and Öner (2008), 10 students among 6th graders were chosen as training group. The aim of the peer mediation training program was to inform students about the concept of mediation, teach mediation skills, and help peer mediators accurately applying the mediation process. After receiving the training, peer mediators served as mediators in conflict situations at school and implemented mediation process. Data were collected through video recordings about conflict resolution processes, observation form which includes researcher's evaluations about the video recordings, two evaluation forms which were answered by the peer mediators and helpees, and lastly interviews with peer mediators and helpees. Results demonstrated that peer mediators applied mediation skills and process in appropriate ways, and resolved disputes among their peers. In short, peer mediation training program was found useful and effective.

For investigating the effectiveness of a peer mediation program according to the perspectives of peer mediators in a high school, Çetin et al., (2014) conducted a study by using semi-structured interviews. Peer mediation program has been applied in a school for six years. The researchers selected the study group participants (n = 50) among those who served as mediators. The interviews results indicated that the participants enjoyed, felt happy and excited as they were recommended by their friends as the mediators of their classes. They also stated that they felt more competent, responsible, and stronger, and improved their self-reliance and problem-solving skills. Other findings related to positive impacts of being selected as mediators were stated as follows: personal development, feeling good, improvement in interpersonal relationships, and being grown-up. On the other hand, some challenging situations were presented such as feeling desperate and jealous, trying not to dispute, difficulty in lessons, and trying to be neutral.

Türnüklü (2011) investigated the perceptions of peer mediators related to the implementation of conflict resolution and peer mediation (CRPM) program. Firstly, CRPM training was applied to 830 high school students from 28 classes. After the training, 12 pupils were recommended by their friends to serve as mediators in each class. Then, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with those who served as mediators and resolved a number of disputes and collected data about the peer mediators' (n = 45) experiences throughout the mediation process. The study findings showed that students adopted and tried to apply mediation implementation. Also, mediation experiences helped peer mediators to improve their self-esteem, self-confidence, relations with their friends, conflict resolution and empathy skills. Furthermore, the rates of conflicts and quarrels decreased, and peer mediators benefited from these skills outside of the school as well. However, some peer mediators stated that they had difficulty when conflicting students humiliated other students and behaved resistant.

Similarly, in another study, evaluations of peer mediators in two elementary schools regarding their mediation experiences were investigated by Kaçmaz (2011). Data

were collected from the peer mediators (n = 60, 30 fourth graders and 30 fifth graders) by using semi-structured interviews. After analyzing the qualitative data, the following results were reached: peer mediators expressed their satisfaction with the mediation process as they had chance to help their peers to resolve conflicts, serving as mediators developed their self-esteem, self-confidence, conflict resolution, and communication skills, and they also started to understand their peers and sources of the conflicts more easily. Also, the mediation process decreased the rates of interpersonal conflicts, while supporting their relationships with their friends. Additionally, peer mediators benefited from the life skills outside the school. However, it was stated that a few peer mediators felt desperate when conflicting students were resistant, humiliate, and misunderstand each other throughout the process. In conclusion, the researcher claimed that conflict resolution and peer mediation education support pupils' conflict resolution skills, empathy, self-expression skills, and understanding. By improving their fundamental life skills, these programs were expected to support personal growth and learning environment.

Uysal and Nazlı (2010) carried out a study in a secondary school. They educated peer helpers for the roles of special friends and special assistants. After getting 30 hours training, 20 peer helpers started to provide services to their peers (n = 370) at the school. In this mixed methods design study, results showed that the peer helping implementation supported the developmental counseling program at school, and students evaluated the program as effective, peer helpers as trustful, respectful, and accessible. Lastly, although the quantitative findings did not reveal a significant result for the effectiveness of the program, qualitative findings indicated that peer helpers developed their skills of empathy and listening, self-confidence, had more friends, had an opportunity to know themselves better, and they were satisfied with their roles in the peer helping program.

2.5. Summary of the Literature Review

Literature review related to the development, history, types, and effectiveness of the peer helping programs indicated that the rates of violence, conflicts, fights, and aggression level in schools decrease; while peer helping interventions create more positive school climate. Moreover, peer helpees develop interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution skills, and self-regulation skills, and become more responsible about consequences of their behaviors. Furthermore, peer helpers improve their empathy, self-esteem, social competence, resiliency, and conflict resolution skills. Peer support appears to be useful for both peer helpers and those who need help; the program supports the peer helpers' feeling of social usefulness, self-growth, and self-esteem, and it provides others a caring rapport. In addition, it creates a positive school climate and a bridge between peer helpers and those who need support (Cowie & Sharp, 1996). It seems that peers are in a crucial position regarding social and psychological development of adolescents, particularly when they are trained, they can serve as role models, a neutral third party to resolve their problems. Furthermore, the review of the literature demonstrated that in Turkey there have been increasing number of studies examining the effectiveness of various peer helping programs in recent years.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes the methodology part of the present study. Firstly, research design is presented. Secondly, characteristics and the selection procedures of the participants are mentioned. Later, information about the training program and the instruments are explained. Lastly, data collection procedures, steps in the program implementation, descriptions of the variables, data analysis procedures, and limitations of the current study are presented.

3.1. Research Design

The present study was conducted at one of the secondary schools in Mahmudiye-Eskişehir in the 2017-2018 academic year. The study aimed to implement the peer helping training program and examine its effectiveness on the competency of peer helpers' conflict resolution skills, empathy, and self-esteem. In order to measure the effectiveness of the program, a matching-only pretest-posttest control group quasi experimental design was used. Matching criteria were age, grade level, and gender of the participants.

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Quantitative data were obtained through administering three instruments to experimental and control group participants as pre- and post-tests; namely, the Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behavior, the Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents-Turkish Form, and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. In order to triangulate quantitative findings and receive feedback from the experimental group participants regarding the training program, Peer Helping Training Program Evaluation Form-Peer Helpers, which was developed by the researcher, was used. Figure 1.1 below shows the overall research design of the study.

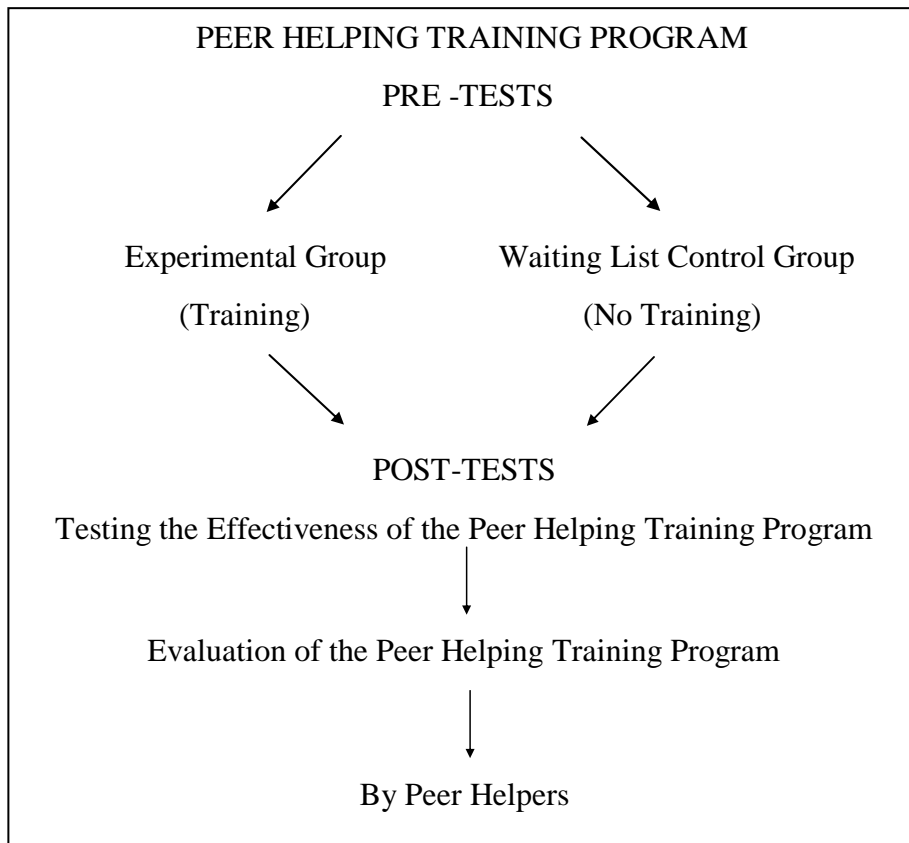


Figure 1.1 Research design of the study

Initially, the Human Subjects Ethics Committee of the University approved the study (See Appendix K). Furthermore, required consent from the Ministry of Education was obtained. Before selecting the participants and implementing the program, the researcher obtained permission from the school administration, the candidate peer helpers and their parents as well.

During the implementation of the program, the experimental group received a 27-hours - 18-week training (Uysal & Nazlı, 2010), whereas the waiting list control group did not receive any training. Two groups received pre-test instruments (the Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behavior, the Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents-Turkish Form, & Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) in December of 2017-2018 academic year. After implementing an 18-week training program, both experimental and waiting list control groups were given the post-tests

at the beginning of May in the same academic year. Mann-Whitney U Test and Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test were used to analyze between-group and within-group comparisons on conflict resolution skills, empathy, and self-esteem. Moreover, content analysis was carried out to analyze the comments of the experimental group members about the program evaluation.

3.2. Participants and Sampling

The target population of the study consisted of the secondary school students in Mahmudiye, Eskişehir in 2017-2018 academic year. In Mahmudiye, there were 4 secondary schools and the total number of students in these schools were 490 in the 2017-2018 academic year. The accessible population of the study was selected as Mahmudiye Secondary School students in which the number of students were 258 in 2017-2018 academic year. There was only one school counselor, and the researcher was the counselor of that school.

There are diverse methods to select the peer helpers before implementing the training program (Bowman, 1986; Koruklu, 2006). Sociogram, teacher opinions, and interviews were used to select the peer helpers in the present study. In addition, Cowie and Wallace (2000) suggested some criteria required to become a peer helper; effective communication skills, active listening, and a problem-solving stance. All in all, having basic listening, empathy, conflict resolution skills, and willingness to help are of utmost importance to develop helping skills. These criteria were considered while selecting the peer helpers in the present study.

Moreover, it can be stated that both convenient and purposive sampling procedures were used in the study. First of all, Mahmudiye Secondary School was chosen due to its convenience to the researcher who works there as a school counselor. Secondly, purposive sampling method found appropriate since there are some important criteria mentioned above while selecting peer helpers. For instance, peer helpers need to have empathic understanding at a certain level.

Before implementing the training, firstly, the researcher made a presentation about the peer helping program to the class teachers in the selected secondary school. During the presentation student selection criteria for becoming a peer helper were also mentioned. Then, the Teacher Suggestion Form (See Appendix A) was given to 18 teachers who attended to the presentation, and they were asked to write the names of the three students on this form by considering the criteria to become a peer helper. Secondly, a sociogram presented in Appendix B (Tindall, 1995) was implemented to the 6th and 7th grade students. There were 83 students as 6th graders and 59 students as 7th graders. This study did not include the 5th and 8th graders since the 5th graders were just new to the school, while 8th graders were trying to get prepared for and cope with the nationwide high school entrance exam. After obtaining all the teachers' opinions and implementing sociogram to all students, the researcher selected the sample among the candidate peer helpers suggested by the students and teachers; consequently 48 students were determined as candidate peer helpers among 142 students. Then, the researcher met firstly with these students and later with their families one by one; two of the students did not accept to participate in the study, and four of the parents did not allow their children to take part in the study. In total, six students were excluded, and 42 students (14 girls and 8 boys among 6th graders; 10 girls and 10 boys among 7th graders) were decided as study sample after meeting with them individually.

After selecting the participants, permissions from their parents were obtained by meeting with them one by one. They were invited to the school both by calling and sending an invitation letter. Parent invitation letter and consent form are presented in Appendix C and Appendix D respectively. After getting permission from the parents; the participant students were assigned to experimental (n = 21) and control (n = 21) groups through matching according to their age, grade, and gender. Both experimental and waiting list control groups consisted of 12 girls and 9 boys before the implementation of peer helper program. Both experimental and waiting list control group participants signed the informed consent form (See Appendix E) before applying pre-tests. Nevertheless, during the training process, four of the peer

helpers withdrawn from the study; one of the students left after the 6th session because the time of the training overlapped with some other courses and the participant got anxious about his lessons and exams; another student wanted to quit the training after the 3rd session since the training took place at the end of the day; and two of the students left at the end of the training period without expressing any reasons. All the students who left the study were boys; two of them were from 6th grade, whereas the other two were 7th graders. In addition, the researcher decided to omit data about one of the students because of high absenteeism rate of this student. Eventually, the final experimental group consisted of 16 students at the end of the training. Waiting list control group participants did not take any training, just responded to pre- and post-tests.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

In the current study, the Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behavior (Koruklu, 1998), the Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents-Turkish Form (Gürtunca, 2013), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Çuhadaroglu, 1986), and Peer Helping Training Program Evaluation Form-Peer Helpers developed by the researcher (See Appendix I) were used to collect data.

3.3.1. The Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behaviors

This scale (See Appendix F) was developed by Koruklu (1998) to measure students' attitudes toward conflict situations and consists of two subscales (aggressiveness and problem solving). In the scale, odd-numbered (i.e., 1., 3., 5., etc.) items measure aggressiveness whereas even-numbered (i.e., 2., 4., 6., etc.) items measure problem solving behaviors. The total measure includes 24 items with 5-point Likert type scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". The maximum and minimum scores that can be obtained from each subscale range between 60 and 12. Higher scores obtained from the problem-solving subscale indicate higher level of conflict resolution skills; whereas the higher scores obtained from the aggressiveness subscale contradicts with the acquisition of conflict resolution skill. Psychometric

properties of the instrument were evaluated in a study conducted by Koruklu (1998). For checking content validity, Koruklu consulted to the experts in Ankara University and conducted factor analysis for construct validity. Koruklu also evaluated the reliability of the scale with 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. The results showed that test-retest reliability is $r = .64$ for aggressiveness subscale and $r = .66$ for problem-solving subscale. Cronbach alpha correlation coefficient computed to estimate internal consistency of the measure was found .85 for aggressiveness and .83 for problem-solving subscales.

3.3.2. The Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents – Turkish Form

The Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents was developed by Bryant in 1982 to measure the level of empathy of 1st through 7th graders and translated into Turkish by Yılmaz (2003). The original scale was firstly constructed by Mehrabian and Epstein (1972) as empathy scale for adults. Later, Bryant (1982) adapted the scale for children and adolescents, including 22 items. In this study, the Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents-Turkish Form (See Appendix G) was used. It consists of 21 items. Second item was omitted in the Turkish version of the scale because its discrimination index (coefficient) score was found below .20 (Gürtunca, 2013). For each item, “yes-no” type of response alternatives are coded as 1 and 0. In the scale, 10 items (i.e., 2, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 21) are reverse coded. The maximum score is “21” and the minimum score is “0”. Higher scores mean higher level of empathy for both children and adolescents. In order to determine the reliability of the scale, Kuder Richardson value was found .70, and test-retest correlation coefficient was .76. Regarding its validity evidence, the association between an Index of Empathy for Children and Adolescents, and the KA-Sİ Empathic Tendency Scale were computed. The correlation coefficient between KASİ Empathic Tendency Scale-Child Form and An Index of Empathy for Children and Adolescents was found .60, while the correlation between KASİ Empathic Tendency Scale-Adolescence Form and An Index of Empathy for Children and Adolescents was found .64.

3.3.3. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

This instrument (See Appendix H) was developed by Rosenberg (1965) to measure the level of adolescents' self-esteem and adapted into Turkish by Çuhadaroğlu (1986). It includes 10 items on a 4-point Likert type scale ranging from 4 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). One can obtain scores between 10 and 40 points; higher scores mean higher level of self-esteem. There are reverse items (3, 5, 8, 9, and 10) in the scale. These items are reversely coded. For this scale, test-retest correlations are in the range of .82 to .88, and Cronbach's alphas are between the values of .77 to .88. In the reliability study of Turkish version of the scale, Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was found as .75.

3.3.4. Peer Helping Training Program Evaluation Form-Peer Helpers

This instrument (See Appendix I) was developed by the researcher in order to obtain experimental/training group participants' opinions about the training program and receive feedback from them to increase its effectiveness. This form contains 5 open-ended questions.

3.4. Training Program

In this section, the training program was introduced; firstly, the process which researcher decided the peer helping training program were mentioned; secondly, training procedure was summarized; and lastly, summary of each session was presented.

3.4.1. Selection of the Training Program

In the present study, the Peer Helping Training Program developed by Uysal and Nazlı (2010) was selected as the training program. Because, the Peer Helping Training Program has been frequently emphasized in Turkish literature, tested empirically among secondary school students, and found appropriate for their cognitive and psychosocial developmental level. In the original study, Uysal and Nazlı implemented the program as part of the comprehensive developmental

counseling program at school in Balıkesir/Karesi Secondary School, and tested its effectiveness on helpees and peer helpers. In the study, 20 peer helpers were selected and trained to serve as special friends and special assistants in the school. Both the quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect data. The Peer Helping Training Program originally was composed of two phases (10 sessions in each phase and each session lasted 90 minutes) and contains 20 sessions - 30 hours training in total. The first phase of the training program contains topics and activities related to communication, helping, and basic helping skills; whereas the second phase includes the topics and activities about advanced helping skills. Summary of the original structure of the training program (Uysal & Nazlı, 2010) is presented below.

First phase of the training:

1. Meeting/introduction, structuring, ethical principles and roles of peer helpers
2. Communication (importance of components of communication, individual differences, respect, being unique, confidence, body-language, empathy, I-language, and communication blockers)
3. Basic helping skills (active listening, questioning, probing, reflection of feelings and meanings, and summarizing)
4. Role-playing by using basic helping skills

Second phase of the training:

1. Summary of the basic helping skills
2. Advanced helping skills (self-disclosure, information giving, confrontation, emphasizing the helpees' strengths, and focusing)
3. Role-playing by using both basic and advanced helping skills
4. Roles and boundaries of peer helpers (referral process)
5. Problem solving steps
6. Effective study techniques
7. Evaluation and termination

After getting permission from the second author of the program, it was selected as the training program of this study. In current study, some parts of the program were modified, some sessions were not included, and some sessions were combined throughout the implementation of the program. For the revision of the program, necessary permission was also obtained from the program developer.

Precisely, in the original program, 5th session includes the topics of “I-language” and “communication blockers”. However, in the present study “empathy” and “I-language” were emphasized in that session, and “communication blockers” and “helping skills” were mentioned in the 6th session. In the revised program, 9th and 10th sessions were combined as 10th session. The 11th and 12nd sessions were also combined as the 11th session, and the 15th and 16th sessions were rearranged as the 14th session. Lastly, “the skill of focusing” planned to be mentioned at the 14th session in the original program but it was omitted in the present study; instead the peer helpers decided the name and logo of the group, and they worked to design posters and brochures to inform other students about the program. Hence, the final program includes two phases, 18 sessions and 27 hours training.

3.4.2. Training Procedure

The modified Peer Helping Training Program which includes two phases, 18 sessions and 27 hours training was implemented once a week to the experimental group participants of the current study. Each session lasted approximately 90 minutes. In each session, 10 minutes recess time was provided to the participants. The training program was implemented by the school counselor (researcher of this study) under the supervision of the thesis supervisor.

The methods used in the training program were; instruction (via PowerPoint presentations), large and small group discussions, role-playing, brain storming, question-answer techniques, and in-session activities/exercises and assignments. At the beginning of each session, the previous session was summarized, and the researcher gave feedback to peer helpers about homework assignments. Moreover,

students who missed some sessions were informed individually about the goals, activities and assignments of the sessions later by the researcher. The highest absenteeism rate ($n = 8$; 40%) was observed during the 6th session, which was held in the last week of the first semester. In general, the reasons for participants' nonattendance in several sessions can be stated as follows; familial issues, health related problems, forgetting the session time, unwillingness to stay at the school at the end of the day, not being in the school in that day, and going home afternoon.

Furthermore, since excluding control group from a potentially beneficial experience may pose an ethical question, at the end of the experimental group training, the waiting list control group participants received similar but shorter form of training by the school counselor at the end of the 2017-2018 academic year.

3.4.3. Summary of the Sessions

3.4.3.1. Session 1

The goals of the first session are:

1. To inform peer helpers about the peer helping program, its importance, the selection process of the candidate peer helpers, and the roles of the peer helpers.
2. To ask peer helpers about their expectations from the training.
3. To inform peer helpers about the ethical principles and responsibilities of peer helping program; to decide on the group rules and to stress the importance of attendance in sessions.

First session started with an activity to introduce the group members with each other. Except one student who could not attend because of health related problem, all the group members were participated in the first session. Next, the term of peer helping, the roles and responsibilities of peer helpers, the reason to apply peer helping program at schools, the selection process of the candidate peer helpers in the school, and the content of the training program were discussed through a PowerPoint

presentation including these topics, some visuals, question-answer technique, and large group discussion. The brochure about the peer helping training program was handed out, subsequently.

During the second part of the session, the participants were asked to write about why they want to become peer helper and what they expect. Later, they shared their opinions and expectations about the program in large group.

Afterward, group norms were decided. The participation contract of the peer helping training program was also given to the candidate peer helpers and its importance was discussed. It was also stressed that attendance to the sessions is of utmost importance. After the students were informed about the homework (observing the problems in their environment), their questions were answered. The researcher also asked the group members about their opinions, feelings, willingness, and suggestions for the session.

3.4.3.2. Session 2

The goals of the second session are:

1. To inform students about types of peer helping program, the roles and responsibilities of peer helpers in these programs.
2. To inform students about ethical principles and responsibilities of peer helpers.
3. To inform students about the factors that affect interpersonal relationships such as respect, confidence, and individual differences.

Based on these goals, topics discussed in this session were the types of peer helping programs (i.e., peer tutoring, peer mediation, peer mentoring), examples about these programs, peer mediation program which was planned to be used in the present study, the ethical principles of peer helping program and the responsibilities of peer helpers, factors that may affect interpersonal relationships, and the characteristics of

the person they would like to receive help. A PowerPoint presentation was prepared about these topics.

After summarizing the first session, an ice-breaker activity was performed. They were asked to find a word which starts with the first letter of their names and shared it with group members. Subsequently, the homework about the question “which problems do you observe frequently in your environment” was discussed. Most of the students stated problems related with friendship skills and communication. Large group discussion was used as a method to discuss how peer helpers can be effective to solve these common problems.

Afterward, participants were asked to think about the characteristics of the person whom they want to receive help. They wrote their answers during the activity and then shared with the entire group. The most important characteristics were discussed as being confidential, trustworthy, honest, respectful, patient, and helpful. They also stated that the quality of voice tone, establishing eye contact, listening effectively, and sharing similar problems with the helpee are required during a helping relationship. One of the goals of the second session could not be reached because of time restriction; the activity named “Everybody is Different” was not carried out since the first ice-breaker activity lasted longer than it was planned. However, participants were assigned to think about the characteristics that make them unique until the next week.

3.4.3.3. *Session 3*

The goals of the third session are:

1. To inform peer helpers about the term of communication, definition and its components.
2. To explain the differences between verbal and nonverbal communication.
3. To explain the factors that affect communication.
4. To explain the communication skills and their importance.

After emphasizing the importance of individual differences and uniqueness by carrying out the activity of “Everybody is Different” and discussing homework question, the participants were asked how they define the term communication, principles and reasons of communication.

Later, the students were matched into groups to role play a dialogue. During this activity, the group members seemed to be willing to participate in group discussion and shared their opinions with each other in general. Not all groups could practice their role play because of the time restriction, so this may have affected their willingness to participate in later discussions. After one group displayed their dialogue, components of communication, communication examples observed in a school environment, its aims and requirements, the terms of verbal-nonverbal communication, their components and importance were presented. After talking about verbal and nonverbal communication, the same group displayed the same scenario first verbally and then nonverbally; and the importance of nonverbal communication was discussed.

Then, an activity was performed to emphasize the importance of eye-contact. Paired students tried to communicate only through their eyes while playing music at the background. The session was over after asking the question “how can we show people that we are listening to them?”

3.4.3.4. Session 4

The session was planned to reach the following goals:

1. To inform peer helpers about the importance of body language,
2. To inform peer helpers about the importance of active listening.
3. To inform peer helpers about the importance of empathy.

Based on these goals, the topics included in the presentation were comfort zone, body language and their importance, active listening, empathy, three steps of constructing empathy, its effects on communication, and examples about empathy.

At the beginning of the session, the group talked about homework assignment; students mentioned body language, gesture, mimic, eye contact, questioning, empathy, probing, and reflecting meaning as effective factors while listening to somebody. Later, to introduce the concept of comfort zone and stress its importance, the activity named “My Comfort Zone” was applied; students who know each other least were chosen and said to stay 6 meters away from each other. Then, they stopped their friends walking toward them when they felt uncomfortable.

Afterward, the story about the little red riding hood was read and the significance of empathy was discussed. Moreover, an activity was introduced to the students about the three steps of constructing empathy. Firstly, students were divided into five groups, four students in each. Then, they were given worksheets about the three steps of constructing empathy and asked to think about situations which they observe in their environments (at school, home, or in street) and need empathic understanding. After small group discussions, groups shared the situations and empathy sentences with the large group. During the session, students were encouraged to participate in the activities and discussions. At the end of the session, students were asked about their opinions related to the sessions and topics.

3.4.3.5. Session 5

This session was planned to achieve the following goal:

1. To inform peer helpers about the concept of I language, its components.
2. To explain the differences between I language and you language.

A PowerPoint presentation was used with an interactive approach in order to give information about the concept of I-language, its components, and importance of using it, the concept of you-language, difference between I-language versus you-language, and examples about these concepts. Exercises including case examples were used during the session to teach the topics effectively.

Firstly, participants were asked to give examples of empathy sentences to repeat the last week's topic. Almost all students provided appropriate examples related to empathy. Subsequently, the term I-language was explained and differentiated from you-language by presenting related examples. After providing the participants case worksheets and a handout including the formula (components) of I-language, they were expected to use I- and you-language for some cases during the presentation. Afterward, the participants were given an exercise/form on which there were three cases and were individually expected to write appropriate sentence by using I and you-language for these situations. Then, participants shared their examples with the entire group. After discussing these examples, at the end of the session, they were assigned two homework; one for practicing I and you-languages, and the other for writing an event related to using I-language in their daily life.

3.4.3.6. Session 6

This session was planned to reach the following goals:

1. To inform peer helpers about communication blockers.
2. To inform peer helpers about helping skills and their importance.

The topics included in the PowerPoint presentation were communication blockers, examples related to them, the concept of helping, helping relationship, basic helping skills, and their importance.

After talking about the assignments, students were asked to think about a question "Ali is waiting in line at canteen and someone moved to his front without getting permission, what might be the Ali's reactions?". By means of this brainstorming activity, it was aimed to get their attention to the topic of communication blockers. The participants were informed about 17 communication blockers by giving examples. Later, they were given cards on which the name of one communication blocker was written. Throughout the presentation, several case examples were shared with the group and they were asked in turn to give an example about that communication blocker written on their cards related to these events.

Afterward, the questions such as “Why these responses affect communication negatively?”, “What do you feel if one behaves in these ways?”, and “How do you respond to that person?” were discussed. After giving homework aiming to produce examples about various communication blockers, the researcher presented the basic helping skills. “What is helping?”, “What are the aims and significance of helping?”, “How to establish a helping relationship?”, and “What are the basic helping skills?” were the questions discussed toward the end of the session.

3.4.3.7. Session 7

The goals of the seventh session are:

1. To inform participants about active listening skills, the role of body language in effective listening.
2. To inform peer helpers about questioning skill and its importance.
3. To inform peer helpers about probing skill.

Throughout the session, the topics including active listening, importance of body language for active listening, questioning skill, open versus closed ended questions, and probing skill were covered.

After summarizing the sixth session and mentioning the assignment about the communication blockers, students were paired with a partner to whom a note was given, including the directions such as do not establish eye contact, engage in something else, and look at your watch or other things while listening. Later, participants were asked about what they felt, whether their partner listened to them.

Furthermore, the topic of active listening and an example dialogue were presented. Afterward, questioning skill and the types of questions were mentioned. Students were expected to alter closed-ended questions into open-ended questions. Then, they were given an exercise about questioning skill and motivated to express their opinions.

After talking about probing skill, students were grouped into triads. Before role-playing activity, students were reminded about the group norms, especially confidentiality. Later, one student was assigned as helper, another as helpee, and the last one as observer. After the role-playing was over, feelings of the helpers and helpees were asked, and the feedback of the observers were given. At the end of the session, students were reminded to use these skills in their daily relationships.

3.4.3.8. Session 8

This session was organized to achieve the goals below:

1. To inform peer helpers about the triangle of feelings, thoughts, and behaviors.
2. To inform peer helpers about emotions and to stress its importance.
3. To explain peer helpers regarding the differences between positive and negative feelings,
4. To demonstrate peer helpers how to realize and express their and others' emotions.

Based on these goals, the topics discussed throughout the session were the concepts of feeling, thought, behavior, relationships among them, examples of feeling words, negative or positive feeling words, importance of emotions, reflecting them, expressing one's own emotion, and lastly the triangle of feeling, thought, and behavior.

After summarizing the last week, students were asked to define the concept of emotion and say all the feeling words that came to their minds in order to make a list. They found 42 feeling words and their list were compared to "the list of emotions" in the original program. Later, by discussing the questions when and under which circumstances people feel these emotions, the feeling words were labeled as positive and negative.

Afterward, the presentation was made regarding basic emotions and the activity named “Feeling Dice” was carried out to help participants realize and express their emotions. It was reminded that listening and confidentiality are of utmost importance. After throwing the feeling dice, they were expected to share an event related to the emotion on the surface of the dice. The students were encouraged to share their feelings throughout the activity. Subsequently, the concepts of thoughts and behavior were discussed and differentiated, and the relationships among three concepts were explained by giving examples. The participants were also given brochures about the concepts of feeling, thoughts, and behaviors; introducing relationship between them and including some examples. The researcher also stressed the importance of developing alternative thoughts when individuals face with negative thoughts and feelings. Subsequently, some examples were given to explain the thought-behavior-feeling circle.

At the end of the session, students were asked about their opinions and feelings related to the sessions. Lastly, the participants were assigned an exercise to examine the relationships among thought, feeling, and behavior, and find out alternative thoughts for several cases.

3.4.3.9. Session 9

These are the goals expected to reach in this session:

1. To inform peer helpers about the skill of reflecting meaning.
2. To inform peer helpers about the skill of reflecting feelings.
3. To inform peer helpers about the skill of summarizing.

A PowerPoint presentation was prepared related to the skills of reflecting meaning, reflecting feelings, and summarizing. At the beginning of the session, the researcher summarized the eighth session, talked about homework, and distributed the list of feeling words made by the group members last week. Later, the presentation was made about the definitions, functions, and importance of reflection skills along with examples. After that, participants were given an exercise to practice the skills of

questioning, reflection of feelings, and meanings. First case was discussed together; questioning and reflecting skills were demonstrated. Later, students were encouraged by the researcher to find examples for each skill.

Afterward, the researcher continued to present the topics including the skill of summarizing, its functions and importance by giving examples. To practice the skills learned throughout the last two sessions, two students were selected among the volunteers. The volunteer students decided a problem situation (job preference) to role play and were motivated to concentrate on their roles as helpee and helper. Other students were instructed to observe the helper's skills and evaluate their effectiveness. When the role-playing activity was over, the helper and the helpee were asked to express their feelings and criticize themselves. Other students also stated their opinions about the performance of the helper.

At the end of the session, students were paired with their group mates to write a scenario about helping relationships, which include the usage of the basic helping skills until the next session. It was emphasized that every member should write a different scenario in which they would take role as helpers in their own problem situations.

3.4.3.10. *Session 10*

The session was designed to achieve the following goals:

1. To help peer helpers to practice basic helping skills through role-playing.
2. To help peer helpers to identify the differences among various helping skills.

Throughout the session, the participants practiced their own scenarios, evaluated their listening and responding skills including their non-verbal behaviors (e.g., body language, eye contact, tone of voice, etc.). They also expressed their feelings and thoughts about being peer helper.

This session started with the summary of the previous session. Later, instructions for the activity were reminded to students; while the helper and the helpee were practicing their scenarios, others would observe them according to the criteria on the observation form and instructed to take notes related to the effectiveness of helping skills. During the activity, students were motivated to concentrate on their roles and listen to their friends effectively.

All the pairs role played their scenarios. In the scenarios, the most common presenting problems of the helpees' were friendship issues, noncompliance to school rules, family pressure, academic success, time management, career choices, and high school entrance exam. The group members mostly established eye contact, reflected the helpees' feelings, used probing and questioning skills effectively. While evaluating the helpers, most students made thoughtful comments without criticizing their group members negatively. The researcher also gave feedback to the helpers about their skills. Lastly, the participants evaluated the session and the activity.

3.4.3.11. *Session 11*

The first session of the second phase of the training program aimed the following goals:

1. To help the peer helpers to summarize and practice the basic helping skills.
2. To inform peer helpers about the advanced helping skills.

Based on these goals, the skills thought to participants throughout the session were self-disclosure and information giving, their importance and functions. In addition, the Johari Window was presented to teach participants regarding the role of self-disclosure in relations.

Firstly, students were expected to summarize and give examples about the first phase of the training. In general, the basic helping skills were summarized by defining and giving examples. Later, the researcher asked the students to define the term of self-disclosure and explain its function in the relations. After brainstorming, the

researcher defined the term, stressed its importance, and talked about the criteria (timing, duration, depth, and quantity) for using self-disclosure as a helping skill. It was also stated that this skill may help peer helpers construct a trustful relationship and increase helpees' self-disclosure. Then, the Johari Window was mentioned to define the concepts of open, blind, hidden, and unknown areas. The participants exemplified these concepts and discussed the importance and functions of this model. A handout about the Johari Window was also distributed to the participants.

Afterward, the question of "Why some individuals hesitate to disclose about themselves?" was discussed. The factors that may affect the level of self-disclosure were mentioned as fear of being close to somebody, fear of being rejected and losing the significant person, and feelings of shame and guilt.

Through the end of the session, the researcher presented the topic of information giving when somebody demands information about academic, social, personal, and vocational issues. It was stated that peer helpers should give reliable and accurate information when requested and needed by the client. At the end of the session, participants were assigned to design a brochure and a poster to inform other students in the school about the peer helping program until the next week.

3.4.3.12. Session 12

The session was designed to reach the following goals:

1. To inform peer helpers about the confrontation skill, its functions and importance.
2. To help peer helpers to use confrontation skill effectively.

In this session, information about the definition of the confrontation skill, its importance, functions, and examples were presented. Firstly, the students were asked to summarize the last week. Then, three students presented the posters they prepared about the peer helping program. The posters and brochures were evaluated by obtaining the opinions of all group members. Subsequently, the researcher asked

participants to brainstorm the definition of confrontation skill. After this brainstorming activity, the confrontation skill, its functions, and importance were defined. The researcher also gave examples about how to use this skill, the situations in which this skill should be used, and the factors that affect confrontation (quality of the relationship and helpee's readiness for challenging).

After the presentation, the researcher explained the subsequent role play activity. In that activity, volunteer group members were expected to take the roles of peer helper or helpee, and the student who acted as a helpee was asked to pick one of the cases among the four case examples. The peer helpers were asked to notice the inconsistencies and use confrontation skill. At the end of the activity, group members expressed their feelings and thoughts. Later, participants were asked whether they experienced inconsistent situations in their lives and used confrontation skills.

At the end of the session, after informing about the contents and examples of posters or brochures, participants were reminded that a group name, logo, and posters would be discussed next week.

3.4.3.13. *Session 13*

The goals of this session are:

1. To inform peer helpers about the use of strength-based approach, emphasizing peer helpee's strengths, and its importance.
2. To decide on a group name and logo, and the content of posters and brochures about peer helping program.

In this session, the topics covered by the PowerPoint presentation were about the use of strength-based approach, emphasizing peer helpees' strengths, its importance, functions, and examples about this skill.

In the beginning of the session, the advanced helping skills were summarized. Later, participants shared their posters and brochures with the group members and gave

feedback to each other about their posters. Also, some visuals about posters and brochures used in the previous studies were demonstrated as examples, and group members decided to work on their posters and brochures in the last sessions.

After talking about the ways to announce the peer helping program, the skill of emphasizing peer helpees' strengths, its functions, and importance were defined by giving examples. It was discussed that this skill may help people to realize their power to solve their own problems. Using this skill may energize and motivate the people to struggle with their problems. Later, the participants were assigned to think about their strengths and positive features by giving them a form. Before the activity, some examples about positive features were given and they were also encouraged during the activity. After writing their strengths on the form, the students who know each other well were matched. Firstly, they were encouraged to share their own features and later, they expressed their opinions about each other's positive characteristics. After small group discussions ended, they shared their feelings and opinions in large groups; the questions "whether you shared any common feature with your partner", "what you felt while your mate was expressing your strengths", "whether you learned new features about yourself" were discussed.

Through the end of the session, the researcher summarized the advanced helping skills and paired up students in order to prepare various scenarios about helping relationships in which both basic and advanced helping skills would be practiced for the next week. Later, the brainstorming technique was used to decide on alternative group names and logos. The participants voted for the alternative group names, and it was decided to use the name of "Legend Peer Helpers". Then, the researcher showed some visuals that can be used while designing group logo. During this process, foods and drinks were provided to motivate students.

3.4.3.14. Session 14

The session included the following goals:

1. To help peer helpers to practice the advanced helping skills through role-playing.
2. To help the peer helpers to identify similarities and differences among various helping skills.

To reach the session goals, the participants practiced their scenarios and evaluated each other's performance. After summarizing the last session, participants were motivated to concentrate on their roles as helper or helpee and to take notes about the skills used by the helpers while observing. During the role play activity, group members were encouraged when they got excited. The scenarios were mostly about the issues related to family pressure, friendship, academic success, and occupational preferences. After each scenario, group members expressed their feelings, and the helpees and observers evaluated the performance of the helper. It was observed that the candidate peer helpers mostly established eye contact; used voice of tone and body language effectively; reflected feelings and thoughts; used other skills such as probing, questioning, and information giving. On the other hand, only a few students used the skills of self-disclosure and confrontation, and the strengths of helpees were hardly emphasized. The skill of summarizing was not practiced probably because the scenarios were brief. Participant also criticized each other without harming and made realistic comments.

One group could not practice their scenarios because of the time restriction; it was postponed to next week session. Generally, participants seemed prepared for this assignment and made a great effort to use the helping skills. Later, students were asked to express their opinions and feelings about the activity. They stated that the role-playing activity provided them with the opportunity to grasp and practice the helping skills. The participants also said that they made sense of the helping skills especially after practicing them in their own scenarios. Lastly, the symbols and

colors were decided for the group logo; participants selected the emblem designed by one of the group members.

3.4.3.15. Session 15

The following goals are planned to be reached:

1. To inform peer helpers about the ethical principles and rules.
2. To explain the referral process.

In the first place, the last session was evaluated; the skill of summarizing, communication blockers, and helping skills were reviewed. Later, the group who could not practice their scenarios displayed their scenarios as helper and helpee. They received feedback from the other members. After, the researcher reminded the students about the contract which was signed at the first session, and the group members were asked to evaluate themselves according to the rules on this contract. Then, the first part of the form including the Ethical Principles and Rules of the Peer Helping (i.e., confidentiality, competence, honesty and trust, respect, sensitivity and tolerance) was handed out to the members. All the principles and rules were discussed one by one, and the students were informed about the significance and the limitations of confidentiality.

Afterward, the distinct roles of peer helpers and their role (as peer mediators) in this school were mentioned again. Later, the limitations of their roles, helping relationship, and the problem situations that they were expected to deal with were discussed. Information about the referral process and its steps were provided as well. In order to help the students to grasp the ethical principles in depth, they were asked to find out which ethical principles violated in some cases presented in a PowerPoint.

Through the end, the second part of the form about the Peer Helping Relationship was handed out and examined together. Before the peer helper candidates signed the form, importance of compliance with the ethical principles was emphasized again.

Lastly, the researcher presented the last version of the group logo (See Appendix J) drawn by a peer helper last week.

3.4.3.16. Session 16

The goals of this session are:

1. To inform peer helpers about the concepts of problem, conflict, conflict resolution, and peer mediation.
2. To inform peer helpers about the problem-solving steps.

After summarizing the last week, in order to increase the curiosity of the group members about the new topic, the session was started with an activity called “Deadlock”. In that activity, seven members were asked to hold each other’s hands randomly and tried to solve the deadlock without leaving their hands. Subsequently, the group members were asked to make a guess about the purpose of this activity.

Afterward, the researcher read aloud a problem situation (i.e., an imaginary plane crash in the Equator) and wanted them to say all the solutions that came into their minds without laughing or criticizing. After brainstorming activity, the answers (e.g., distillation, finding the way by looking at the mosses, making ship by using the parts of airplane) were written on a board and evaluated together.

Later, the concepts of problem and conflict were defined, and the steps to solve problems were mentioned by giving examples. It was also emphasized that individuals may face problems related to themselves or their relationships; thus, rather than ignoring them or disputing with others, problems need to be solved. Afterward, an exercise about a problem situation was applied by giving the students extra time to solve the problem according to the problem-solving steps. Then their solution strategies were examined.

Subsequently, the researcher asked the students to imagine a conflict situation they had faced before and make a prediction about what would happen if a mediator was

involved in that conflict management/problem-solving process. Subsequently, the concept of peer mediation, and the characteristics of peer mediators were presented. Then, a worksheet was assigned to the group members so that they could think and solve a problem situation until the next week. After asking the feelings and opinions of the students about the sessions, they were reminded to bring the posters and brochures which they designed before.

3.4.3.17. Session 17

This session aims to achieve the following goals:

1. To inform peer helpers about effective studying techniques.
2. To encourage the peer helpers to prepare posters and brochures to introduce the peer helping program at the school.

In the beginning of the session, the summary of the last week session was made, and the homework was examined. Then, the students were asked about their study program. The topics including effective study techniques and preparing a study program were discussed subsequently. The importance of goal setting, preparing a study program, effective time management, listening and taking notes during the lessons, daily repeating; being prepared for lessons, and some obstacles that may prevent studying were also discussed through the session. Later, some examples for preparing study programs were presented, and the students were assigned to prepare their own study programs until the next week.

After the presentation, the participants were divided into four groups. They were assigned to prepare posters or brochures which give information about the peer helping program, ethical principles, characteristics of the peer helpers, some issues that a peer helper can help, and the contact information. The topics were divided according to the preference of the groups, and while the groups were preparing their posters, the required materials, foods, drinks, and music were provided to motivate them.

3.4.3.18. Session 18

The last session was designed to focus on the following goals:

1. To ask the peer helpers to evaluate themselves and the training program.
2. To ask the peer helpers to share their opinions and feelings about other group members.
3. To explain the importance of the ethical principles and the rules during the peer helping program implementation.
4. To review the posters and brochures about the peer helping program.

In the last session, the topics including the summary of the training program; the problem situations that peer helpers can deal with; importance of ethical principles; marketing the program; deciding the time for supervision; and peer helpers' feelings and opinions regarding the program, and the termination of the group process were discussed.

In the first place, the previous session was summarized, and the researcher examined the study programs prepared by the group members. Later, the topics in the training program and the helping skills were reviewed briefly. Afterward, the services that can be provided by the peer helpers at school and their roles were discussed. It was decided to prepare a notice board in every classroom and a board at the school entrance including visuals, group name, the logo, and a brochure that provides information about the program and introduce the peer helpers to other students. Subsequently, the time and the location of the supervision sessions were decided as half an hour at lunch time in every Friday at the school counselor's office. It was also mentioned once again that the peer helpers are welcome to consult the school counselor whenever they needed.

Subsequently, via the activity named "Love Bombardment", all the members were instructed to express their positive feelings and thoughts about each other so that they could hear about their positive characteristics from their friends by sitting on a chair in the middle of the class. After this activity, the participants expressed their feelings

and thoughts about the termination process. A few students stated that they were feeling sad and some reflected that they were worried about being a peer helper and practicing it.

Through the end of the session, the importance of ethical principles and rules of being peer helper were reemphasized. Later, the researcher gave the badges with the group logo and the certificates to peer helpers. Additionally, “thank you letters” to the parents of the peer helpers were handed out. During this period; foods, drinks, and music were provided, and photographs of group members with their caps and certificates were taken.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

Prior to the data collection process, the program implementer contacted to the researchers who developed or adapted the instruments except peer helping training evaluation form-peer helpers and then, their permissions were obtained to implement the questionnaires. After assigning the participants into experimental/training and waiting list control groups, pre-tests (i.e., the Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behavior, the Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents-Turkish Form, and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) were applied. Before implementing the pre-tests, it was emphasized that the answers of the students would be kept confidential; however, they had to write their names on the forms to pair their pre- and post-test results.

After peer helping training program was over, post tests were applied to both experimental group and waiting list control group participants. Meanwhile, Peer Helping Training Program Evaluation Form-Peer Helper was also used to collect qualitative data from the experimental group participants.

3.6. Description of Variables

The independent variable of the study is the condition of participating in peer helping training program (i.e., training versus waiting list control group). The dependent variables are aggressiveness, problem solving, empathy, and self-esteem scores.

Aggressiveness: The total score of the Aggressiveness Subscale in the Scale of Identification of Conflict Resolution Behaviors. The score ranges between 12 and 60.

Problem-Solving: The total score of the Problem-Solving Subscale in the Scale of Identification of Conflict Resolution Behaviors. The score ranges between 12 and 60.

Empathy: The total score obtained from the Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents-Turkish Form. The score ranges between 0 and 21.

Self-Esteem: The total score of Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. The score ranges between 10 and 40.

3.7. Data Analysis

In order to examine the effectiveness of the peer helping training program on aggressiveness, problem-solving, empathy, and self-esteem scores of the peer helpers, non-parametric statistical tests including Mann-Whitney U Test for between group comparisons and Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for within group comparisons were implemented. In order to examine the differences between experimental and waiting list control group participants' aggressiveness, problem-solving, empathy, and self-esteem scores, 8 separate Mann-Whitney U Tests were employed. Furthermore, in order to explore the differences between pre- and post-test aggressiveness, problem-solving, empathy, and self-esteem scores of the experimental and waiting list control group participants, 8 separate Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test were conducted. Moreover, to assess the qualitative data provided by the training group participants through the evaluation forms and to examine the effects

of peer helping training program on peer helpers' personal and social competency qualitatively, content analysis was used. Alpha level was accepted as .05 while interpreting all statistical procedures. Version 23.0 of IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Statistics for Windows (2015) was used in the statistical analyses of the quantitative data.

3.8. Limitations of the Study

Some limitations emerged during the implementation of the peer helping training program. Firstly, since this study was conducted in one of the schools in Mahmudiye-Eskişehir and participants were selected only among the 6th and 7th graders in that school, these conditions prevent the generalization of the results to other secondary school settings. Secondly, selected participants were not assigned to groups randomly which may also threaten the internal validity of the study. Before assigning participants into groups, to prevent the effect of the subject characteristics, it was planned to match the subjects according to their age, gender, and grade level. However, other subject characteristics might have been an obstacle while comparing the results of experimental and waiting list control groups.

Thirdly, self-report format of the instruments and the lack of anonymity during the evaluation process might lead to social desirability bias (favorable feedback about the skill acquisition) in the peer helpers' program evaluation forms. Although the students were told that their answers would be kept confidential, they had to write their names on the pre-tests, post-tests, and the evaluation form. This was preferred to pair pre-tests with post-tests and qualitative findings with quantitative results if needed.

Another limitation was related to dropout or withdrawal of some of the participants from the training program. Several problems emerged during the implementation phase of the peer helping training program since it lasted 18 weeks starting in December 2017 and ending in May 2018. Therefore, mortality became a problem. From beginning to the end of the training period, withdrawal rate was 19.05%

(almost 20%), and all the students who left the program were boys. Some unplanned events might have affected the training group participants' dropout. For instance, during the second semester, the schedules of some extracurricular courses (e.g., supportive academic courses, art, and sport activities) have been changed and overlapped with the time of peer helping training. It became so difficult to arrange appropriate time/day for every student to participate in the training; thus, some had to give up the program. Additionally, some students left the program as they were concerned about studying for their exams and about their overall academic success.

Moreover, absenteeism was another limitation during the implementation of the program. Some of the students lived far from the school district and needed transportation to their home after the sessions. Some students mentioned that the sessions were long, and they suffered from concentration problems as the training took place after school period. In addition to the above situations inferred from the peer helpers' behaviors or their answers on the evaluation forms such as the factors affecting peer helpers' willingness, the reasons for not attending the all sessions can be stated as follows; familial issues, health related problems, forgetting the day and time of the session, not coming to school in the training day, and sometimes school administrators cancelled some classes and sent students to their home as their teachers were absent. All in all, high absenteeism rate created challenges through the implementation period and might have been affected by the above factors.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Data analysis results regarding each research questions are presented in this chapter. Initially, the quantitative results are presented, including subsections related to the between and within group comparisons of experimental/training and waiting list control groups according to conflict resolution skill, empathy, and self-esteem scores, respectively. The statistical results of each hypothesis testing are addressed in four subsections. Subsequently, qualitative results are presented. And the last section includes the summary of the results.

4.1. Quantitative Analyses

The quantitative analyses are reported under the categories of preliminary analyses, the results related to the conflict resolution scale scores, the results related to the empathy scale scores, and lastly the results related to the self-esteem scale scores.

4.1.1. Preliminary Analyses

In the first place, parametric assumptions were tested to run parametric statistical analyses. As some of the assumptions were not met and the number of members in each group was lower than 30; non-parametric statistical analyses were employed in order to compare the differences between and within the scores of training and waiting list control groups regarding the dependent variables.

4.1.1.1. Results related to the comparisons of the pre-tests scores of the training and waiting list control groups

A Mann-Whitney U test was run to examine if there is a significant difference between the training and waiting list control groups according to the pre-test scores of the Aggressiveness Subscale. It was found that the aggressiveness subscale scores of the training group (mean rank = 17.88) were not significantly different from those of the waiting list control group (mean rank = 15.13), $U = 106.00$, $p > .05$, as it can be seen in Table 4.1 below.

In order to investigate the equivalency of the training and waiting list control group pre-test scores of the Problem-Solving Subscale, a Mann-Whitney U test was employed. As shown in Table 4.1, the results revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the training group (mean rank = 14.81) and the waiting list control group (mean rank = 18.19) according to the participants' problem-solving subscale scores, $U = 101.00$, $p = .307$.

A Mann-Whitney U test was employed to examine whether there is a significant difference between the training and waiting list control groups according to the pre-test scores of the Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescence-Turkish Form. According to the test results presented in Table 4.1, the empathy scale scores of the training group (mean rank = 15.66) were not significantly different from those of the waiting list control group (mean rank = 17.34), $U = 114.50$, $p = .607$.

Lastly, the pre-test scores of Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale for both groups were compared by using a Mann-Whitney U test. As it can be seen in Table 4.1 below, the results showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the training group (mean rank = 15.41) and the waiting list control group (mean rank = 17.59) according to their self-esteem scale scores, $U = 110.50$, $p = .507$. Regarding these results, it can be stated that two groups were equal in terms of aggressiveness, problem solving, empathy, and self-esteem scores before the implementation of the peer helping training program.

Table 4.1

The Mean Ranks of the Experimental and Waiting List Control Groups for Pre-test Scores

		Mann-Whitney U Test					
	Groups	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	<i>U</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Total Score of Aggressiveness Subscale	Experimental	16	17.88	286	106	-.83	.41
	Waiting List Control	16	15.13	242			
Total Score of Problem Solving Subscale	Experimental	16	14.81	237	101	-1.02	.31
	Waiting List Control	16	18.19	291			
Total Score of Empathy Scale	Experimental	16	15.66	250.50	114.50	-.51	.61
	Waiting List Control	16	17.34	277.50			
Total Score of Self-Esteem Scale	Experimental	16	15.41	246.50	110.50	-.66	.51
	Waiting List Control	16	17.59	281.50			

4.1.2. Results Related to the Conflict Resolution Scale Scores

As the scale for identification of conflict resolution behaviors includes two subscales, the results of this section are presented in two subsections, namely results related to the aggressiveness subscale scores and results related to the problem-solving subscale scores.

4.1.2.1. Results related to the aggressiveness subscale scores

In order to investigate the hypothesis of “the aggressiveness post-test scores of the experimental group will be significantly lower than those of the participants in the waiting list control group after the implementation of the peer helping training program”, a Mann-Whitney U test was used. According to the results presented in Table 4.2, the distributions of the post-test scores of the training and waiting list control groups were not similar. The aggressiveness post-test scores of the training group (mean rank = 13.19) was found significantly different from those of the waiting list control group (mean rank = 19.81) after the training, $U = 75.00$, $p = .045$, $r = .13$, small effect.

Table 4.2

The Mean Ranks of the Experimental and Waiting List Control Groups for Post-test Aggressiveness Scores

			Mann-Whitney U Test				
	Groups	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	U	z	p
Total Score of Aggressiveness Subscale	Experimental	16	13.19	211	75	-2.01	.045*
	Waiting List Control	16	19.81	317			

Note. $p < .05$

The hypothesis of “the aggressiveness post-test scores of the experimental group will be significantly lower than their pre-test scores after the implementation of the peer helping training program” was examined by using Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. The results presented in Table 4.3 indicated that there were no significant differences between the pre-test ($Mdn = 5.50$) and post-test ($Mdn = 9.50$) aggressiveness scores of the experimental group, $Z = -.882$, $p = .378$.

Table 4.3

The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Aggressiveness Scores of the Experimental Group

		Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test				
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p
Total Score of Aggressiveness Posttest-Pretest	- Ranks	7	9.50	66.50	-.88	.38
	+ Ranks	7	5.50	38.50		
	Ties	2				
	Total	16				

Regarding to the hypothesis that “there will be no significant difference between the aggressiveness pre- and post-test scores of the waiting list control group”, Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was run. According to the results in Table 4.4, there was a significant median change in the post-test scores of the waiting list control group ($Mdn = 5.13$) compared to their pre-test scores ($Mdn = 9.05$), $Z = -2.253$, $p = .024$, $r = .39$, moderate effect.

Table 4.4

The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Aggressiveness Scores of the Waiting List Control Group

		Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test				
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p
Total Score of Aggressiveness Posttest-Pretest	- Ranks	4	5.13	20.50	-2.25	.02*
	+ Ranks	11	9.05	99.50		
	Ties	1				
	Total	16				

Note. $p < .05$

4.1.2.2. Results related to the problem-solving subscale scores

Non-parametric statistical tests were also conducted in order to compare the participants' problem solving skills in each group before and after the training. By using a Mann-Whitney U Test, it was found that there was no significant difference between the training and waiting list control groups in the problem-solving post-test scores. As it was presented in Table 4.5, the results indicated that the problem solving skill mean rank scores of the training group (mean rank = 17.09) were not significantly different from those of the waiting list control group (mean rank = 15.91) after the training, $U = 118.50$, $p = .719$.

Table 4.5

The Mean Ranks of the Experimental and Waiting List Control Groups for Post-test Problem-Solving Scores

		Mann-Whitney U Test					
Groups		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	U	z	p
Total Score of Problem Solving Subscale	Experimental	16	17.09	273.50	118.50	-.36	.72
	Waiting List Control	16	15.91	254.50			

In order to investigate the hypothesis that problem-solving post-test scores of the experimental group will be significantly higher than their pre-test scores, a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was carried out. In Table 4.6, the results indicated that the problem solving post-test scores of the training group ($Mdn = 8.50$) was significantly different from their pre-test scores ($Mdn = 7.92$), $Z = -2.448$, $p = .014$, $r = .43$, moderate effect.

Table 4.6

The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Problem-Solving Scores of the Experimental Group

		Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test				
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	P
Total Score of Problem Solving Posttest-Pretest	- Ranks	2	8.50	17	-2.45	.01*
	+ Ranks	13	7.92	103		
	Ties	1				
	Total	16				

Note. $p < .05$

Later, for the hypothesis of “there will be no significant difference between the problem-solving pre-test and post-test scores of the waiting list control group, a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was implemented. The analysis showed in Table 4.7 that the problem solving post-test scores of the waiting list control group participants ($Mdn = 6.80$) were not significantly different from their pre-test scores ($Mdn = 6.29$), $Z = -.393$, $p = .694$.

Table 4.7

The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Problem-Solving Scores of the Waiting List Control Group

		Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test				
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p
Total Score of Problem Solving Posttest-Pretest	- Ranks	5	6.80	34	-.39	.69
	+ Ranks	7	6.29	44		
	Ties	4				
	Total	16				

4.1.3. Results Related to the Empathy Scale Scores

Regarding the hypothesis that the empathy post-test scores of the participants in the training group will be significantly higher than those of the participants in the waiting list control group after the implementation of the peer helping training program, a Mann-Whitney U Test was conducted. The results showed in Table 4.8 that the distribution of the empathy post-test scores of two groups were similar, and the empathy scale scores of the waiting list control group (mean rank = 16.44) were not significantly different from those of the experimental group (mean rank = 16.56) after the training, $U = 127.00$, $p = .970$.

Table 4.8

The Mean Ranks of the Experimental and Waiting List Control Groups for Post-test Empathy Scores

			Mann-Whitney U Test				
	Groups	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	U	z	p
Total Score of Empathy Scale	Experimental	16	16.56	265	127	-.04	.97
	Waiting List Control	16	16.44	263			

In order to test the hypothesis that the empathy post-test scores of the experimental group will be significantly higher than their pre-test scores, a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was run. According to the analysis presented in Table 4.9, the empathy post-test scores of the training group participants ($Mdn = 6.88$) were not significantly different from their pre-test scores ($Mdn = 4.58$), $Z = .00$, $p = 1.00$.

Table 4.9

The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Empathy Scores of the Experimental Group

		Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test				
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p
Total Score of Empathy Posttest-Pretest	- Ranks	4	6.88	27.50	.00	1.00
	+ Ranks	6	4.58	27.50		
	Ties	6				
	Total	16				

Subsequently, to analyze the hypothesis that there will be no significant difference between the empathy pre- and post-test scores of the waiting list control group, a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was conducted. The analysis indicated that the pre-test scores of the waiting list control group ($Mdn = 5.00$) were not significantly different from their post-test scores ($Mdn = 7.20$), $Z = -.270$, $p = .788$, as it was presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10

The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Empathy Scores of the Waiting List Control Group

		Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test				
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p
Total Score of Empathy Posttest-Pretest	- Ranks	5	7.20	36	-.27	.79
	+ Ranks	6	5.00	30		
	Ties	5				
	Total	16				

4.1.4. Results Related to the Self-Esteem Scale Scores

A Mann-Whitney U Test was implemented to test the hypothesis of “the self-esteem post-test scores of the participants in the experimental group will be significantly higher than those of the participants in the waiting list control group after the implementation of peer helping training program”. The analysis indicated that the self-esteem scale scores of the waiting list control group (mean rank = 17.13) were not significantly different from those of the training group (mean rank = 15.88), $U = 118.00$, $p = .705$ as it can be seen in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11

The Mean Ranks of the Experimental and Waiting List Control Groups for Post-test Self-Esteem Scores

		Mann-Whitney U Test					
Groups		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	U	z	p
Total Score of Self-Esteem Scale	Experimental	16	15.88	254	118	-.38	.71
	Waiting List Control	16	17.13	274			

In order to analyze the hypothesis of “the self-esteem post-test scores of the experimental group will be significantly higher than their pre-test scores”, a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used. According to Table 4.12, the results showed that the self-esteem post-test scores of the training group ($Mdn = 7.63$) was not significantly different from their pre-test scores ($Mdn = 6.72$), $Z = -1.061$, $p = .289$.

Table 4.12

The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Self-Esteem Scores of the Experimental Group

		Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test				
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p
Total Score of Self-Esteem Posttest-Pretest	- Ranks	4	7.63	30.50	-1.06	.29
	+ Ranks	9	6.72	60.50		
	Ties	3				
	Total	16				

Finally, by using a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, the hypothesis of “there will be no significant difference between the self-esteem pre- and post-test scores of the waiting list control group” was tested. According to the results presented in Table 4.13, it was found that the self-esteem post-test scores of the waiting list control group ($Mdn = 6.00$) were not significantly different from their pre-test scores ($Mdn = 9.50$), $Z = -.284$, $p = .777$.

Table 4.13

The Results of Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test of Pre-test Post-test Self-Esteem Scores of the Waiting List Control Group

		Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test				
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p
Total Score of Self-Esteem Posttest-Pretest	- Ranks	8	6.00	48	-.28	.78
	+ Ranks	6	9.50	57		
	Ties	2				
	Total	16				

4.2. Qualitative Results / Peer Helpers' Program Evaluation

After the implementation of the training program, the experimental group participants (n=16) responded to the Peer Helping Training Program Evaluation Form-Peer Helpers that includes five open-ended questions. Their answers were content analyzed and grouped into 3 main themes and 9 subthemes.

4.2.1. Peer Helpers' Competency

This main theme was grouped into two subthemes, namely topics about which peer helpers believe to be helpful and peer helpers' knowledge about their roles, skills, and responsibilities.

4.2.1.1. *Topics about which peer helpers believe to be helpful*

Academic support, support for conflict resolution, support for solving personal problems, and emotional support were the subthemes compounded under this main theme. These categories can be presented as follows:

4.2.1.1.1. *Academic support*

Firstly, peer helping training program aimed to give information about effective studying techniques and 25 % (n = 4) of the students stated that they can support their peers in academic matters.

*It may be about quarrels among friends, lessons (or lectures), problems related to teachers or family. **Peer Helper-2 (female, 6th grader)***

*I think I can help about course related problems. **Peer Helper-15 (male, 7th grader)***

4.2.1.1.2. *Support for conflict resolution (mediation)*

Secondly, after informing peer helpers about the basic and advanced helping skills; they were instructed about the concepts of conflict, conflict resolution, and peer mediation throughout the training. More than half of the peer helpers reported that

they developed their conflict resolution skills (62.5%; n = 10) so that they can support their friends when they fight or have disputes.

*Separating and reconciling when others are fighting. **Peer Helper-3 (male, 6th grader)***

*I want to be helpful for them without forcing them, to reconcile those quarreled, and to make sad peoples happy / satisfied. **Peer Helper-6 (female, 6th grader)***

*If they dispute with their friends, I would try to help them to reconcile. That is to say, I will struggle to remove resentments. **Peer Helper-7 (female, 6th grader)***

*I think that I can support those who have problems with their friends. **Peer Helper-14 (female, 7th grader)***

4.2.1.1.3. Support for solving personal problems

Thirdly, peer helpers were instructed about the concepts of problem and problem solving steps during the training process. On the peer helping evaluation form, 37.5% (n = 6) of the students reported that they can help others to solve their problems related to daily life.

*I believe that I can support them to solve their problems and distresses. **Peer Helper-5 (male, 6th grader)***

*I can help them to solve their problems faced at school or home. **Peer Helper-12 (female, 7th grader)***

4.2.1.1.4. Emotional support

Lastly, during the training process of the peer helpers, the importance of being aware of feelings and expressing them were discussed through topics including the importance of empathy; basic feeling words; positive and negative feelings; realizing and expressing one's own emotion and others'; and relationship among feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. On the basis of the qualitative data, it can be expressed that

peer helpers became more sensitive to others' feelings and 31.25% (n = 5) they could support their friends emotionally.

*If someone argues with his/her friend or feels isolated, I can help as long as the issue is not beyond my competency. **Peer Helper-4 (female, 6th grader)***

*I can motivate someone who got low grade in the exam. **Peer Helper-9 (female, 7th grader)***

*In the cases of debates, some school related issues such as feeling isolated or again problems emerged in the school. **Peer Helper-11 (female, 7th grader)***

4.2.1.2. Peer helpers' knowledge about their roles, skills, and responsibilities

On the evaluation forms, two students mentioned necessity of “clients' willingness” during the helping process:

*I want to be helpful for them without forcing them. **Peer Helper-6 (female, 6th grader)***

*I think that I can support as much as possible if they are willing to mention their situations difficult to tell any others. **Peer Helper-14 (female, 7th grader)***

Moreover, 31.25% (five) of the students stressed the importance of “referral process” as it was mentioned in the 15th session:

*If I hear about a challenging or vital situation, I would refer it to the school counselor. **Peer Helper-1 (female, 6th grader)***

*I think that I can help to my peers about every issue that they want to disclose to me, but of course I could not engage in topics exceeding my skills. **Peer Helper-8 (female, 6th grader)***

*I can help without exceeding my border. **Peer Helper-12 (female, 7th grader)***

Furthermore, four of the peer helpers stated that they developed their “helping skills” (emphasizing the strengths of peer helpees and informing):

*If there had been no training process, we could not have used most of the skills and been sure about giving reliable information. **Peer Helper-11 (female, 7th grader)***

*I think that I have learned new skills to take the role as a peer helper and, I also achieved to become more kind and polite. **Peer Helper-14 (female, 7th grader)***

Lastly, during the first phase of the training, the concept of helping and helping relationship; the aims and the importance of helping; and each helping skills by stating their importance were discussed. On the grounds of the qualitative data, it can be asserted that 93.75% (n = 15) of the peer helpers are satisfied with their roles and want to serve as peer helpers for the benefits of others/their peers. This may support development of peer helpers' prosocial behaviors:

*It is wonderful as it would help us in the future, we would assist people. **Peer Helper-10 (female, 7th grader)***

*I recommend it since we have been learning to be helpful for people and our friends through this training, which is a good thing. **Peer Helper-6 (female, 6th grader)***

*Yes, I recommend it since we have learned crucial information here. And after the training is over, we would assist our friends and these would make us happy. **Peer Helper-7 (female, 6th grader)***

*I recommend it because others can also benefit from what we have learned. If they learn, they become aware of the helping process. They may help others more with this awareness. **Peer Helper-9 (female, 7th grader)***

4.2.2. Benefits of the Training Program

This main theme was composed of two subthemes, namely development of peer helpers' interpersonal relationships and their personal competency.

4.2.2.1. Development of peer helpers' interpersonal relationships

4.2.2.1.1. Friendship skills

Firstly, the training program supported some of the peer helpers to develop their friendship skills; 37.50% (n = 6) of the students stated that they had chance to improve their relationship with their friends.

*In the training, there were others who I did not get acquainted, we met and became friends. I have learned a lot of things. **Peer Helper-1 (female, 6th grader)***

*This training has provided some benefits such as realizing positive sides of the events, getting along with my peers, and increasing my friendship skills. **Peer Helper-2 (female, 6th grader)***

4.2.2.1.2. Conflict resolution skills

Three of the participants in the training group mentioned that they have learned novel ways to solve their own conflicts:

*In my opinion, peer helping program is of utmost importance. The topics that I have learned during the training are coming to my mind in any place or during a conflict. They work while I interact with my friends or in any place, so I would like to thank to the program implementer. **Peer Helper-1 (female, 6th grader)***

*I tried to use the skills that I have learned in this training while talking with my friends. Previously, I was probably rude. Nowadays, we are quarreling less as I have been using the skills. And we hurt each other less. **Peer Helper-12 (female, 7th grader)***

4.2.2.1.3. Communication skills

During the training process, the concept of communication; its components; communication skills and their importance; difference between verbal and nonverbal communication; factors that affect communication; communication blockers; the importance of body language, active listening, and empathy were discussed by

carrying out some instructive activities. Based on the qualitative data, more than half of the training group participants 56.25% (n = 9) reported that they had the chance to improve their communication skills.

*These topics and activities assisted me excessively. It helped me to understand my friends, my environment, and my family better. **Peer Helper-7 (female, 6th grader)***

*We are learning to develop empathy, not to hurt people (using I-language). **Peer Helper-12 (female, 7th grader)***

*Anymore, I get along with people better. I communicate better with them. **Peer Helper-16 (male, 7th grader)***

4.2.2.2. Personal competency of peer helpers

4.2.2.2.1. Personal satisfaction

The peer helpers reported that they enjoyed during the training process, liked the topics and activities. While evaluating the training process; 87.5% (n = 14) of the peer helpers stated that they benefited from the program, enjoyed the training, felt helpful and important.

*I enjoyed the peer helping program and liked the topics. **Peer Helper-16 (male, 7th grader)***

*Each topics and activities are of utmost importance. We took the training for 18 weeks and it helped us and our environment. Participating in this training is very good / advantageous for me. **Peer Helper-6 (female, 6th grader)***

4.2.2.2.2. Personal gains

This subtheme is about peer helpers' personal gains from the training program, which also includes the development of the peer helpers' self-regulation skills (responsibility, time management, and making plans). On the evaluation forms, 31.25% (n=5) of the students stated that they had some personal gains and their appreciation to take part in the peer helping training program.

*I recommend this program to my peers because we help not only other people but also ourselves. We are also learning to live in the community. **Peer Helper-12 (female, 7th grader)***

*Not wasting our times; learning how to behave in various situations (through activities); learning to be organized and planned; knowing our responsibilities. **Peer Helper-15 (male, 7th grader)***

4.2.3. Peer Helpers' Evaluation of the Training Program

Under this main theme, peer helpers' statements related to their opinions about the instructional methods and the content of the training, their feelings during the training program, their recommendations to become a peer helper, the challenges faced during the implementation and their suggestions to improve the program were presented respectively.

4.2.3.1. Opinions about the instructional methods of the training program

Four of the peer (25%) helpers stated their opinions about some instructional methods used in sessions:

*At the beginning, I thought that I would have difficulty in understanding the topics when I first heard about their names and I could not grasp some of them. However, I comprehended them after preparing scenarios with my friends. **Peer Helper-8 (female, 6th grader)***

*We learnt about important topics and performed crucial activities. We engaged in both the lessons and the activities; it was pleasurable and I enjoyed. **Peer Helper-5 (male, 6th grader)***

4.2.3.2. Opinions about the content of the training program

Firstly, 31.25% (n = 5) of the peer helpers interpreted the content and the clarity of the training program:

*We carried out pleasurable activities. The topics were clear, so there was nothing left to understand. **Peer Helper-9 (female, 7th grader)***

*There was not any unrelated topic. All the topics were essential and satisfactory to be a peer helper. **Peer Helper-11 (female, 7th grader)***

Secondly, after investigating the qualitative data results, it was also observed from the 13 quotations that 50% (n = 8) of the peer helpers found the training program “informative”.

*I have learned a lot of things and I remember the things that I have learned before. **Peer Helper-3 (male, 6th grader)***

*It helped me to understand my friends, my family, and my surroundings. I got more information. I grasped the topics that I knew less about. **Peer Helper-7 (female, 6th grader)***

Thirdly, after examining the qualitative data, 15 quotations were constructed and it was pointed out that 56.25% (n = 9) of the students thought the training program was “useful and crucial”. Furthermore, one of the students stated that people sometimes need support while solving their problems; in relation to this, one student stated that being supported by or getting help from one’s peer is of utmost importance. Two of the students also found the peer helping training program effective and necessary to share one’s problems or distresses. Some of the participants also stated that:

*It would be a useful project for our school. Our relationships with our friends would progress. **Peer Helper-4 (female, 6th grader)***

There are countless advantages of this program. We may be offended or our friends may be offended. However, the important thing is to make peace.

Peer Helper-6 (female, 6th grader)

*I recommend it because it is so good to share your problems with someone else. **Peer Helper-5 (male, 6th grader)***

4.2.3.3. Emotions felt during the training

On the evaluation forms, 31.25% (n = 5) of the peer helpers expressed that they found the training “pleasant”, “exciting”, and “enjoyable”.

*It was enjoyable, exciting, and pleasant. **Peer Helper-3 (male, 6th grader)***

*Some of the topics were very pleasurable. The activities helped us to feel better. **Peer Helper-4 (female, 6th grader)***

*The activities that we engaged in were so enjoyable. **Peer Helper-9 (female, 7th grader)***

On the other hand, after evaluating the training program, it was also recognized that 37.5% (n = 6) of the students mentioned their feelings such as being “*embarrassed*” and “*bored*”, during the training process:

*I was ashamed when I first participated in this training because there were people I did not know. And I am still a little bit ashamed. **Peer Helper-1 (female, 6th grader)***

*During the first sessions, I was bored since I had known the first topics. Later, the topics changed, and I enjoyed learning about the topics that I did not know. **Peer Helper-12 (female, 7th grader)***

*First weeks were boring for me. However, I enjoyed during other parts of the training since we were both learning and carrying out activities, thus this course was entertaining. **Peer Helper-14 (female, 7th grader)***

4.2.3.4. Challenges that peer helpers faced through the training process and their suggestions

4.2.3.4.1. Challenges

Peer helpers wrote about challenges they faced and struggles during the sessions on the Peer Helping Training Program Evaluation Forms. These challenges and their frequencies can be presented as follows: overlap with other courses (n = 3), forgetting previously learned topics (n = 1), difficulty in studying for the exams (n = 2), problems with the time schedule of the training (n = 3), problems with the duration of the training (n = 2), problems with the location of the training (n = 1), and concentration problem (n = 1).

Two of the peer helpers stated that they had difficulty while studying for their exams:

*I had some difficulties when studying for exams or attending other courses (activities). **Peer Helper-11 (female, 7th grader)***

*Going home late during the exam weeks caused distress. **Peer Helper-12 (female, 7th grader)***

Three of the peer helpers also stated their problems related to the time schedule of the training as follows:

*We could not concentrate much more because the training was at the end of the day. **Peer Helper-15 (male, 7th grader)***

*It was a bit dull since the training took place after school. **Peer Helper-9 (female, 7th grader)***

Problems with the duration of the training program were stated as follows by two peer helpers:

*Time was a bit long. **Peer Helper-12 (female, 7th grader)***

*Time was not sufficient for everyone to participate in the activities. **Peer Helper-15 (male, 7th grader)***

4.2.3.4.2. Suggestions

In this study two of the peer helpers presented their suggestions about the time schedule, location, and content of the training:

*If it had taken place at weekends, we would have become more energetic and we might have done more lessons. **Peer Helper-9 (female, 7th grader)***

*There might have been more effective seating arrangement or a room for effective listening. **Peer Helper-13 (male, 7th grader)***

*Topics and activities were enough and clear. However, in my opinion, there might have been a few more activities. **Peer Helper-13 (male, 7th grader)***

4.2.3.5. Peer helpers' recommendation to their friends about being a peer helper

All the students ($n=16$) stated that they would recommend the peer helping training program to their peers, except one student saying that:

I say yes because we are learning some things. On the other hand, I say no as I was embarrassed, hesitated, and could not state my opinions. **Peer Helper-1 (female, 6th grader)**

Other students ($n = 15$) directly stated that they would recommend their friends to become peer helpers:

Yes, I recommend it because in the future we would not be here, so new peer helpers are needed to help our friends to solve their problems. Peer Helper-4 (female, 6th grader)

I recommend it since we can live in a world in which there is no trouble if everyone takes this training. Peer Helper-15 (male, 7th grader)

I recommend it because others may learn to get along with their friends better. Peer Helper-16 (male, 7th grader)

4.3. Summary of the Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

In summary, the quantitative results of this study can be presented as follows: firstly, pre-test scores of the training group were not significantly different from the waiting list control group pre-test scores regarding aggressiveness, problem-solving, empathy, and self-esteem; secondly, aggressiveness post-test scores of the training group were found significantly different from post-test scores of the waiting list control group and there was a significant difference between aggressiveness pre- and post-test scores of waiting list control group; thirdly, the peer helping training program have a significant effect on the problem solving scores of the training group compared to the waiting list control group when participants' pre- and post-test scores were compared; fourthly, empathy scores of the participants in training group compared to those in the waiting list control group did not change significantly after

the peer helping training program; lastly, there was no significant differences on the pre- and post-test self-esteem scores of both training and waiting list control groups.

Based on the qualitative findings, more than half of the training group participants reported that they can resolve conflicts among disputing parties, and they had chance to improve their communication skills and prosocial behaviors by means of the training program. Additionally, peer helpers were satisfied with their participation to the program. The training program was also found informative and useful by the half of the peer helpers. Lastly, all the participants in the training group stated that they would recommend becoming a peer helper to their friends.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this chapter, initially the study findings are discussed and subsequently, the implications reached from the results of the study and recommendations for future research are mentioned.

5.1. Discussions of the Research Findings

The aim of the present study was to examine the effect of peer helping training program on the conflict resolution skills (i.e., aggressiveness and problem-solving skills), empathy, and self-esteem of the middle school peer helpers in Mahmudiye-Eskişehir. The discussion on the findings are presented in two sub-sections, discussions of the quantitative findings and discussions of the qualitative findings.

5.1.1. Discussions of the Quantitative Findings

In this part, the findings are discussed in three sub-sections, including the discussions of the results related to the impacts of the training program on peer helpers' conflict resolution skills, empathy, and self-esteem respectively.

5.1.1.1. *Discussions regarding conflict resolution skills*

As the conflict resolution skills of the participants were measured via two subscales – aggressiveness and problem-solving – results regarding the effects of the peer helping training program on peer helpers' aggressiveness and problem-solving skills are discussed concomitantly.

Firstly, pre-test comparisons of aggressiveness revealed that there were no significant differences between training and waiting list control groups before implementing the training. In other words, prior to the training, two groups were equivalent in terms of their aggressiveness scores. On the other hand, aggressiveness post-test scores of the training group were found significantly different from those of the waiting list control group. That is, compared to the waiting list control group participants' post-test aggressiveness scores, experimental group participants' aggressiveness scores decreased after attending the peer training program. Nevertheless, the aggressiveness post-test scores of the training group were not significantly different from their pre-test scores, while the aggressiveness post-test scores of the waiting list control group were significantly different from their pre-test scores. Despite being insignificant, the mean aggressiveness scores of the training group slightly decreased. In contrast, the aggressiveness post-test scores of the waiting list control group significantly increased compared to their pre-test scores; higher aggressiveness contradicts with the acquisition of conflict resolution skills.

Thus, it can be concluded that the peer helping training program helped the training group participants to cope with their aggressiveness. This means that at least it prevented the peer helpers from exhibiting aggressive behaviors (or diminished its likelihood) in contrast to the waiting list control group members, who experienced an increase in their scores of aggressiveness. In short, this finding can support the view that the peer helping training program might be preventing the negative escalation in aggressiveness for middle school peer helpers; however, it does not provide robust empirical evidence to suggest that the training program is effective in dealing with middle school peer helpers' aggressiveness. This finding might be explained by the reason that the training program did not include topics or activities related to the anger management skills. For instance, in one study, the training program aimed to teach the anger management skills and the results indicated that the aggression scale scores of the trained students significantly decreased (Türnüklü et al., 2010a).

The findings of only one previous study (Sezen & Bedel, 2015) are in line with those of the current study, indicating that peer mediation training did not have any significant effect on aggressiveness levels of the training group. However, some of the experimental studies in the related literature provided contradictory findings demonstrating that peer helping training programs are effective in decreasing aggressive behaviors of the training group participants (Bickmore, 2002; Jones, 2004; Stacey, 1996; Türk & Türnüklü, 2016a). Furthermore, in their study, Yelpeze and Özkamalı (2015) mentioned that teaching social skills via peer guidance significantly reduced the level of aggression among middle school pupils.

Secondly, the quantitative findings of the study regarding problem solving skills of the participants indicated that before the implementation of the training program, there were no significant differences observed between training and waiting list control groups. Similarly, no significant difference was observed after the training when the post-test problem solving scores of the experimental and waiting list control group were compared. Likewise, no significant difference between pre- and post-test scores of the waiting list control group was observed. On the other hand, post-test scores of the experimental group were found significantly different from their pre-test scores. In other words, even though between group comparisons did not provide empirical evidence regarding the effect of training program on problem solving skills of the participants, within group comparisons revealed that training group participants' problem-solving skills were improved. This might be related to the content and flow of the sessions in which problem solving skills were taught to the experimental group participants. The timing of teaching this skill to the participants, which was almost at the end of the training, might have had an influence on their retention and competency level that reflected in their responses.

Similar to the findings of the current study, it was also supported by the experimental studies in the related literature that peer helping programs improved problem-solving skills (Cardoza, 2013; Koruklu & Yılmaz, 2010; Sezen & Bedel, 2015; Thompson, 1996; Thompson & Smith, 2011). After evaluating 14 peer support programs in her

research, Baginsky (2004) pointed out that peer support programs helped to improve problem-solving skills.

In conclusion, based on the quantitative findings acquired from the aggressiveness and problem-solving subscales, it can be speculated that the peer helping training program improves the conflict resolution skills of peer helpers. Additionally, the qualitative data analysis results support this finding. In the evaluation forms, peer helpers reported that they could support their friends to resolve their conflicts. These consistent findings might display the effective usage of conflict resolution skills by peer helpers subsequent to the provision of the training.

There are some supportive findings related to the acquisition of conflict resolution skills, which indicated that peer mediators increased their conflict resolution skills after receiving the training (Bell et al., 2000; Cardoza, 2013; Cassinerio & Lane-Garon, 2006; Johnson & Johnson, 2001b; Klepp et al., 1986; Thompson, 1996; Törnükü et al., 2010b; Türk & Törnükü, 2016a). Moreover, in her meta-analysis study, Türk (2017) concluded that peer mediation, peace education, and conflict resolution education significantly improved students' conflict resolution skills. Kolan (1999) also found that through peer mediation, students reached successful agreements and solved their conflicts effectively. Similarly, in a study conducted by Taştan and Öner (2008), it was found that peer mediators implemented the mediation process accurately and resolved conflicts among friends.

5.1.1.2. *Discussions regarding empathy skills*

The results revealed that there were no significant differences between the training and waiting list control groups regarding the pre-test empathy scores as well as the post-test scores. Besides, there were no significant differences between pre- and post-test scores of the waiting list control group as well as between pre- and post-test scores of the training group. These findings indicated that peer helping training program had no significant effect on the participants' empathy skills.

As opposed to these findings, earlier studies (Aladağ, 2005; Cardoza, 2013; Cassinero & Lane-Garon, 2006; Sharp & Cowie, 1998; Törnükü et al., 2009a) showed that peer helping training programs significantly improved peer helpers' empathy skills. For example, Törnükü and Çetin (2015) stated that peer mediators improved their empathy skills. Furthermore, after evaluating the results of fourteen peer support programs, Baginsky (2004) stated that peer support improved empathy. Regarding some qualitative research studies (Törnükü, 2011), peer mediators have been found to advance their empathy skills. In contrast, in another study conducted by Uysal and Nazlı (2010), there were no significant differences between pre- and post-test empathy scores of the peer helpers; however, in the evaluation phase, peer helpers reported that their empathy skills developed. The findings of the recent study have yielded similar results, indicating that peer mediation training did not significantly increase the empathic tendency of the experimental group (Türk & Törnükü, 2016a).

Based on the quantitative results in the present study, the mean empathy score of the training group slightly increased; however, this could not be supported with empirical evidence. This finding might be accounted for based on some reasons even though discussing these might be somewhat speculative. Firstly, candidate peer helpers were chosen among the students who had already had empathic attitudes, thus they were recommended by their friends and teachers; hence, this situation might have caused only a slight difference (increase) between the pre- and post-test empathy scores. Secondly, in some other lessons in the middle school curriculum, students had been taught communication skills, I-language, and empathy; thus, this might have prevented the observance of significant differences both in the training and waiting list control groups according to these variables.

On the other hand, in the evaluation forms of this study, 93.75 % of the training group participants reported that they wanted to help others. Thus, this might show their empathic attitudes. In support of this view, Eisenberg and Fabes (1990) mentioned that acquiring empathy substantially affected the prosocial behavior,

which is also important for the development of helping skills. In short, whereas the peer helping training did not significantly contribute to the empathy levels of the training group participants, the qualitative findings supported that the training might have improved their prosocial behaviors highly related to empathy skill.

5.1.1.3. *Discussions regarding self-esteem scores*

Based on the pre-test self-esteem scores, there were no significant differences between the training and waiting list control groups; nor were there any significant differences between these groups with respect to the post-test scores. In addition, there were no significant differences found between pre- and post-test scores of both the training and waiting list control groups. Thus, it can be concluded that the peer helping training program had no significant effect on the participants' self-esteem scores.

As opposed to these results, some studies in the literature (Aladağ, 2005; Cowie & Sharp, 1996; Cowie & Smith, 2011; Smith & Sharp, 1994; Thompsons, 1996; Törnükü & Çetin, 2015) indicated that peer helping training programs developed peer helpers' self-esteem. After evaluating 14 peer support programs in her research, Baginsky (2004) concluded that peer support helped to improve self-esteem. Based on the results of qualitative studies (Çetin et al., 2014; Kaçmaz, 2011; Törnükü, 2011), peer mediators' self-esteem increased. On the other hand, one study investigating the effects of the peer mediation training found a significant decrease between the pre- and post-test self-esteem scores of the training group. Yet, based on the qualitative findings of the mentioned study, the author (Cardoza, 2013) claimed that peer helpers seemed to have enhanced their self-esteem, unlike non-mediators.

In the current study, neither the quantitative nor the qualitative findings revealed improvement in the self-esteem levels of the training group participants. Based on the quantitative results, the mean self-esteem score of the training group has slightly increased; however, it was not sufficient to obtain significant results. If a follow-up test had been applied to the training group after serving as peer helpers, their self-

esteem scores might have significantly increased. In this study, since the training lasted 18 weeks almost until the end of the academic year, the peer helpers did not provide peer helping service. As it was mentioned in one of the studies, the quality of education, ongoing supervision, and the peer helpers' service implementation with the support of other students and staff help peer helpers to acquire higher self-esteem (Cardoza, 2013). Additionally, Silcock and Stacey (1997) pointed out that a cooperative school culture is required to help trained peer mediators to acquire self-esteem and self-control. Thus, practicing the peer helping skills in a cooperative school culture might facilitate self-esteem improvement of peer helpers.

5.1.2. Discussions of the Qualitative Findings Regarding the Evaluations of the Peer Helpers

In the evaluation forms, the training group participants reported that the training program improved their prosocial behaviors, conflict resolution skills, and communication skills. Similar findings were highlighted in the studies encountered and examined in the related literature. For example, Lane-Garon et al. (2005) reported that the peer helper program improved altruistic helping behaviors of the middle school students participating in the study. Furthermore, peer helping programs supported students' prosocial behaviors (Cowie & Smith, 2010; Kaçmaz, 2011; Smith & Sharp, 1994) and conflict resolution skills (Cardoza, 2013; Hopkins, 2005; Kaçmaz, 2011; Lane-Garon, Yergat, & Kralowec, 2012; Schellenberg et al., 2007; Sharp & Cowie, 1998; Türnüklü, 2011). Besides, in one longitudinal study, qualitative results revealed that a conflict resolution and peer mediation training program was effective for the resolution of conflicts among middle school students (Gögebakan-Yıldız, 2016). Additionally, in some studies, it was reported that peer helpers' / mediators' communication skills had developed (Cardoza, 2013; Dearden, 1998; Eryılmaz, 2015; Kaçmaz, 2011; Nazlı, 2003; Sharp & Cowie, 1998; Taştan, 2004; Thompson & Smith, 2011; Türnüklü & Çetin, 2015). In one previous study, carried out by Uysal and Nazlı (2010), the qualitative findings also showed that the peer helpers had improved their listening and communication skills. In another study, communication skill was found crucial for the improvement of prosocial behaviors

and conflict management skills, and it was concluded that students' communication skills could be enhanced by conflict resolution education (Cardoza, 2013). On the other hand, in Aladağ's study (2005), no significant change in the communication skills over pre, post, and follow-up test periods of both the training and control groups was found. Nonetheless, evaluation forms of the peer helpers indicated improvement in their communication skills.

In the current study, the training group members reported that they were highly satisfied with their participation in the program. Likewise, in some other studies, it was concluded that the training group became satisfied with the program (Cowie & Smith, 2010; Taştan, 2004; Uysal & Nazlı, 2010). Furthermore, in the present study, the training program was also evaluated as informative and useful by half of the peer helpers. Similarly, in some other studies, the peer supporters reported that the program was helpful (Naylor & Cowie, 1999) and useful (Cardoza, 2013; Cowie & Olafsson, 2000). Lastly, all the participants in the training group stated that they would recommend their friends to become peer helpers. A similar finding was reported in another study conducted with university students (Aladağ, 2005).

As mentioned in previous studies (e.g., Çetin et al., 2014; Kaçmaz, 2011; Nazlı, 2003; Smith & Sharp, 1994; Türnüklü, 2011; Uysal & Nazlı, 2010), in the present study, some of the training group participants expressed that they made more friends, developed their relationships with their friends after the training, and the training helped them to develop their self-regulation skills. Additionally, in the evaluation forms, the peer helpers expressed that they enjoyed the training program. In some other studies, peer helpers also stated that they were happy about the process (Bowman & Myrick, 1987; Çetin et al., 2014; Eryılmaz, 2015; Kaçmaz, 2011). In contrast, the peer helpers mentioned some challenges they experienced during the training. These were mentioned as follows: the overlap with other courses, forgetting earlier topics, problems with concentration, difficulty in preparing for their exams, problems with the time schedule, duration, and the location of the training.

5.2. Implications for Practice and Research

In the current study, empirical evidence supported that the peer helping training program significantly improved experimental group participants' problem-solving skills, provided only a slight decrease in mean aggressiveness of the training group, and prevented negative escalation in their aggressiveness. Additionally, the qualitative findings showed that the peer helpers enhanced their conflict resolution skills, prosocial behaviors, and communication skills. Thus, it might be reasonable to suggest that the peer helping training program can be implemented in middle school settings in order to equip peer helpers especially with problem-solving skills.

Previously, Downe et al. (1986) claimed that through the peer helping programs, students can reach the counseling services more easily. Since it helps to construct a relationship between psychological counselors and students, more students can be assisted. It is also believed that implementing peer mediation program at schools is crucial for the development of a positive school culture and for helping students to acquire the essential life skills. In addition, Törnükü et al. (2009b) mentioned that a peer mediation program should be implemented at schools to resolve conflicts among students since it provides a socialization and peace-negotiation culture. Thus, even though the current study was carried out in a middle school by using convenient sampling and found significant results related to the problem-solving via non-parametric statistical tests, this program can be included into the school guidance and psychological counseling plans also as one of the preventive activities of counseling services.

Moreover, the peer helping program is an alternative source of help to resolve and decrease interpersonal problems at schools. Peers are perceived as helping resources, so peer helping programs might assist school counselors when there is a high demand for counseling service in schools. By providing effective training and supervision, peer helpers might recognize and meet the needs of more students. In this study, peer helpers also stated that “*they want to help others*” (prosocial behaviors) and believe in their ability to “*resolve conflicts among their peers*”. Thus, peer helpers can serve

as helping agents to resolve conflicts in schools and might support school counselors since they stated their willingness to help. The current study has indicated that a peer helping training program is promising for the field of school counseling, yet the training program needs modifications. Hence, the new modified peer helping program can be applied as a violence prevention strategy in the Violence Action Plan of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE).

5.3. Recommendations for Future Research

Cremin (2002) claimed that if the peer mediation program includes all students in a school (student-body approach), it will become more influential and economic than the cadre approach, in which a group of students were chosen to be educated on mediation skills. Since it strengthens the conflict resolution strategies of all students across the school (Türnüklü et al., 2010b), school-based peer mediation program is also suggested by some researchers. Bickmore (2002) concluded that all of the pupils took the advantage of and utilized the school-wide peer mediation approach. Accordingly, for future research, it is also recommended that all students in a school might be included into or at least informed more about the conflict resolution education and peer mediation programs.

Since the candidate peer helpers were chosen according to some criteria to become a peer helper and they already had certain skills (friendship skills, empathy, conflict resolution skills, and leadership) in this study, the likelihood of finding a significant difference between pre- and post-test scores of these skills might have been difficult as it was stated in another study (Uysal & Nazlı, 2010). In support of this view, Baginsky (2004, p. 6) stressed that instead of choosing among “obviously good and successful children”, the program implementer might give chance to other children to become volunteers as peer helpers. According to Thompsons (1996), all the students (role models and at-risk students) should be involved in a peer helping program (the ratio of at-risk students were decided as 1/3). Thus, the selection procedure before implementing a peer mediation program needs to be reorganized and should not only

be dependent on the precondition that students should possess certain skills; future research should be conducted to test the effectiveness of such programs.

In addition, a training program and activities should be well planned and include the topics that are more related to the skills required to implement the type of program decided upon. For example, in this study, the educator could have mentioned conflict resolution skills more in depth and could have added further practices or exercises to educate the training group as qualified peer mediators. Moreover, the aggressiveness scores of the peer helpers could have decreased further if more anger management strategies and activities had been included into the training program. When it comes to the general topics to be included in the training program, Cowie and Wallace (2000) mentioned that some communication skills, such as attending, listening, responding, waiting in silence, and questioning, should certainly be included into the training program. Besides, as it was stated by Taylı (2010), it would be better to plan the training program after deciding which program type (i.e., peer tutoring, special friendship, peer counseling or peer leadership) is to be used.

Some of the peer helpers made some comments and suggestions for revising the training program and implementation. Their recommendations were related to the content, location, and the time schedule of the training. As it was emphasized in the evaluation forms by one of the peer helpers (Peer Helper-13, male), the training should involve more role-playing exercises. In addition, the same participant stated that the training environment is very crucial for effective listening. In another study, the peer helpers stressed the importance of role-playing, defined role-playing interviews as one of the most effective components of the training, and suggested more of such exercises since they thought conducting role-playing exercises prepared them for their peer helping roles (Aladağ, 2005). Thus, the training program, exercises, and the training environment should be well planned before the implementation. Furthermore, the training environment could be selected as an appropriate place for “circle time” (Sellman, 2002, p. 8). In another research, it was also emphasized that peer helping training would be more effective if students sat on

a circle of chairs during lecture or activities (Mosley, 1996 as cited in Selman, 2002). Thus, in future research, seating arrangement needs to be well organized to increase social interactions among group members during the training period. Moreover, the training was found to be very long by some of the peer helpers; thus, it might be recommended that training time and duration could be planned according to the students' needs or opinions. For example, it might be planned more than once in a week in future research (it could possibly be planned with the support of the school staff also).

Additionally, since the assumptions required to carry out parametric statistical tests were not met and the number of members in each group was under 30, the researcher had to use non-parametric statistical tests for data analysis; this situation might have affected the power of the results of the present study. Thus, future research is recommended to include larger samples to overcome this potential limitation.

Because of the time restriction, a follow-up test was not thought as applicable in this research; however, in future research it is recommended to apply follow-up tests to measure long-term effects of the program. Follow-up tests might also be required to evaluate the effects of the peer helpers' service delivery (implementation phase). Thus, better and significant findings could be reached if longitudinal studies are carried out to investigate the effects of both training and program implementations. For example, unlike the findings of the current study, in some qualitative research (e.g., Çetin et al., 2014; Kaçmaz, 2011; Törnüklü, 2011) in which peer helpers provided service delivery, it was found that peer helpers significantly improved their self-esteem. Thus, it can be claimed that not just receiving training but also serving as peer helpers might support higher self-esteem. It can be also stated that future research might be well planned to examine the impacts of peer mediation program for two or three years since it requires time to really adopt and successfully implement these programs at schools.

Furthermore, in this study, only boys ($n = 4$) left the training program since they found the program so demanding. However, gender effect was not examined, so future research might investigate the possible gender impact. Also, based on the qualitative findings related to the development of prosocial behaviors, it is recommended that future research should collect and analyze data about prosocial behaviors by using quantitative instruments. Besides, in future research, the principals and teachers might be interviewed or given an evaluation form to collect more data about the peer helpers' behavioral improvements after the training. This might prevent limitations for instrumentation as well.

Moreover, the sample in the current study was small since it was selected from among a small number of students and only from one school. In order to have a larger sample, future research might include more than one school and different school districts if the number of students is not sufficient. Also, this study might be replicated in another school district to explore the possible impacts of distinct school populations. By this means, results of future research might be generalized to broader settings.

In addition, if peer mediation programs are clearly designated, research studies can be reliably replicated. If not, it might become very difficult to replicate since there are various peer helping program types (Kolan, 1999). Furthermore, developing a structured and standardized training model might decrease the effects of the researchers on the success of the program. In order to evaluate this, the same program might be implemented by different researchers or in different districts. Thus, it might be concluded that standardized training programs for distinct types of peer helping programs and for different grade levels need to be developed in Turkey. Regarding the general results of this study, it can be also stated that peer helping program might be implemented and evaluated at different settings across Turkey and at various educational levels (especially in primary education level).

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APPENDICES

A. The Teacher Suggestion Form / Öğretmen Öneri Formu

2017-2018 Eğitim Öğretim yılında, Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık Servisi tarafından okulumuzda uygulanması planlanan Akran Yardımcılığı Programında görev alabileceğini düşündüğünüz öğrenci isimlerini paylaşmanızı önemle rica ederiz.

Akran yardımcısı öğrenciler, okulumuzda arkadaş ilişkilerini geliştirme ve sürdürme konusunda sorun yaşayan, çatışma çözme becerileri ve sosyal beceri (empati kurma) yönünden yetersiz olan öğrencilere destek olmak amacıyla eğitim alacağı için, önerdiğiniz öğrencilerin dinleme ve başkalarını anlayabilme gibi becerilere yatkın olması gerekmektedir. Akademik başarı önemli bir koşul değildir. Bunlara ek olarak, öğrencilerin seçiminde göz önünde bulundurulması gereken diğer faktörler aşağıda yer almaktadır (Myrick, 1997):

1. Kendilerine, başkalarına ve okula karşı olumlu tutuma sahip olan öğrenciler,
2. Kolayca arkadaş olabilen, duyarlı, başkalarına yardımcı olmaktan hoşlanan öğrenciler,
3. Kendini ifade becerisi yüksek olan ve arkadaşları tarafından saygı duyulan öğrenciler,
4. Sorumluluk almaya istekli öğrenciler,
5. Gruba ve grup çalışmalarına katılmaya gönüllü olan öğrenciler,
6. Liderlik potansiyeli olan öğrenciler.

S.N.	Öğrencinin Adı-Soyadı:	Sınıfı:
1		
2		
3		

Not: Önerdiğiniz öğrenci isimlerinin yer aldığı bu formu 24.11.2017 tarihine kadar Rehberlik Servisine iletmeniz gerekmektedir. Desteyiniz için teşekkür ederiz.

Formu Dolduran Öğretmenin

Adı - Soyadı:

Tarih:

İmza:

Dilanur TAŞKIN ÇİFTÇİ
Okul Psikolojik Danışmanı

B. Sociometric Test / Sosyometrik Test

Sevgili Öğrenciler,

Aşağıda yer alan sorulara vereceğiniz yanıtlar okulumuzda başlatılacak olan akran yardımcılığı projesinde yer alacak gönüllü akran yardımcılarının seçilmesinde etkili olacaktır. Paylaştığınız isimler gizli tutulacaktır. Yardımlarınız için teşekkürler.

Dilanur TAŞKIN ÇİFTÇİ

Okul Psikolojik Danışmanı

- I. Bir sorun yaşadığınızda konuşmak isteyeceğiniz, güvendiğiniz, size yardım edeceğine inandığınız ve anlattıklarınızı gizli tutacağını düşündüğünüz sınıf arkadaşlarınızdan 3 kişinin ismini aşağıdaki 1, 2 ve 3 rakamlarının karşısındaki boş yerlere öncelik sırasına göre yazınız.

1.

2.

3.

C. Parent Invitation Letter / Veli Bilgilendirme Mektubu

Öğrencilerimizin kendi sorunlarını çözebilen, haklarını savunan ve başka insanların haklarına saygı gösteren, ilgi ve yeteneklerinin farkında bireyler olarak kendi ayakları üzerinde durmaları oldukça önemlidir. Aile ve okul ortamının güvenilir ve öğretici olması; öğrencilerimizin sosyal, duygusal ve akademik gelişiminde en önemli etkenlerdir.

Okul ortamında, öğrenci ve öğretmen arasındaki iletişim kadar öğrencilerin birbirleri ile iletişimi de oldukça önemlidir. Çünkü arkadaşlar bireylerin yaşamındaki en etkili yardım ve destek kaynaklarından birini oluşturmaktadır. Öğrenciler arasındaki işbirliği okul iklimini de olumlu yönde etkilemekte, öğrenciler arasında şiddet içeren davranışları azaltmakta, olumlu davranışları ve akademik başarıyı arttırmaktadır. “Akran Yardımcılığı Programı” da bu amaçlara hizmet eden gelişimsel bir yaklaşımdır.

Peki, Nedir Akran Yardımcılığı?

“Gönüllü bir grup öğrencinin belirli bir plan çerçevesinde seçilerek, bir ön eğitimden geçirildikten sonra okul psikolojik danışmanının gözetimi altında diğer öğrencilere akademik ve sosyal alanlarda destek vermesidir”.

Okulumuzda 2017-2018 eğitim yılı içerisinde, Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık Birimi tarafından, okul idaresi, öğretmenlerimiz ve siz değerli velilerimiz işbirliğinde “Akran Yardımcılığı” programının uygulanması amaçlanmaktadır. Bu uygulama (Akran Arabuluculuğu) ve akran yardımcıları aracılığı ile öğrencilerin yaşadıkları sorunlarla başa çıkmaları için kendi çözüm yollarını üretmeleri, iletişim ve çatışma çözme becerilerini geliştirilmeleri hedeflenmektedir.

Öğrencimiz, de/da “Akran Yardımcısı” olabilecek öğrencilerden birisi olarak seçilmiştir ve yapılan görüşme sonrasında programa katılma konusunda gönüllü olmuştur. Akran Yardımcılığı uygulaması, programın sınırlılıkları ve eğitim süreci hakkında daha detaylı bilgi edinmek, sorularınızı yöneltmek ve yüz yüze görüşmek için sizi okulumuza davet ediyorum.

Görüşme Tarihi:

Görüşme Saati:

Yer: Mahmudiye Ortaokulu / Rehberlik Birimi

Dilanur TAŞKIN ÇİFTÇİ
Okul Psikolojik Danışmanı

D. Parent Consent Form / Veli İzin Formu

.../.../...

Sayın Velimiz,

Bu çalışma ODTÜ Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi ve Mahmudiye Ortaokulu Psikolojik Danışmanı Dilanur Taşkın Çiftçi tarafından Doç. Dr. Zeynep Hatipoğlu Sümer danışmanlığında yürütülen bir tez çalışmasıdır. 2017-2018 eğitim öğretim yılı içerisinde yürütülecek olan bu çalışmanın amacı; Akran Yardımcılığı Programının akran yardımcı öğrencilerin çatışma çözme becerileri, empati ve benlik saygısı düzeylerine etkisini incelemektir. Bu program sayesinde; akran yardımcıların iletişim ve yardım etme becerilerinin gelişeceği, okulda öğrenciler arası anlaşmazlıkların çözümünde arabuluculuk sağlanacağı ve arkadaşlık ilişkilerinin olumlu yönde gelişeceği öngörülmektedir.

Bu doğrultuda aday akran yardımcıları belirlenirken, öncelikli olarak 6 ve 7. sınıf öğrencilerine anket uygulanacak ve öğrencilerin derslerine giren öğretmenlerin görüşleri alınacaktır. Daha sonra programa katılacak akran yardımcıları okul psikolojik danışmanı tarafından yapılacak birebir görüşmeler sonrasında, öğrencilerin gönüllü katılımları esas alınarak belirlenecektir. Akran yardımcıları eğitim programı ders dışındaki saatlerde verilecek olup, toplamda 27 saat ve 18 hafta sürecek şekilde planlanmıştır. Eğitimin içeriğinde; iletişim, beden dili, dinleme, empati, iletişim engelleri, temel yardım becerileri, ileri düzey yardım becerileri, problem çözme basamakları ve verimli ders çalışma teknikleri gibi konular yer almaktadır. Eğitim sürecinin, Aralık ayı ikinci haftasında başlaması ve Mayıs ayı başında sona ermesi planlanmaktadır.

Sizin de bilginiz dâhilinde öğrencimiz eğitim programına katılacak ve program öncesi ve sonrasında becerilere yönelik 3 ankete yanıt vermesi gerekecektir. Öğrencimizin verdiği tüm cevaplar gizli tutulacak ve sadece bilimsel amaçlar için kullanılacaktır. Bu formu imzaladıktan sonra, öğrencimiz de siz de uygulamadan istediğiniz zaman ayrılma hakkına sahipsiniz. Araştırma bulguları isteğiniz dâhilinde, sene sonunda, okul rehberlik birimi tarafından tarafınıza bildirilebilir.

Teşekkür ederiz.

Dilanur Taşkın Çiftçi
Psikolojik Danışman ve Rehber Öğretmen
Mahmudiye Ortaokulu / Eskişehir

.....
Velisi bulunduğum isimli, numaralı öğrencinin Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık bölümü tarafından planlanan ve okul idaresi-veli-öğretmen işbirliğinde yürütülecek olan “Akran Yardımcılığı” programına; Akran Yardımcısı olarak katılmasında hiçbir sakınca yoktur. Akran Yardımcılığı programı, öğrencilere verilecek eğitim, uygulamanın avantajları ve sınırlılıkları hakkında gerekli bilgilendirme, okul psikolojik danışmanı Dilanur Taşkın Çiftçi aracılığıyla, tarihinde tarafıma yapılmıştır. Öğrencimin istemediği takdirde uygulamadan ayrılabilceği konusunda bilgilendirildim. Çalışmada edinilen bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlar çerçevesinde kullanılmasına izin veriyorum.

Velinin Adı-Soyadı:

İmza:

İletişim Bilgileri (Telefon & Adres):

E. Informed Consent Form / Bilgilendirilmiş Onam Formu

Bu çalışma ODTÜ Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi ve Mahmudiye Ortaokulu Psikolojik Danışmanı Dilanur Taşkın Çiftçi tarafından Doç. Dr. Zeynep Hatipoğlu Sümer danışmanlığında yürütülen bir tez çalışmasıdır. Çalışmanın amacı akran arabuluculuk programını Mahmudiye Ortaokulunda uygulamak ve programın akran yardımcılarının çatışma çözme becerileri, empati ve benlik saygısı düzeyleri üzerindeki etkililiğini incelemektir.

Akran yardımcılarının Aralık 2017 ve Mayıs 2018 tarihleri arasında, 27 saat ve 18 hafta sürecek eğitim alması planlanmaktadır. Akran yardımcı öğrencilerin seçilmesi ve eğitime katılma sürecinde gönüllülük esas alınmaktadır. Akran yardımcı öğrencilerden bilgi toplama sürecinde 4 farklı ölçek kullanılacaktır. Bunlardan üç tanesi ön-test ve son-test olarak uygulanacaktır. Katılımcıların vereceği cevaplar kesinlikle gizli kalacak, sadece araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Ayrıca edinilen bilgiler sadece bilimsel amaçlar çerçevesinde kullanılacaktır.

Anketler katılımcıları rahatsız edecek sorular içermemektedir. Fakat katılım sürecinde rahatsız olduğunuz takdirde, soruları cevaplandırmama ve eğitimden ayrılma hakkına sahipsiniz. Böyle bir durumda çalışmayı yürüten okul psikolojik danışmanına anketi tamamlayamadığınızı ve eğitime devam etmek istemediğinizi söylemeniz yeterli olacaktır.

Eğitim sürecini tamamladıktan ve anketler uygulandıktan sonra, okul psikolojik danışmanı sizi çalışmanın sonuçları hakkında bilgilendirecektir. Çalışmaya katılımınız ve değerli katkınız için teşekkürler. Çalışma hakkında detaylı bilgi için Mahmudiye Ortaokulu Psikolojik Danışmanı, Dilanur Taşkın Çiftçi ile iletişime geçebilirsiniz. (Mahmudiye Ortaokulu Rehberlik Servisi; e-mail: dilanurtn@gmail.com).

Bu çalışmaya tamamen kendi isteğimle katılıyorum ve çalışmayı istediğim zaman bırakma hakkım olduğunu biliyorum. Çalışmaya sunduğum bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlar için kullanılmasına izin veriyorum. (Lütfen, bu formu doldurduktan ve imzaladıktan sonra okul psikolojik danışmanına iletiniz).

Öğrencinin Adı-Soyadı

Tarih

İmza

----/----/----

**F. The Scale for Identification of Conflict Resolution Behaviors / atışma özme
Davranışlarını Belirleme Ölçeđi**

Deđerli öğrenciler aşağıda kişilerin arkadaş ilişkilerinde yaşadığı bir takım durumlar ifade edilmiştir. Her ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyun, sonra da genel olarak bu tür durumlarda nasıl davrandığınızı düşünün ve ifadelerin sağ tarafındaki sayılar arasında sizi en iyi tanımlayanı seçerek üzerine (X) işareti koyun. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap yoktur. Genel olarak, seçenekleri düşünerek size uygun olanı işaretleyiniz.

Katıldığınız için teşekkür ederim.

Hiç Uygun Değil	Biraz Uygun	Uygun	Oldukça Uygun	Çok Uygun
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1. Çok önem verdiğim ve gizli tuttuğum bir konuda arkadaşım gelişigüzel konuşursa onunla kavga ederim.
2. Sınıfta iki çocuğun bir top başında tartıştıklarını görsem gidip onların yaptığının yanlış olduğunu söylerim.
5. Arkadaşım okulda benim hakkımda yalan yanlış dedikodu yapsa bende onun hakkında dedikodu yaparım.
6. Sevdiğim kişi başka bir arkadaşımın yanında bana aptal dese onunla yalnız kaldığımda niçin böyle konuştuğunu sorar ve çok üzüldüğümü söylerim.
11. Öğretmen sınıf içi çalışmalarda bana görev verse ve bunu başka birisi de istediği için öğretmene benim istemediğimi söyleyerek görevi alsın o arkadaşımınla bir daha konuşmam.
12. Sevdiğim kişi benim bazı hareketlerimden rahatsız olduğunu söylerse onunla bunların neler olduğunu konuşurum.
17. Bir grubun okul çıkışında bizim sınıfın eşyalarına zarar verdiğini görsem sınıf arkadaşlarımı alarak onlarla kavga ederim.
18. Sınıf arkadaşım ailesi ile olan tartışmadan dolayı derslerinde geri kalsa o arkadaşımın ailesiyle konuşması için yardımcı olurum.

G. The Empathy Scale for Children and Adolescents-Turkish Form / Çocuklar ve Ergenler için Empati Ölçeği-Türkçe Form

Aşağıda yer alan her ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyun, ifadelerin sağ tarafındaki evet-hayır kısımlarından size en uygun olanı seçerek üzerine (X) işareti koyun. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap yoktur. Genel olarak, seçenekleri düşünerek size uygun olanı işaretleyiniz.

Katıldığınız için teşekkür ederim.

Evet	Hayır
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1. Oynayacak arkadaş bulamayan bir kız çocuğu görmek beni üzer.
2. Mutluluktan ağlayan erkekler aptaldır.
4. Ağlayan bir erkek çocuğu gördüğümde ben de ağlamaklı olurum.
5. Bir kız çocuğunun incindiğini görmek beni üzer.
7. Bazen televizyon seyrederken ağlarım.
9. Birinin neden üzgün olduğunu anlamak benim için zordur.
10. Yaralanmış bir hayvan görmek beni üzer.
16. Sınıf arkadaşlarımdan sürekli öğretmenin yardımına ihtiyacı varmış gibi davranması beni deli eder.
19. İnsanların acıklı bir film seyrettiklerinde ya da acıklı bir kitap okuduklarında ağlamalarının komik olduğunu düşünüyorum.

H. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale / Rosenberg Benlik Saygısı Ölçeđi

Ařađıdaki ifadelerin her biri iin yanında yer alan seeneklerden size en uygun gelen tek bir seeneđi iřaretleyiniz. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap yoktur. Genel olarak, seenekleri düşünerek size uygun olanı iřaretleyiniz.

Katıldığınız iin teşekkür ederim.

ok Doğru	Doğru	Yanlış	ok Yanlış
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1. Kendimi en az diđer insanlar kadar deđerli buluyorum.
3. Genelde kendimi başarısız bir kiři olarak görme eğilimindeyim.
6. Kendime karşı olumlu bir tutum iindeyim.
7. Genel olarak kendimden memnunum.
9. Bazen kesinlikle kendimin bir iře yaramadığını düşünüyorum.

I. Peer Helping Program Evaluation Form-Peer Helpers / Akran Yardımcılığı
Program Değerlendirme Formu-Akran Yardımcılar

Akran Yardımcılığı Eğitim Programı'nın siz katılımcılar tarafından değerlendirilmesi, programın içerik, süreç ve etkililiği açısından daha sonraki uygulamalarda yol gösterici olacaktır. Aşağıda yer alan açık uçlu soruları, eğitim grubundaki yaşantılarınızı düşünerek yanıtlayınız. Sorulara vereceğiniz içten yanıtlar için şimdiden teşekkür ederim.

Dilanur TAŞKIN ÇİFTÇİ

Okul Psikolojik Danışmanı

1. Akran yardımcılığı eğitiminde anlatılan konular ve yapılan uygulamalarla ilgili düşünceleriniz nelerdir?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
2. Eğitim sürecinin size göre olumlu yönleri nelerdi?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
3. Eğitim sürecinin size göre olumsuz yönleri nelerdi?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
4. Aldığınız eğitimi düşündüğünüzde, akran yardımcısı olarak okuldaki diğer öğrencilere hangi konularda destek olabileceğinizi düşünüyorsunuz?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
5. Akran yardımcılığı eğitimini başka arkadaşlarınıza da önerir misiniz? Neden?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

J. Group Logo



K. Approval Letter from Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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07 KASIM 2017

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç.Dr. Zeynep HATİPOĞLU SÜMER ;

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız yüksek lisans öğrencisi Dilanur TAŞKIN ÇİFTÇİ'nin "**Akran Yardımcılığı Programının Akran Yardımcıların Kişisel ve Sosyal Gelişimlerine Etkisi**" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay **2017-EGT-176** protokol numarası ile **20.11.2017 – 30.09.2018** tarihleri arasında geçerli olmak üzere verilmiştir.


Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.


Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil TURAN

Başkan V


Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL

Üye


Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR

Üye

BULUNAMADI
Doç. Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI


Üye


Doç. Dr. Zana ÇITAK

Üye


Yrd. Doç. Dr. Pınar KAYGAN

Üye


Yrd. Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK

Üye

L. Turkish Summary / Türkçe Özet

Akran Yardımcılığı Eğitim Programının Akran Yardımcıların Kişisel ve Sosyal Yeterliklerine Etkisi

1.1. Giriş

Aile özellikle yaşamın ilk yıllarında, bireyin gelişimi ve desteklenmesi açısından oldukça büyük bir önem ve etkiye sahiptir. Ancak, ilerleyen süreçlerde birey, çoğunlukla arkadaşlarından etkilenmeye başlar. Özellikle, ergenlik dönemiyle birlikte akranlar, bireyin hayatını daha çok etkilemektedir (Myrick, 1997). Ayrıca akranlar birbirlerinin problemlerini daha kolay kavrayabilir, akranlarının gözünde daha güvenilir bir izlenim yaratabilir ve akranları bir sorunla karşılaştıklarında daha ulaşılabilir olabilirler (Tindall, 1995). Bu nedenle, genç bireyler akranlarından destek alma konusunda daha isteklidirler.

Önceki çalışmalar, saldırgan davranışların (Vasquez-Neuttall & Kalesnik, 1987) ve kişilerarası problemlerin (Kulaksızoğlu, 2011) özellikle ortaokul yıllarında ortaya çıktığını göstermiştir. Ayrıca, okul psikolojik danışmanları, davranış problemlerinin ilkökul ve ortaokullardaki en önemli sorun olduğunu belirtmişlerdir (Uz-Baş, 2009). Bu sebeple, okullarda görevli psikolojik danışmanların, kapsamlı gelişimsel rehberlik programının önleyici ve iyileştirici stratejilerini kullanarak, okullardaki bu tür sorunları çözmeleri gerekmektedir. Bu stratejilerden biri akran yardımcılığıdır. Bütün öğrencilere ulaşılmasını ve bazı temel yaşam becerilerinin kazandırılmasını amaçlayan akran yardımcılığı programları, okul psikolojik danışmanlarına, okuldaki bazı problemlerle başa çıkma fırsatı sunmaktadır. Myrick, Highland ve Sabella (1995), akran yardımcılığı uygulamalarını, profesyonel olmayan akran yardımcılarının, belirli bir eğitim programı aracılığıyla, temel iletişim ve yardım becerileri hakkında eğitim aldığı ve eğitim sonrası süpervizyon hizmeti sağlanan bir süreç olarak tanımlamaktadır.

Okullarda akran yardımcılığı programlarının uygulanmasının çeşitli sebepleri vardır. İlk olarak, akranlar bireyin yaşamında büyük önem taşımaktadır; çünkü diğer öğrencilerin yakınlık hissettiği ve kaygılarını ele alma ve duygularını ifade etme şansı bulabilecekleri bir ortam yaratabilirler (Topping, 1996).

Ayrıca, Boxford (2006), aileden sonra en önemli etkenin, bireye sosyalleşme fırsatı sağlayan, okullar olduğunu iddia etmiştir. Öğrencilerin, okulda akademik gelişimlerinin yanı sıra, kişiliklerini şekillendiren bazı becerileri edinme fırsatına sahip olduğu bilinmektedir (Smith v.d., 2002). Buna rağmen, bazı araştırmalarda belirtildiği gibi, okullarda şiddet oranı önemli ölçüde artmış (Aküzüm & Oral, 2015) ve zorbalık davranışlarının yaygınlaştığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır (Salmivalli, 2002). Bu tür olaylar, okullar hakkında olumsuz izlenimler yaratabilmekte ve öğrenme sürecini olumsuz etkileyebilmektedir. Bu nedenle, okullardaki şiddet, dikkatle ve etkili bir şekilde ele alınması gereken çarpıcı bir konudur.

Öğrenciler, anlaşmazlıklarını çözmek için daima saldırgan davranışlara yöneliyorsa, yapıcı çatışma çözme becerilerini öğrenmeye ihtiyaçları vardır (Leimdorfer, 1995). Akran yardımcılığı programlarının bir türü olan akran arabuluculuğu, çatışan taraflar için bir kazan-kazan çözümü sağlayabilir. Johnson ve Johnson'a göre (2006), okullarda akran arabuluculuğu programının uygulanmasının iki sebebi vardır. Birincisi, güvenilir bir okul ortamı sağlaması; ikincisi ise, öğrencilerin hem okulda hem de günlük yaşamlarında yararlanabilecekleri temel yaşam becerileri kazanmasına fırsat tanınmasıdır.

Ayrıca, akran yardımcılığı eğitimi aracılığıyla, akran yardımcıları gerekli çatışma çözme ve empati becerilerini geliştirir ve benlik saygılarını arttırırlarsa, programın okul ortamına ve diğer öğrencilere de faydalı olacağı düşünülmektedir. Bu görüşü destekleyen çeşitli deneysel çalışmalar vardır. Akran arabuluculuk programlarının okul iklimini iyileştirdiği, okuldan atılma oranlarını, disiplin olaylarını ve şiddeti azaltmada etkili olduğu düşünülmektedir. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin iletişim becerilerini ve

benlik saygılarını geliştirerek, sosyal kimlik oluşumunu desteklemektedir (Sandy & Boardman, 2000).

Özetle, akran yardımcılarının sosyal beceri gelişimini, problem çözme, çatışma çözme becerilerini, empati ve benlik saygılarını desteklemek için, yaş düzeyine de uygun bir strateji olarak, akran yardımcılığı programlarının ortaokullarda uygulanmasına ihtiyaç vardır. Bu programların uygulanmasının, okullarda şiddet, zorbalık, çatışma ve saldırganlığı önleyebileceği varsayılmaktadır. Ayrıca akranlar, bireyin yaşamında önemli bir etkiye sahip olduklarından, arkadaşları için etkili birer rol model olabilirler. Bu sebeple, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programı, akran yardımcılarını çatışma çözme ve empati gibi temel yaşam becerileriyle donatabilir ve bu sayede akran yardımcılar, çatışma durumlarında akranlarına model teşkil edebilecek şekilde benlik saygılarını arttırabilirler.

1.2. Araştırmanın Amacı

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, ortaokullarda akran yardımcılarının çatışma çözme becerileri (saldırganlık ve problem çözme), empati ve benlik saygıları üzerindeki etkililiğini incelemektir. Araştırmada aşağıdaki sorulara yanıt aranmıştır:

1. Akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının akran yardımcılarının çatışma çözme becerileri (saldırganlık puanları ve problem çözme becerileri), empati ve benlik saygısı puanları üzerindeki etkisi nedir?
2. Deney grubu katılımcıları akran yardımcılığı eğitim programı değerlendirme formunda programı nasıl değerlendirmişlerdir?

1.3. Araştırmanın Hipotezleri

Çalışmanın nicel araştırma sorularına göre hipotezler şu şekilde sıralanabilir:

1. Akran yardımcılığı eğitim programı uygulanmadan önce, deney ve bekleme listesi kontrol gruplarının saldırganlık, problem çözme, empati ve benlik saygısı ön-test puanları arasında anlamlı düzeyde bir farklılık yoktur.

2. Akran yardımcılığı eğitimi uygulandıktan sonra, deney grubunun problem çözme, empati ve benlik saygısı son-test puanları kontrol grubu katılımcılarının son-test puanlarından anlamlı oranda yüksek; deney grubunun saldırganlık son-test puanları kontrol grubu katılımcılarının son-test puanlarından anlamlı oranda düşüktür.
3. Akran yardımcılığı eğitim programı uygulandıktan sonra, deney grubunun problem çözme, empati ve benlik saygısı son-test puanları, ön-test puanlarından anlamlı oranda yüksek, saldırganlık son-test puanları ise ön-test puanlarından anlamlı oranda düşüktür.
4. Akran yardımcılığı eğitim programı uygulandıktan sonra, bekleme listesi kontrol grubunun saldırganlık, problem çözme, empati ve benlik saygısı son-test puanları, ön-test puanlarından anlamlı düzeyde farklı değildir.

1.4. Araştırmanın Önemi

Önceki çalışmalar, akran yardımcılığı programlarının diğer öğrenciler, okul iklimi, okul rehberlik ve psikolojik danışma hizmetleri ve akran yardımcıları açısından etkili olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Okuldaki diğer öğrencilere etkileri açısından değerlendirilecek olursa, akran yardımcılarının, yalnızlık ve kaygı hislerinden kurtulmaya, kişilik gelişimine ve zorluklarla baş edebilmeye yardımcı olacağı belirtilmiştir (Widdicombe & Wooffitt, 1995). Bu doğrultuda, akran yardımcılığı programları, öğrencilerin sosyal gelişimlerini desteklediği için önem teşkil etmektedir.

Akran yardımcılığı programlarının okul iklimine etkisi incelendiğinde, program uzun vadede sürdürülür ve okul politikasının bir parçası haline getirilirse, öğretmen odaklı bir kontrol mekanizmasından ziyade öğrenci odaklı bir bakış açısının etkili olacağı düşünülmektedir. Ayrıca, akran yardımcılığı programı sayesinde, öğretmenlerin ders işlemeye daha çok zaman ayırabilecekleri (Hart & Gunty, 1997) ve öğretmenlere yapılan şikâyet oranlarının azalacağı düşünülmektedir (Sellman, 2002). Bu kapsamda, akran yardımcılığı programları, okul ortamını daha güvenli (Hart &

Gunty, 1997) bir yapıya dönüştürebilir; öğrenci ve öğretmen arasındaki iletişimi destekleyebilir (Schrumpf, Crawford, & Bodine, 1997).

Ayrıca, kapsamlı gelişimsel rehberlik programları aracılığıyla, okul psikolojik danışmanlarının, öğrencilerin kişisel, sosyal ve akademik gelişimlerini desteklemesi amaçlanmaktadır. Ancak, okullarda psikolojik danışma faaliyetlerine duyulan ihtiyaç arttığından ve kaynakların sınırlı olması sebebiyle, okul psikolojik danışmanları öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarını tek başlarına karşılama noktasında zorlanabilmekte ve okul idaresinin, öğretmenlerin, ailelerin veya diğer öğrencilerin desteğine ihtiyaç duyabilmektedirler. Bu doğrultuda, okul psikolojik danışmanları, özellikle ortaokul düzeyinde, önleyici bir strateji olan akran yardımcılığı programını tercih edebilir (Foster-Harrison, 1995). Çünkü akran yardımcıları, okul psikolojik danışmanı ve diğer öğrenciler arasında güçlü bir bağ ve iletişim sunması açısından önemlidir (Aladağ, 2005).

Akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, akran yardımcıları üzerindeki etkisini değerlendirecek olursak, mevcut çalışmalar akran yardımcıların eğitim programından faydalandıklarını, iletişim (Taştan, 2004) ve kişilerarası becerilerinin (Nazlı, 2003) yanı sıra öz-yeterlilik gibi becerilerinin de geliştiğini, akademik başarılarının arttığını ve okula karşı olumlu bir tutum geliştirdiklerini göstermiştir (Myrick, 1997). Akran arabuluculuk programları, aynı zamanda akran arabulucuların sorumluluk duygularını geliştirebilir, sosyal açıdan faydalı hissetmelerini sağlayabilir ve yardım etme isteklerini arttırabilir (Smith & Sharp, 1994).

Mevcut çalışmada, bir ortaokulda yürütülen akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, akran yardımcıları üzerindeki etkisi deneysel olarak test edilmiştir. Bu bağlamda, araştırmacılar veya okul psikolojik danışmanları, eğitim sürecinde karşılaşılan zorluklara karşı önlem alabilir, kendi çalışmalarını planlarken ve uygulama sürecinde, bu çalışmada etkili bulunan yöntem ve önerilerden faydalanabilirler. Özetle, kapsamlı gelişimsel rehberlik modelinin bir parçası olarak, akran yardımcılığı programları, okul psikolojik danışmanlarını ve öğrencileri destekleyebilir ve eğitim

alan öğrencileri temel yaşam becerileri ile donatmayı amaçlayan önleyici bir strateji olarak etkili olabilir.

2. YÖNTEM

2.1. Araştırmanın Deseni

Akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının etkililiğini ölçmek için, eşleştirilmiş ön-test son-test kontrol gruplu yarı deneysel desen kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışmada hem nicel hem de nitel veri toplanmıştır. Nicel veriler, 3 farklı ölçeğin deney ve bekleme listesi kontrol grubu katılımcılarına ön-test ve son-test olarak uygulanmasıyla elde edilmiştir. Nicel bulguları desteklemek ve deney grubu katılımcılarından eğitim programı hakkında geri bildirim almak için, araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen Akran Yardımcılığı Eğitim Programı Değerlendirme Formu-Akran Yardımcılar kullanılmıştır.

2.2. Örneklem

Araştırmanın hedef evrenini, 2017-2018 eğitim öğretim yılında Mahmudiye-Eskişehir’de bulunan ortaokul öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın ulaşılabilir evreni ise, toplam öğrenci sayısı 258 olan Mahmudiye Ortaokulu öğrencileri olarak belirlenmiştir. Mevcut çalışmada, aday akran yardımcılarını seçmek amacıyla sosyometrik test, öğretmen görüşleri ve mülakat yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Ayrıca aday akran yardımcılar bazı kriterlere göre seçilmiştir. Öğrencilerle yapılan mülakatlar sonucunda belirlenen 42 öğrenci çalışmanın örneklemini oluşturmuştur. Öğrencilerin ailelerinden gerekli izinler alındıktan sonra, katılımcı öğrenciler, bazı kriterlere (yaş, sınıf düzeyi ve cinsiyet) göre deney ve kontrol gruplarına atanmıştır. Eğitim programı uygulanmadan önce, hem deney grubu hem de bekleme listesi kontrol grubu, 12 kız ve 9 erkek öğrenci olmak üzere toplam 21 öğrenciden oluşturulmuştur. Fakat eğitim sürecinde programdan ayrılanlar nedeniyle, deney grubu 16 öğrenci ile eğitimi tamamlamıştır.

2.3. Veri Toplama Araçları

Bu araştırmada, bilgi toplamak amacıyla, Çatışma Çözme Davranışları Belirleme Ölçeği (Koruklu, 1998), Çocuklar ve Ergenler için Empati Ölçeği-Türkçe Form (Gürtunca, 2013), Rosenberg Benlik Saygısı Ölçeği (Çuhadaroglu, 1986) ve araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen, Akran Yardımcılığı Eğitim Programı Değerlendirme Formu-Akran Yardımcılar kullanılmıştır.

2.3.1. Çatışma Çözme Davranışlarını Belirleme Ölçeği (ÇÇDBÖ)

Bu ölçek, Koruklu (1998) tarafından, öğrencilerin çatışma durumları karşısındaki tutumlarını ölçmek amacıyla geliştirilmiştir ve 2 alt ölçekten (saldırganlık ve problem çözme) oluşmaktadır. ÇÇDBÖ, toplamda 24 maddeden oluşan, beşli Likert tipi bir ölçektir. Koruklu (1998) tarafından yürütülen bir çalışmada, ölçeğin psikometrik özellikleri 6, 7 ve 8. sınıflardan elde edilen verilere göre test edilmiştir. Koruklu, kapsam geçerliliğinin kontrolü için Ankara Üniversitesi uzmanlarına danışmıştır ve yapı geçerliliği için ise faktör analizi yürütmüştür. Bulgular, test tekrar test güvenilirliğinin saldırganlık alt boyutu için $r = .64$ ve problem çözme alt boyutu için $r = .66$ olduğunu göstermiştir. ÇÇDBÖ'nün iç tutarlılığını tahmin etmek için hesaplanan Cronbach Alpha korelasyon katsayısı, saldırganlık alt boyutu için .85 ve problem çözme alt boyutu için .83 olarak bulunmuştur (bkz EK-F).

2.3.2. Çocuklar ve Ergenler için Empati Ölçeği (CEEÖ) – Türkçe Form

Orijinal ölçek ilk olarak Mehrabian ve Epstein (1972) tarafından yetişkinler için empati ölçeği olarak oluşturulmuştur. Daha sonra, Bryant (1982) ölçeği, 22 madde halinde, çocuk ve ergenler için uyarlamıştır. Bu çalışmada, 21 maddeden oluşan, Çocuklar ve Ergenler için Empati Ölçeği-Türkçe Formu kullanılmıştır. Ölçeğin Türkçe formunda yer alan 2 numaralı madde, ayırt edicilik katsayısı .20 değerinden küçük olduğu için ölçekten çıkarılmıştır (Gürtunca, 2013). Ölçeğin güvenilirliğini belirleyen Kuder Richardson değeri .70 olarak ve test tekrar test korelasyon katsayısı .76 olarak bulunmuştur. Ölçeğin geçerlilik çalışması için Çocuklar ve Ergenler için Empati Ölçeği ile KA-Sİ Çocuk ve Ergenler için Empatik Eğilim Ölçeği arasındaki

ilişki hesaplanmıştır. KA-Sİ Empatik Eğilim Ölçeği-Çocuk Form ile ÇEEÖ arasındaki korelasyon katsayısı .60 olarak ve KA-Sİ Empatik Eğilim Ölçeği-Ergen Form ile ÇEEÖ arasındaki korelasyon ise .64 olarak bulunmuştur (*bknz* EK-G).

2.3.3. Rosenberg Benlik Saygısı Ölçeği

Bu ölçek (*bknz* EK-H), Rosenberg (1965) tarafından ergenlerin benlik saygısı düzeyini ölçmek amacıyla geliştirilmiştir ve Çuhadaroglu (1986) tarafından Türkiye’de ergenlerle kullanılmak üzere uyarlanmıştır. Dörtlü Likert tipi ölçek 10 maddeden oluşmaktadır. Ölçeğin test tekrar test korelasyon değerleri .82 ve .88 aralığındadır ve Cronbach Alpha .77 ve .88 değerleri arasındadır. Türkçe ölçeğin güvenirlilik çalışmasında, Cronbach Alpha güvenirlik katsayısı .75 olarak bulunmuştur.

2.3.4. Akran Yardımcılığı Eğitim Programı Değerlendirme Formu-Akran Yardımcılar

Eğitim grubu katılımcılarının, eğitim programı hakkındaki görüşlerini almak ve programın etkililiğini arttırmak için katılımcılardan geri bildirim almak amacıyla araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Bu form, 5 açık uçlu sorudan oluşmaktadır (*bknz* EK-I).

2.4. Eğitim Programı

2.4.1. Eğitim Programının Seçimi

Mevcut çalışmada, Uysal ve Nazlı (2010) tarafından geliştirilen Akran Yardımcılığı Eğitim Programının kullanılmasına karar verilmiştir. Çünkü bu eğitim programının, ortaokul öğrencileri üzerindeki etkililiği deneysel olarak test edilmiş ve program, öğrencilerin bilişsel ve psikolojik gelişim düzeylerine uygun bulunmuştur. Çalışmanın orijinalinde, programın akran yardımcıları ve diğer öğrenciler üzerindeki etkililiği test edilmiştir. Orijinal eğitim programı 2 bölümden oluşmaktadır ve toplamda 20 oturum-30 saat eğitim uygulamasını içermektedir. Eğitimin ilk bölümü, etik ilke ve sorumluluklar, iletişim, yardım etme ve temel yardım becerileri ile ilgili

konuları ve etkinlikleri içerir; ikinci bölümde ise ileri düzey yardım becerileri, akran yardımcılarının sorumlulukları, sınırlılıklar, yönlendirme süreci ve problem çözme basamakları ile ilgili konular ve etkinlikler yer almaktadır. Bu programı kullanmak ve revize edebilmek için gerekli izinler, ikinci yazarla irtibata geçilerek alınmıştır. Sonuç olarak, eğitim programı yine iki bölümden oluşacak şekilde, 18 oturum-27 saat olarak revize edilmiştir.

2.4.2. Eğitim Programı Uygulama Süreci

Bu çalışmada, eğitim programı, eğitim grubu katılımcılarına haftada bir gün şeklinde uygulanmıştır. Eğitim, araştırmacı tarafından, tez danışmanı gözetiminde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Her oturumun başlangıcında bir önceki oturum özetlenmiş ve araştırmacı, akran yardımcılara ödevleri hakkında geribildirim vermiştir. Ayrıca, bazı oturumlara katılamayan öğrenciler, araştırmacı tarafından oturumların amacı, etkinlikler ve ödevler hakkında bireysel olarak bilgilendirilmiştir. Genel olarak, eğitim grubu katılımcılarının oturumlara katılmama sebepleri şu şekilde sıralanabilir; ailevi durumlar, sağlık sorunları, oturum zamanının unutulması, gün sonunda okulda kalmayı istememe, öğrencilerin o gün okulda olmaması veya öğleden sonra okula gelmemesi. Ayrıca, kontrol grubunu eğitimden mahrum bırakmak etik bir sorun yaratacağından, 2017-2018 eğitim yılının sonunda bekleme listesi kontrol grubu katılımcıları da benzer, fakat daha kısa bir eğitim almıştır.

2.5. Veri Toplama Süreci

Çalışmanın başlangıcında, ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'ndan araştırmanın yürütülebilmesi için gerekli izin alınmıştır (bknz EK-K). Ayrıca yetkili yazarlarla irtibata geçilerek, bu çalışmada kullanılan ölçeklerin izinleri de alınmıştır. Katılımcıları deney ve bekleme listesi kontrol grupları şeklinde atadıktan sonra, ön-testler uygulanmıştır. Ön-testler uygulanmadan önce, katılımcıların yanıtlarının gizli tutulacağı vurgulanmıştır; ancak ön-test ve son-test sonuçlarının eşleştirilebilmesi için ölçeklere isimlerini yazmaları istenmiştir. Akran yardımcılığı eğitim programı sona erdikten sonra, hem deney hem de bekleme listesi kontrol grubuna son-testler

uygulanmıştır. Bu arada, deney grubu katılımcılarından nitel veri toplamak amacıyla, Akran Yardımcılığı Eğitim Programı Değerlendirme Formu kullanılmıştır.

2.6. Veri Analizi

Akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, akran yardımcılarının saldırganlık düzeyleri, problem çözme, empati becerileri ve benlik saygıları üzerindeki etkililiğini incelemek amacıyla, gruplar arası karşılaştırmalar için Mann-Whitney U Testi ve grup içi karşılaştırmalar için Wilcoxon İşaretli Sıra Testi gibi parametrik olmayan testler uygulanmıştır. Ayrıca, eğitim grubu katılımcılarının değerlendirme formlarında sunduğu nitel verileri değerlendirmek ve eğitim programının akran yardımcılarının kişisel ve sosyal gelişimlerine etkilerini nitel olarak incelemek için içerik analizi yürütülmüştür.

2.7. Çalışmanın Sınırlılıkları

Akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının uygulanması sırasında bazı sınırlılıklar ortaya çıkmıştır. Öncelikle, bu çalışma Mahmudiye-Eskişehir'deki okullardan birinde yürütüldüğü ve katılımcılar sadece o okuldaki 6 ve 7. sınıf öğrencileri arasından seçildiği için, bu koşullar sonuçların diğer ortaokullara genelleştirilmesini engellemektedir. İkincisi, aday akran yardımcılar gruplara rastgele atanmadığından, bu durum araştırmanın iç geçerliliğini tehdit etmektedir. Üçüncüsü, ölçeklerin kendini değerlendirmeye dayalı olması ve akran yardımcılarının değerlendirme formlarını yanıtlarken isim bilgilerinin alınması, sosyal beğenirlik açısından yanlış yanıt vermelerine yol açmış olabilir.

Diğer bir sınırlılık, bazı katılımcıların eğitim programından ayrılması ile ilişkilidir. Akran yardımcılığı eğitim programı, 18 haftalık bir uygulama olduğu için, bu süreçte çeşitli sorunlar ortaya çıkmıştır. Dolayısıyla, eğitim sürecinin sonunda programdan ayrılan öğrencilerin oranı % 19.05 olmuştur. Ayrıca planlanmamış bazı olaylar, eğitim grubu katılımcılarının programdan ayrılmasını etkilemiş olabilir. Örneğin, ikinci yarıyıl ders dışı bazı kursların (destekleme yetiştirme kursları, sanat ve spor

aktiviteleri) haftalık programları deęiřtięi iin akran yardımcılıęı eęitimi uygulama saatleri ile akıřmıřtır. Eęitim grubu iin, tm ęrencilere uyan zamanın/gnn belirlenmesi olduka zor olmuřtur. Bu nedenle bazı ęrenciler programdan ayrılmak zorunda kalmıřtır. Bunun yanı sıra, ęrencilerin bazıları sınavlara hazırlık sreci ve genel akademik bařarıları hakkında duydukları endiře nedeniyle programdan ayrılmıřtır. Son olarak, devamsızlık, eęitim programı uygulama srecinde karřılařılan bir dięer sınırlılıktır.

3. BULGULAR

İlk olarak, parametrik istatistik analizlerini yrtmek iin parametrik varsayımlar test edilmiřtir. Bazı varsayımlar karřılanmadıęından ve hem deney hem de bekleme listesi kontrol grubundaki katılımcı sayıları 30'un altında olduęundan, parametrik olmayan analizler kullanılmıřtır.

Saldırganlık, problem özme, empati ve benlik saygısı leklerinden elde edilen n-test puanlarına gre, eęitim ve bekleme listesi kontrol grupları arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark olmadıęı grlmřtr. Bu sonularla ilgili olarak, akran yardımcılıęı eęitim programı uygulanmadan nce, her iki grubun saldırganlık, problem özme, empati ve benlik saygısı puanları aısından eřdeęer olduęu sylenebilir.

Ayrıca, eęitim grubu saldırganlık son-test puanlarının bekleme listesi kontrol grubu son-test puanlarından anlamlı derecede farklı olduęu sonucuna ulařılmıřtır. Eęitim grubu saldırganlık n ve son-test puanları arasında ise anlamlı bir fark bulunamamıřtır. Bunun yanı sıra, bekleme listesi kontrol grubu saldırganlık son-test puanları, n-test puanlarıyla kıyaslandıęında, anlamlı oranda medyan deęiřiklięi grlmřtr.

Problem özme alt leęi deęerlendirildięinde, eęitim grubu son-test puanlarının bekleme listesi kontrol grubu son-test puanlarından anlamlı lde farklı olmadıęı bulunmuřtur. Ayrıca, eęitim grubu son-test puanlarının n-test puanlarından anlamlı

derecede farklı olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Bekleme listesi kontrol grubunun son-test puanları ve ön-test puanları arasında ise anlamlı bir farklılık gözlemlenmemiştir.

Bu sonuçlara ek olarak, eğitim sonrası grupların empati ölçeğinden aldıkları puan dağılımlarının benzer olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca hem eğitim grubu hem de bekleme listesi kontrol grubu katılımcılarının empati son-test puanları ile ön-test puanları arasında anlamlı bir farklılık bulunamamıştır. Ayrıca, eğitim sonrası bekleme listesi kontrol grubu ve eğitim grubunun benlik saygısı ölçeğinden aldığı puanlar arasında anlamlı derecede bir farklılık bulunamamıştır. Dahası, eğitim grubunun benlik saygısı son-test puanlarının ön-test puanlarından anlamlı oranda farklılık göstermediği ve bekleme listesi kontrol grubunun benlik saygısı son-test puanlarının ön-test puanlarından anlamlı derecede farklı olmadığı sonuçlarına ulaşılmıştır.

Öte yandan, eğitim grubu katılımcılarının, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programı değerlendirme formlarında verdikleri yanıtların içerik analizinin ardından, nitel bulgular 3 ana tema ve 9 alt tema altında sınıflandırılmıştır. Bu temalar şu şekilde sunulabilir:

1. Akran yardımcılarının yeterlilikleri

Akran yardımcılarının yardımcı olabileceklerini düşündükleri konular

Akran yardımcılarının rolleri, becerileri ve sorumlulukları hakkındaki farkındalıkları

2. Eğitim programının faydaları

Kişilerarası ilişkilerin gelişimi

Kişisel yeterlik

3. Akran yardımcılarının eğitim programı hakkındaki değerlendirmeleri

Eğitim programının öğretim yöntemleri hakkındaki görüşler

Eğitim programının içeriği hakkındaki görüşler

Eğitim sürecinde hissettikleri duygular

Eğitim sürecinde karşılaştıkları zorluklar ve önerileri

Arkadaşlarına akran yardımcısı olmayı önerme oranları

Özetle, bu çalışmanın nicel sonuçlarına göre, eğitim grubu saldırganlık son-test puanları ve bekleme listesi kontrol grubu saldırganlık son-test puanları arasında anlamlı oranda bir farklılık gözlemlenmiştir. Ayrıca, bekleme listesi kontrol grubunun saldırganlık son-test puanları, ön-test puanlarından anlamlı ölçüde farklı bulunmuştur. Öte yandan, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, eğitim grubunun problem çözme becerileri üzerinde anlamlı düzeyde etkili olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Nitel bulgulara göre, eğitim grubu katılımcıları, tartışan taraflar arasındaki çatışmaları çözebileceklerini, iletişim becerilerini ve olumlu sosyal davranışlarını geliştirme fırsatı bulduklarını belirtmiştir. Ayrıca, akran yardımcıları programa katıldıkları için memnun olduklarını ifade etmiştir. Bunun yanı sıra, eğitim programı, akran yardımcıların yarısı tarafından bilgilendirici ve faydalı bulunmuştur. Son olarak, eğitim grubundaki tüm katılımcılar arkadaşlarına akran yardımcısı olmayı önereceklerini belirtmiştir.

4. TARTIŞMA

4.1. Araştırma Bulgularının Tartışılması

Mevcut çalışmada, katılımcıların çatışma çözme becerileri, saldırganlık ve problem çözme alt ölçekleriyle değerlendirildiği için, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, akran yardımcıların saldırganlık ve problem çözme becerilerine etkisine ilişkin nicel sonuçlar birlikte ele alınmıştır. İlk olarak, saldırganlık ön-test puanlarının karşılaştırması, eğitim ve bekleme listesi kontrol grupları arasında anlamlı bir fark olmadığını göstermiştir (Hipotez 1). Öte yandan, eğitim grubu saldırganlık son-test puanları, bekleme listesi kontrol grubu son-test puanlarından anlamlı derecede farklı bulunmuştur (Hipotez 2). Ancak, eğitim grubu saldırganlık son-test puanları, ön-test puanlarından anlamlı düzeyde farklı bulunmamıştır (Hipotez 3). Bekleme listesi kontrol grubu saldırganlık son-test puanları ise, ön-test puanlarından anlamlı düzeyde farklıdır (Hipotez 4). Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma sağlam istatistiksel dayanaklar sunamamasına rağmen, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, akran yardımcıların saldırgan davranışlarını engellediği (veya olasılığını azalttığı) söylenebilir. Bu sonuçlarla ilişkili olarak, alanyazındaki bazı araştırmalar, arabuluculuk eğitiminin öfke puanları üzerinde anlamlı düzeyde bir etkisinin olmadığını göstermiştir (Sezen

& Bedel, 2015). Öte yandan, bazı deneysel çalışmalar, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, eğitim grubu katılımcılarının saldırgan davranışlarını azaltmada etkili olduğunu gösteren bazı bulgulara ulaşmıştır (Türk & Tümnüklü, 2016a).

Problem çözme becerilerine göre nicel bulgular değerlendirildiğinde, eğitim programını uygulamadan önce, eğitim ve bekleme listesi kontrol grupları arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunamamıştır (Hipotez 1). Eğitim sonrası, eğitim ve bekleme listesi kontrol grubunun problem çözme son-test puanları karşılaştırıldığında anlamlı oranda bir farklılığa ulaşamamıştır (Hipotez 2). Ayrıca, bekleme listesi kontrol grubu ön-test ve son-test puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark yoktur (Hipotez 4), ancak eğitim grubu son-test puanları, ön-test puanlarından anlamlı derecede farklı bulunmuştur (Hipotez 3). Bu durum, eğitim grubu katılımcılarına, problem çözme becerilerinin öğretildiği oturumların içeriği ve akışı ile ilgili olabilir. Bu becerinin (özellikle eğitimin sonuna doğru) katılımcılara öğretilmesi, cevaplarının kalıcılığını etkilemiş olabilir. Alanyazındaki birkaç çalışma, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programlarının, öğrencilerin problem çözme becerileri üzerinde etkili olduğu sonucuna ulaşmıştır (Koruklu & Yılmaz, 2010; Thompson & Smith, 2011).

Sonuç olarak, saldırganlık ve problem çözme alt ölçeklerinden elde edilen nicel bulgulara göre, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, akran yardımcıların çatışma çözme becerilerini desteklediği söylenebilir. Ayrıca, nitel bulgular da bu sonucu destekler niteliktedir. Değerlendirme formlarında, akran yardımcıları, arkadaşlarına çatışma çözme konusunda destek olabileceklerini belirtmişlerdir.

Araştırma bulguları, empati ön-test ve son-test puanları açısından, eğitim ve bekleme listesi kontrol grupları arasında anlamlı bir farklılık olmadığını göstermiştir (Hipotez 1 ve Hipotez 2). Ayrıca, bekleme listesi kontrol grubunun ön-test ve son-test puanları arasında (Hipotez 4) ve eğitim grubunun ön-test ve son-test puanları arasında (Hipotez 3) anlamlı ölçüde bir farklılık yoktur. Bu bulgular, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, akran yardımcıların empati becerileri üzerinde anlamlı düzeyde bir etkisinin olmadığını göstermektedir. Bu bulguların aksine, daha önceki çalışmalar

(Aladağ, 2005; Sharp & Cowie, 1998), akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının akran yardımcıların empati becerilerini anlamlı ölçüde geliştirdiğini göstermiştir. Öte yandan, Uysal ve Nazlı (2010) tarafından yapılan bir başka çalışmada, akran yardımcıların empati ön-test ve son-test puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunamamıştır. Araştırmanın nicel sonuçlarına göre, deneysel kanıtlarla desteklenmemesine rağmen, eğitim grubunun ortalama empati puanları bir miktar artmıştır. Tartışmak biraz spekülatif olsa bile, bu bulgu bazı nedenlerle açıklanabilir. Birincisi, aday akran yardımcıları, arkadaşlarının ve öğretmenlerinin önerileriyle, empatik eğilime sahip olan öğrenciler arasından seçilmiştir; bu durum eğitim grubunun empati ön-test ve son-test puanları arasında yalnızca küçük bir fark (artış) yaratmış olabilir. İkincisi, ortaokul müfredatındaki diğer bazı derslerde, öğrencilere iletişim becerileri, ben-dili ve empati gibi konularda dersler verilmektedir. Bu nedenle, bu değişkenler açısından, eğitim ve bekleme listesi kontrol grupları arasında anlamlı farklılıklar gözlemlenememiş olabilir.

Benlik saygısı ön-test ve son-test puanlarına göre, eğitim ve bekleme listesi kontrol grupları arasında anlamlı bir fark yoktur (Hipotez 1 ve Hipotez 2). Ayrıca, hem eğitim hem de kontrol gruplarının ön-test ve son-test puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunamamıştır (Hipotez 3 ve Hipotez 4). Dolayısıyla, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, katılımcıların benlik saygısı puanları üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olmadığı sonucuna varılabilir. Bu sonuçların aksine, alanyazında bazı araştırmalar (Aladağ, 2005), akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının akran yardımcıların benlik saygısını geliştirdiğini göstermiştir. Öte yandan, akran arabuluculuk eğitiminin etkililiğini inceleyen bir araştırmada, eğitim grubu katılımcılarının benlik saygısı ön-test ve son-test puanları arasında anlamlı oranda bir azalma olduğu bulunmuştur (Cardoza, 2013). Nicel sonuçlara göre, eğitim grubunun ortalama benlik saygısı puanları bir miktar artmıştır; ancak, bu durum bilimsel bulgular sunmak için yeterli görülmemektedir. Buna karşın, eğer eğitim grubu katılımcılarına, akran yardımcıları olarak görev yaptıktan sonra bir izleme testi uygulanmış olsaydı, benlik saygısı puanları anlamlı ölçüde artabilirdi. Ancak, mevcut çalışmada, eğitim 18 hafta

boyunca ve neredeyse akademik yılın sonuna kadar sürdüğü için, akran yardımcıları akran yardımcılığı hizmetini sunamamıştır.

Eğitim grubu katılımcıları, değerlendirme formlarında akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının, olumlu sosyal davranışlarını, çatışma çözme becerilerini ve iletişim becerilerini geliştirdiğini belirtmiştir. Bu doğrultuda, alanyazındaki çalışmalar incelendiğinde, benzer bulgulara ulaşılmıştır. Örneğin, akran yardımcılığı programlarının öğrencilerin olumlu sosyal davranışlarını (Smith & Sharp, 1994) ve çatışma çözme becerilerini (Cardoza, 2013) geliştirdiği sonuçlarına ulaşılmıştır. Ayrıca, birkaç araştırmanın sonuçları, akran yardımcıların iletişim becerilerini geliştirdiklerini göstermiştir (Eryılmaz, 2015; Taştan, 2004).

4.2. Araştırma ve Uygulamaya Yönelik Doğurgular

Mevcut çalışmada, deneysel kanıtlar, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının deney grubunun problem çözme becerilerini anlamlı ölçüde geliştirdiğini, eğitim grubu katılımcılarının ortalama saldırganlık puanlarının görece azaldığını ve saldırganlık puanlarındaki yükselişin önlendiğini ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, nitel bulgular, akran yardımcıların çatışma çözme becerilerini, olumlu sosyal davranışlarını ve iletişim becerilerini geliştirdiklerini göstermiştir. Bu nedenle, akran yardımcıları özellikle problem çözme becerilerini kazandırmak için, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının ortaokullarda uygulanabileceğini önermek makul olabilir.

Ayrıca, akran yardımcılığı programı, okullarda öğrenciler arasındaki çatışmaları çözmek ve azaltmak için alternatif bir yardım kaynağıdır. Özellikle, okullarda psikolojik danışma hizmetlerine duyulan ihtiyaç arttığında, akran yardımcılığı programları okul psikolojik danışmanlarına yardımcı olabilir. Gerekli eğitim ve süpervizyonun sağlanmasıyla, akran yardımcıları daha fazla öğrencinin ihtiyaçlarını fark edebilir ve karşılayabilirler. Bu çalışmada, akran yardımcıları, “başkalarına yardım etmek istediklerini” (olumlu sosyal davranış) ve “akranları arasındaki çatışmaları çözmek” becerilerine inandıklarını da belirtmişlerdir. Bu nedenle, akran yardımcıları gönüllü oldukları takdirde, okullarda çatışma çözümü sırasında önemli

birer destek kaynağı olarak görev alabilir ve okul psikolojik danışmanını destekleyebilirler. Mevcut çalışma, akran yardımcılığı eğitim programının okul psikolojik danışma süreci açısından ümit verici olduğunu, ancak eğitim programında değişiklik yapılması gerektiğini göstermiştir. Sonuç olarak, revize edilmiş güncel bir akran yardımcılığı programı, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB) Şiddet Eylem Planı'nda belirtilen şiddeti önleme stratejilerinden biri olarak uygulanabilir.

4.3. Gelecekteki Araştırmalar için Öneriler

Aday akran yardımcıları, bazı kriterlere göre seçildiklerinden ve zaten belli becerilere sahip olduklarından, bu becerilere ait ön-test ve son-test puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark bulma olasılığı azalmış olabilir. Bu doğrultuda, akran yardımcılığı programını uygulamadan önce, akran yardımcıların seçim sürecinin yeniden düzenlemesi önerilmektedir.

İkinci olarak, eğitim programı ve etkinliklerin iyi planlanması ve kararlaştırılan program türünü uygulamak için gereken becerilerle ilgili konuların programa dâhil edilmesi gerekmektedir. Örneğin, eğitim programına, öfke kontrolü yöntemleri ve bu konu hakkında daha fazla etkinlik dâhil edilmiş olsaydı, akran yardımcılarının saldırganlık puanları biraz daha azalabilirdi.

Ayrıca, parametrik istatistik testlerini gerçekleştirmek için gereken varsayımlar karşılanmadığından ve her gruptaki üye sayısı 30'un altında olduğundan, araştırmacı veri analizi için parametrik olmayan testler kullanmak zorunda kalmıştır. Bu durum, çalışmanın sonuçlarının gücünü etkilemiş olabilir. Bu nedenle, gelecekteki araştırmaların, daha büyük bir örneklem kullanması önerilmektedir. Son olarak, bu çalışmada, dönem sonu olması nedeniyle, izleme testi uygulaması araştırmaya dahil edilmemiştir; ancak, gelecekteki araştırmalarda programın uzun vadeli etkilerini değerlendirmek amacıyla, izleme testi uygulanması önerilmektedir.

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