

## Investigation of social skill levels seen in high school students from different variables

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### Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the social anxiety scale for high school students (ESKO) in terms of psychometric properties. The research has been studied on 200 students in total in the academic year of 2017–2018 in Samsun Sema Cengiz Büberci Technical and Vocational High School, Samsun Canik Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School and Samsun Gazi Anatolian High School. The ESCT consists of three sub-scales: fear of negative evaluation (ODK), social avoidance and unrest in general situations (G-SKHD) and social avoidance and unrest in new situations (Y-SKHD). When the findings were examined, there was no significant difference between adolescents' gender, age group, number of siblings, mother's education status, mother's profession, mother's self or stepmother, father's education status, mother's or father's status and family income. A significant difference was found between the social anxiety level of the adolescents, whether the mother was her own or stepdaughter, and the father's occupation and the rent or self-ownership of the house.

**Keywords:** Social anxiety, adolescent, scale, reliability, validity.

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## 1. Introduction

The fact that people are happy, healthy and educated forms the basis of social development.

Individuals who spend their emotional, cognitive and social developmental periods in a healthy way can be successful and happy. To be loved, accepted and communicated in the society are to develop good relationships by meeting these needs (Okumus, 2011). In order to achieve this aim, it is important to focus on social development in terms of age, gender, birth order in the family, number of siblings, family income, friendship and parenting attitude of parenting that can be affected (Durualp & Aral, 2010).

The term 'social phobia' was first used by Pierre Janet in 1903 and was described by Marx in 1970 as a clinical syndrome (Demir, 1997; cited in Noyan and Berk, 2007). Social anxiety (social phobia) is a common anxiety disorder that can be defined by the tendency to be embarrassed, humiliated, intensely feared by others in social settings and avoided feared situations (Akt. Aydin and Tekinsav-Sutcu, 2007; American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Epidemiological studies on the age of onset of social phobia indicate that social phobia started early, usually in adolescence, and the mean age at onset ranged from 13 to 18 years. Some new social or occupational needs (such as meeting new people and speaking in public) have been reported to start after 25 years of age unless it triggers this syndrome (Topcu, 2004). In recent years, the findings of epidemiological studies have suggested that the disorder is very common among children, adolescents and adults (Beidel and Turner 1998; cited in Aydin and Tekinsav-Sutcu, 2007).

All anxiety problems severely impair the daily functioning of children and their families. Children who have symptoms of social anxiety have difficulties in attending school, in academic subjects and in establishing and maintaining friendships. In addition, it has been reported that negative results such as depression, somatoform disorders, suicides, anxiety, alcohol and substance abuse are common in social studies together with social anxiety (Beidel, Turner & Morris, 1999, Essau, Conradt & Petermann, 1999, Stein and Walker, 2001; Akt. Aydin and Tekinsav-Sutcu, 2007). Children and adolescents with social anxiety may find it difficult to obtain information through the structured interview because of the fear of being evaluated negatively, the discomfort from interaction with unfamiliar people and avoidance behaviours. Therefore, self-report scale is an important method in evaluation (Johnson, Inderbitzen-Nolan & Anderson, 2006; Akt. Aydin and Tekinsav-Sutcu, 2007). The person may feel anxious for many reasons, for example, family attitudes, circle of friends, economic opportunities, bilateral relations, outward appearance, gender, not being accepted by their peers, test anxiety and fear of being alone. Limiting and over-protective parental style restricts the use of child's independence and abilities. This ultimately returns to the parent as a dependency. The irrelevant and exclusionary attitudes of the parent may cause the child to be strongly endorsed and accepted, as well as the fear of misinterpretation in the child. In future, these children may be socially concerned individuals (Allaman and Crandall, 1972).

Studies show that socially anxious individuals tend to over-protective, unrelated, reject and shame their own parents (Hudson and Rapee, 2000; Akt. Erkan, 2002). Socially concerned individuals are intensely interested in getting social approval from others (Akt Erkan, 2002; Ellis, 1962; Goldfried and Sobocinski, 1975). Today, considering the effect of media, any defect in appearance for an individual in adolescence is considered as unacceptable (Dogan, 2011).

The body image is positive or negative, together with self-esteem, eating behaviour, social phobia levels, sexual behaviour, social relationships and emotional life, which is variable (Cash and Fleming, 2002; Dogan, 2011).

In some studies on social anxiety, it is emphasised that there is no differentiation between genders, whereas in some studies, girls have significantly higher scores and higher rates of diagnosis than boys (Akt. Aydin and Tekinsav-Sutcu, 2007; Beidel et al., 1999, Compton, Nelson & March, 2000, Demir 1997, Essau et al., 1999).

The relationships between the ESL and other scales were investigated by the correlation analysis. For the internal consistency of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was calculated by using a split-half analysis by Guttman. The significance level was accepted as 0.05 in all analyses. Two different scales were used to determine the criterion validity of the IOC. One of them was the PES, which was developed in our country before and the other one is the continuous anxiety form of the RDSC. Correlations of these two scales were found as 0.75 and 0.66, respectively. These findings are in parallel with the studies examining the relationship between the ESL, anxiety and social anxiety scales. As the results of the reliability analysis of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha and the two-half reliability results show that the ESL has very good internal consistency. The Cronbach Alpha and the two-half reliability obtained for the whole scale were 0.88 and 0.85, respectively. For the sub-scales, the lowest Cronbach Alpha coefficient was obtained from the G-SKHD sub-scale (0.68) and the lowest two-half reliability coefficient was obtained from the Y-SKHD sub-scale (0.67). These results are similar to the previous studies (Akt. Aydin and Tekinsav-Sutcu, 2007; Inderbitzen-Nolan and Walters 2000; La Greca, 1999). Considering the analysis made, it was understood that all of SAS is a reliable and valid measure of social anxiety evaluation for middle school students in Turkey.

The sample of the study includes the students of the second grade between the ages of 12 and 15. It is thought that it will be appropriate to work with larger age groups and clinical sampling in the studies to be done after that (Aydin and Tekinsav-Sutcu, 2007).

## **2. Method**

In this section, the path followed and the validity-reliability process of the social anxiety scale for adolescents and adolescents are explained. In this study, a general screening model was chosen from descriptive research methods. The general screening models are screening arrangements made on a group, sample or sample to be taken from the whole or to obtain a general judgment about the universe in a universe composed of many elements (Karasar, 2010, p 79).

### **2.1. Problem**

Determination of social anxiety levels in high school students and examining them by various variables.

### **2.2. Sub-problems**

1. Do the social anxiety levels of high school students vary according to gender?
2. Do the social anxiety levels of high school students vary according to age?
3. Do the social anxiety levels of high school students vary according to class variable?
4. Is there a significant difference between the social anxiety levels and the number of siblings in high school students?
5. Is there a significant difference according to the social anxiety levels of the high school students and the mother 's being self or stepmother?
6. Is there a significant difference between the social anxiety levels and the mother's educational status in high school students?
7. Is there a significant difference in the social anxiety levels of the high school students according to the mother's occupation variable?
8. Is there a significant difference according to the social anxiety levels of the high school students and the variable of the father being self or stepmother?

9. Is there a significant difference between the social anxiety levels and the educational status of the father in high school students?
10. Is there a significant difference in social anxiety levels among high school students according to the father's occupation variable?
11. Is there a significant difference in the level of social anxiety among high school students and whether the parents are together or separately?
12. Is there a significant difference in the level of social anxiety among high school students and their families' monthly income level?
13. Is there a significant difference in the social anxiety levels of high school students and the variables of the house they live in?

### **2.3. Purpose**

The aim of this study was to measure the social anxiety levels of the ESL by applying Inderbitzen-Nolan and Walters (2000) to high school students to measure the psychometric properties of adolescents. When we look at the basic characteristics of adolescence; It is known that there are many concerns such as negative body perception, disapproval by peers, social appearance (liking, not accepting defects). ESCT is a scale developed and applied for 12–15 age group.

### **2.4. Working group**

The study was carried out with a total of 200 students (173 girls and 27 boys) studying in Samsun Sema Cengiz Büberci Technical and Vocational High School, Samsun Canik Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School and Samsun Gazi Anatolian High School.

### **2.5. Data collection tools**

ESCO-R developed for children instead of other children – veril, A my peers – were adapted to adolescents with small word changes rather than c playing games cegi and this form was called social anxiety scale for adolescents (SAS-A) (La Greca and Lopez 1998). ESC consists of 22 items, 4 of which are unrelated, as in the form of a child. It has been shown that the scale has a three-factor structure as in the form of a child (Inderbitzen-Nolan and Walters 2000). These sub-scales supported by factor analysis, fear of negative evaluation (FOE), social avoidance and unease in general situations (G-SKHD) and social avoidance and unrest in new situations (Y-SKHD).

## **3. Process**

The social anxiety scale for adolescents (ESLS) was translated into Turkish by three academicians and one English linguist expert in the field of clinical psychology. After comparing the items in the scale with the final shape, the scale was started to be applied. The scales were applied by students who were willing to participate in the research. Before the application, a brief description was given to the students about the purpose of the study and the students were told what they should pay attention to in the implementation of the scales. During the application, students were in the classes to answer questions. And it lasted for about 10–15 minutes.

### **3.1. Analysis of data**

The data obtained after the collection of the data were prepared for statistical procedures. Data were analysed using SPSS 16.0. Gender, mothers and fathers being self or stepmother, the parents were together or separated, and the house they rented or the t-test was carried out for their own variables. In addition, one-way analysis of variance was used for variables such as grade level, education level of the mother and father and their professions and the monthly income level of the

family. Tukey analysis was used for multiple comparisons. In order to determine the construct validity, the principal component factor analysis was made according to the "varimax" axis rotation method. The relationships between the ESL and other scales were investigated by correlation analysis. For the internal consistency of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was calculated by using a split-half analysis by Guttman. Tüm analizlerde anlamlilik düzeyi 0.05 olarak kabul edilmistir.

#### 4. Findings

**Table 1. Mann–Whitney U test results regarding sex of points taken from the ESKO**

Gender	N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	U	Z	p
Female	173	100,79	17437,00	2285,000	-181	218
Male	27	98,63	2663,00			

In Table 1, the mean score of the female students and male students in the research group was 100.79 and 98.63, respectively. Mann–Whitney U test was used to test whether the social anxiety levels of the adolescents in the study group differed significantly according to the gender variable. As a result of the analysis, it was seen that social anxiety levels in adolescents did not change according to gender.

**Table 2. Results of the Kruskal Wallis H test to determine whether the points obtained from the ESKO differ according to the age group**

Age	N	Mean rank	FD	p
10–13	4	4	12.9	0.353
14–16	140	140		
17–20	56	56		

$p > 0.05$

In Table 2, there was no difference between the scores of the students in the research group. Kruskal Wallis, non- parametric test from statistical tests, was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the social anxiety levels and age variables of the adolescents participating in the study group. As a result of the analyses, no significant difference was found between the age variable and social anxiety in adolescents.

**Table 3. The results of Kruskal Wallis H test to determine whether the points obtained from the ESLs differ according to the class variable**

Class	N	Mean rank	FD	p
9th. Class	23	112,37	3	380
10th. Class	49	89,08		
11. Class	100	102,99		
12. Class	28	101,86		
Total	200			

$p > 0.05$

In Table 3, there was no difference between the scores of the students in the research group. A nonparametric test, Kruskal Wallis analysis, was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the social anxiety level of the adolescents participating in the study group and the class variable they had read. As a result of the analyses, no significant difference was found.

**Table 4. The results of Kruskal Wallis H test to determine whether siblings differ according to variable**

Number of siblings	N	Mean rank	FD	<i>p</i>
0	26	111,77	4	569
1	62	100,18		
2	62	92,17		
3	30	101,68		
4+	20	110,90		
Total	200			

$p > 0.05$

In Table 4, a nonparametric test, Kruskal Wallis analysis, was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the social anxiety level of the adolescents participating in the study group and the class variable they had read. As a result of the analyses, no significant difference was found.

**Table 5. Non-parametric Mann–Whitney U test results for testing the significance of mothers of the points taken from the ESLS**

Parents to be self or stepmother	N	Mean rank	U	Z	<i>p</i>
Self	178	100,69	1924,000	-0.133	0.894
Step	22	98,95			
Total	200				

$p > 0.05$

In Table 5, analysis was conducted in order to test whether the social anxiety levels of the adolescents in the study group differed significantly according to the mother 's or step-one variable, and no significant difference was found between the social anxiety levels of the adolescents and the mother' s self or step being.

**Table 6. Kruskal Wallis H test results of the points obtained from the ESKO according to the mother's educational status variable**

Mother's education status	N	Mean rank	FD	<i>p</i>
Primary school	90	98,99	4	935
Middle school	50	101,89		
High school	47	103,04		
License graduate	12	99,96		
graduate	1	54,00		
Total	200			

$p > 0.05$

In Table 6, Kruskal Wallis analysis, which is a nonparametric test, was used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the social anxiety levels of the adolescents participating in the study group according to the educational status of the mother. As a result of the analyses, no significant difference was found.

**Table 7. The results of the Kruskal Wallis H test to determine whether the points obtained from the ESLS differ according to the professional variable of the mother**

Mother's profession	N	Mean rank	FD	<i>p</i>
Retired	18	88,17	3	761
Housewife	139	99,92		
Worker	17	101,97		
Officer	21	90,48		
Total	195			

$p > 0.05$

In Table 7, a nonparametric test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the social anxiety levels of the adolescents participating in the study group according to the occupation variable. As a result of the analyses, no significant difference was found.

**Table 8. Kruskal Wallis H test results for the differences of the score of the ESKO according to the educational status of the father**

Education status of father	N	Mean rank	FD	<i>p</i>
Primary School	75	98,45	4	221
Middle School	41	88,93		
High School	62	113,66		
License	18	88,78		
Graduate	4	106,38		
Total	200			

$p > 0.05$

In Table 8, a nonparametric test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the social anxiety levels of the adolescents participating in the study group and the educational status of the father. As a result of the analyses, no significant difference was found.

**Table 9. The results of the Kruskal Wallis H test to determine whether the points obtained by the ESKO differ according to the profession variable**

Father's occupation	N	Mean rank	FD	<i>p</i>
Retired	27	116,50	4	0.059
Self-Employment	36	85,71		
Worker	55	98,62		
Officer	33	85,82		
Artisan	34	79,94		
Total	185			

$p > 0.05$

In Table 9, a nonparametric test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the social anxiety levels of the adolescents participating in the research group and the father's professional variables. As a result of the analyses, no significant difference was found.

**Table 10. Mann–Whitney U test for the examination of the points taken from the ESKO according to the variable or separated parent findings**

Mother father having together	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	Z	<i>p</i>
Together	178	100,69	17923,00	1924,000	2177,000	0.894
Separate	22	98,95	2177,00			
Total	200					

In Table 10, Mann–Whitney U test was used to test whether the social anxiety levels of the adolescents in the study group differed significantly according to whether the parents were together or not. As a result of the analysis, it was seen that social anxiety levels in adolescents did not change according to gender.

**Table 11. Kruskal Wallis H test results for Whether the points obtained from ESKO differ according to the monthly income status variable**

Monthly income	N	Mean rank	FD	<i>p</i>
0–1,000	28	95,21	4	0.766
1,000–2,000	77	101,48		
2,000–3,000	59	102,04		

3,000–4,000	24	108,44
4,000+	12	83,08
Total	200	

$p > 0.05$

In Table 11, Kruskal Wallis analysis, which is a nonparametric test, was used to determine whether there is a significant difference in social anxiety levels of the adolescents participating in the study group according to the monthly income status variable. As a result of the analyses, no significant difference was found.

**Table 12. Mann–Whitney U test for the evaluation of the scores of the points obtained by the ESKO according to the rent or self-ownership variable findings**

House rent or own	N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	U	Z	p
Rent	72	109,18	7861,00	3839,000	-1798	0.076
Host	126	93,97	11840,00			
Total	198					

In Table 12, the Mann–Whitney U test was used to test whether the social anxiety levels of the adolescents in the study group differed significantly according to the rent or their own variables. As a result of the analyses, no significant difference was found.

## 5. Findings about validity

The principal component factor analysis was performed according to 18 items of ESLS and the varimax axis rotation method. As a result of the factor analysis, three factors were found to meet 48% of the total variance. This result is very suitable for the 3-dimensional structure of the scale. Table 2 shows that the items contained in the factors almost reflect the sub-scales of the scale. Only two items (3 and 20) were different from the original dimensions of the scale. The first factor (7 items) consisted of the items of the ODC sub-scale, but an item of the ODC sub-scale (item 3) was included in factor 3. According to Article 3, the highest factor is the load taken from factor 3, but the load from factor 1 is above 0.30.. The factor includes all of the items of the G-SCHD sub-scale and a factor of Y-SKHD (item 20). As seen in Table 2, item 20 has a burden of more than 0.30 on all three factors. The third factor includes the items of the G-SCHD sub-scale, excluding the third item. Correlation analysis was used to evaluate the relationship between the ESIQ sub-scales and the continuous anxiety scale as a criterion for external. The correlation coefficients obtained from the analysis are shown in Table 3. As seen in Table 3, correlation analysis was used to evaluate the relationship between the sub-scales of the ESLS with each other and as an external criterion for the PTSD and STSQ, and also the total score of the scale was statistically significant at the level of 0.01. The highest correlation coefficient (0.89) was found to be between the ASM sub-scale and the ESI, whereas the lowest correlation coefficient (0.51) was between G-SCHD and ODK sub-scales. The scale is also statistically significant as it is another factor that measures social anxiety. The highest correlation coefficients were between the total score of both scales and the total score of the PSSS. Correlation coefficients were 0.66, which evaluated social anxiety, and 0.66, with a continuous anxiety scale. As peer relations of the individuals with social anxiety problems are limited and it is known that they do not have many close friends, it is considered that the number of close friends of the students can be considered as an external criterion when examining the validity of the scale. One-way analysis of variance results in the total score of the total number of friends [F (3,1238) = 14.30  $p = 0.000$ ], ODK [F (3,1238) = 10.94  $p = 0.000$ ], Y-SKHD [F (3,1238) = 9.45  $p = 0.000$ ] and G-SKHD [F (3,1238) = 10.48  $p = 0.000$ ]. As seen in Table 4, according to the Tukey multiple comparisons test, it was found that the students who had no friends or only one close friend had significantly higher scores than the total ASK and sub-scales compared to those with two or more close friends. In other words, students who have no close friends or only one close friend have



significantly higher social anxiety levels than those with two or more close friends (Aydin and Tekinsav-Sutcu, 2007).

**Table 13. Correlation coefficients between the ESLS subscales and the WEEE and the ICDS continuous anxiety form**

Olcekler	ESKO	ODK	Y-SKHD	G-SKHD	CESFO	CDSKE (continuous)
ESKO (total)	-	0.89*	0.85*	0.75*	0.75*	0.66*
ODK		-	0.59*	0.51*	0.63*	0.61*
Y-SKHD			-	0.59*	0.65*	0.53*
G-SKHD				-	0.65*	0.52*
CESFO					-	0.77*
CDSKE (continuous)						-

\* $p < 0.01$

**Table 14. Comparison of ESRS scores by close friends**

Scale	Close friends				F
	Never (26)	Only one (96)	Two-three (334)	Four and above (786)	
ESKO (Total)	52.38 ± 13.61 <sup>a</sup>	48.97 ± 13.42 <sup>a</sup>	43.05 ± 11.56 <sup>b</sup>	42.10 ± 12.18 <sup>b</sup>	14.30*
ODK	24.85 ± 7.10 <sup>a</sup>	22.52 ± 6.80 <sup>a</sup>	20.07 ± 6.43 <sup>b</sup>	19.51 ± 6.53 <sup>b</sup>	10.94*
Y-SKHD	17.77 ± 5.14 <sup>a</sup>	17.53 ± 4.99 <sup>a</sup>	15.41 ± 4.57 <sup>b</sup>	15.16 ± 4.69 <sup>b</sup>	9.45*
G-(SKHD)	9.77 ± 4.00 <sup>a</sup>	8.92 ± 3.50 <sup>a</sup>	7.57 ± 2.99 <sup>b</sup>	7.43 ± 3.14 <sup>b</sup>	10.48*

ESKO: Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents, ODK: Negative Evaluation, Y-SKHD: Fear and Restlessness in New Social Situations, G- (SKHD): Fear and Restlessness in General Social Situations a, b, c. comparisons were made. There are statistically significant differences between the averages represented by different letters. \* $p = 0.000$

### 5.1. Findings about reliability

In order to determine the reliability level of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency and two-half reliability coefficients were calculated for each sub-test of the scale. As seen in Table 5, reliability coefficients are found that the ESR has the highest Cronbach Alpha coefficient (0.88), whereas the G-SKHD sub-scale consisting of four items has the lowest coefficient (0.68). The highest two-half reliability coefficient (0.85) was found to belong to the whole scale and the ODC sub-scale, whereas the lowest coefficient (0.67) to the Y-SKHD sub-scale (Aydin and Tekinsav-Sutcu, 2007).

**Table 15. Reliability coefficients for ESCT and all subscales**

Scales	Cronbach alfa	Two-half reliability
ESKO (total)	0.88	0.85
ODK	0.83	0.85
Y-SKHD	0.71	0.67
G-SKHD	0.68	0.71

## 6. Conclusion and suggestions

The following conclusions were drawn from the research in the city of Samsun to determine the social anxiety levels of the students who attending the Samsun Canik Vocational and Technical High School and Samsun Gazi Anatolian High School.

- The students participating in the research indicated that they were hesitant to do something new in front of others in some cases.
- Students have always stated that they like to do something with others.
- It was observed that the students were worried when they were confused.
- The students stated that they were embarrassed in some cases.
- Students often speak to people with very good witnesses.
- Students participating in the research stated that sometimes they feel that they are talking behind their peers.
- Students stated that they always read books.
- The students stated that they did not worry about the thoughts of others.
- Students stated that they were not afraid that others would not like them.
- The students said that they were not excited when they were talking to their peers who they knew.
- Students stated that they like to do sports.
- The students stated that they were not worried about others making negative comments about them.
- The students stated that they were not concerned about meeting new people.
- The students stated that they would not be anxious that others would not like them.
- Students stated that they were not stagnant when they were together with a group of people.
- The students stated that they were happy to do something on their own.
- The students stated that they did not think that others were making fun of themselves.
- The students stated that they did not develop the opinion that the other party would not like them when they entered into a discussion.
- The students stated that they were not afraid that the answer would be no when they offered something to the other person.
- The students stated that they were not anxious with other people.
- The students stated that they were not ashamed of their friends.
- The students said that they were not afraid of asking for something from others.

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