

## **Investigation of the Effect of the "Violence Reduction Psychoeducation Program" on Anger, Violence and Aggression Levels of Students**

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### **Abstract**

The study aimed to examine the effect of the "Violence Reduction Psychoeducation Program (VRPP) for Students 11-18 Years Old" on the anger, violence, and aggression levels of students. "Quasi-experimental Designs with Pre-test and Post-test Control Group" were used in the study. The sample of the study consisted of 114 students studying in Selçuklar secondary school affiliated to Mersin Provincial Directorate of National Education in the 2018-2019 academic year. The program was applied to the experimental group for 8 weeks with 1 session per week and 60-70 minutes in the conference hall of the school. To test the effectiveness of the program, the "Continuous Anger and Anger Expression Style Scale," "Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire" and "Aggression Scale" were used as measuring instruments. "Independent Sample T-Test," "Covariance Analysis" and "Two-Way Variance Analysis for Repeated Measurements" were used for data analysis. As a result of the research, it was observed that the program was effective in reducing the anger, violence, and aggression levels of the students and it was concluded that it is a valid and reliable program applicable to secondary school students in Turkey. Suggestions that such programs to prevent anger, violence, and aggression to be placed on the system of education and school curricula within the scope of preventive and developmental guidance and to be applied to students from an early age by the school psychological counselors have been made. It is thought that the program will contribute to the field of Psychological Counseling and Guidance as preventive guidance and will also be a pioneer in new studies in this field.

**Keywords:** Violence Reduction Program, Violence, Aggression, Anger, Adolescent Students

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## INTRODUCTION

Schools have two basic tasks, one is to educate students and to prepare them for life so that they can participate effectively in the adult world (Öğülmüş, 2006). In this process, students are expected to develop desired behaviors and to learn the information taught in schools. Unfortunately, unwanted behaviors are frequently observed in schools for different reasons. It is especially observed in schools that violent behavior among students is increasingly common (Bacıoğlu & Özdemir, 2012). Increasing violent events in schools day by day make these institutions far from being safe education places (MEB, 2015). Violence in school can have serious negative effects on the healthy development of students. When students fail to develop a healthy personality, they will appear as violent people in their adulthood using violence on the street, in traffic, in their workplaces, and even in their own homes. Different violent incidents that are reflected in the media every day reveal this.

Education of children is more important than adult education in preventing negative behaviors and combating crime because criminal personality formation can be prevented by early intervention (Kelley et al., 1997). The intervention programs that will be applied to students to reduce their anger, violence and aggression levels gain importance at this point. Moreover, there are studies showing that early intervention programs involving skills, such as communication, conflict resolution, empathy, emotion management, and anger management decreased students' violence and aggression (Akgün & Araz, 2014; Bacıoğlu, 2014; Donat-Bacıoğlu & Özben, 2011; Sağkal, 2011) and anger levels (Özbay & Erden 2011; Öz & Aysan, 2011; Serin & Genç 2011; Sütçü, Aydın & Sorias, 2010).

Unless there are early intervention programs, what do violence, aggression, and anger mean that can cause negative situations in students. According to Budak (2003), violence is the expression of aggressive feelings such as anger and hostility through the use of destructive physical force towards objects or people. Aggression, on the other hand, is a tendency that is accepted as naturally occurring in humans and arise in violent situations (Ayan, 2007). Violence is a style, and aggression is a feeling shaped in it. While aggression forms the basis of violence, violence refers to the part of aggression that has been turned into practice (Vatandas, 2003). The transformation of aggression into violence occurs with the interaction of an individual's social and psychological development, and hormonal and neurological structure (Lorenz, 1996). Risk factors in aggression turning into violence can be listed as family, close environment, peer group, school, unfavorable cultural and economic environment characteristics, inadequate communication and interaction environment, and negative learning experiences (Güçkiran, 2008). Violence is a form of aggression and it is the most intense form of aggressive behavior.

Anger, on the other hand, is a concept that can decrease the daily life quality of individuals with violence and aggression and cause serious problems, especially in interpersonal relations (Haskan & Yıldırım, 2014). According to Şahin (2005) anger is a state of emotion experienced by individuals who cannot positively express themselves in case the needs, wishes, and goals are prevented and injustices are experienced. According to Soykan (2003), anger is an emotional response to unwanted results, unfulfilled expectations, and unsatisfied requests. One of the reasons that disrupt the order of society and cause serious problems among people is the feeling of anger and a lack of information on how to deal with this feeling (Şahin, 2005). When the individual cannot express his anger in a controlled manner, reflects his anger with an aggressive attitude, or repress his anger, the person and those people around him can be seriously harmed.

Intense feelings, such as anger, violence, and aggressive behaviors, are common in adolescence. It is important to learn how to manage emotions such as anger experienced during adolescence and to control behaviors such as violence to survive this period. Anger and violent behaviors experienced during adolescence may cause adverse situations such as crime, violence, aggressive behaviors becoming permanent in further years, as well as the problems experienced by the adolescence period (Snyder, Schrepferman, Mc-Eachern & DeLeeuw, 2010). Therefore, it is necessary

to know the characteristics of the adolescence period to make appropriate interventions for adolescent students.

Adolescence is a period of rapid maturation and development in terms of psychological, biological, social, and cognitive aspects (Steinberg, 2007). Rapid changes occurring in the biological, cognitive, and social structure during adolescence, lack of knowledge and experience, not being able to think of events in multi ways cause create an imbalance in adolescents (Yavuzer, 1987). Adolescence is one of the difficult life periods experienced in terms of difficult problems encountered and solutions that need to be developed for these problems (Kulaksızoğlu, 2002). Adolescents need support in developing their communication, conflict resolution, and empathy skills, increasing their awareness and coping positively with their anxiety and feelings of anger to deal with these difficulties encountered during adolescence. In this regard, the function of schools, especially psychological counseling and guidance services, is very important. Professional support is essential for the solution of biological, psychological, and social problems experienced by students, especially during adolescence. This professional support can be provided by the implementation of effective intervention programs by the psychological counseling and guidance service in schools.

There are ten thousands of guidance counselors/psychological counselors currently employed at schools. It is very important to implement prevention, protective, and intervention programs for students to achieve a healthy developing generation as there is such a great power of counselors at schools. In a study, it was found that the guidance and counseling departments of schools, which are a great strength for schools, are not sufficiently effective in contributing to the development of students and solving their problems (Erdemir & Winter, 2017). Intervention programs should be developed and implemented to have more contributions of the guidance and counseling departments to the healthy development of students in schools (Kabasakal, Sağkal & Türnüklü, 2016; Koç, Terzi & Gül, 2015). It would be more effective to implement them as a part of the curriculum as the other courses (Akgün & Araz, 2010).

There have been studies conducted on the development and implementation of intervention programs for students. The programs developed for adolescent students and the research conducted on these programs are as follows: The effect of "Conflict Resolution Training Program" on aggression levels of students (Akgün & Araz, 2014; Latipun, Zainah, Nasir & Khairudin, 2012), The effect of "Peer Mediation Training Program" on aggression levels of students (Kabasakal, Sağkal & Türnüklü, 2015), The effect of "Peace Education Program" on students' violence levels (Coşkuner, 2008), The effect of "Character Education Program" on aggression levels of students (Çokdolu & Arslan, 2013), The effect of "Anger Management Education Program" on anger levels of students (Özbay & Erden, 2011; Serin & Genç, 2011), The effect of "Creative Drama Based Conflict Resolution Program" on aggression, anger and conflict resolution skills of students (Gündoğdu, 2009), The effect of "Group Practices Using Psychodrama Techniques" on aggression levels of students (Karataş & Gökçakan, 2009), The effects of "Violence and Aggression Prevention Program in Children and Adolescents" on aggression levels of students (Donat-Bacıoğlu & Özben, 2011), The effect of "Aggression and Anger Reduction Program" on anger and aggression levels of students (Gültekin, 2008), The effect of "Coping with Violence and Aggression Program" on aggression levels of students (Kılıçarslan & Atıcı, 2017), and The effect of "Training Program against Violence" on violence and conflict resolution skills of students (Uysal & Temel, 2009). Considering the previous studies, no programs were found aiming to develop communication, conflict resolution, emotion management, anger management, and empathy skills of students as a whole; and no studies were examining the effect of such a program on the communication, conflict resolution, and empathy levels of the students.

Therefore, there is a need for a program to be developed by the guidance counselors/psychological consultants for improving the communication, conflict resolution, emotion management, anger management, and empathy skills of students not individually but as a whole. "Violence Reduction Psychoeducation Program (VRPP)," which was developed by Akan (2018) and found to be effective on adult individuals' aggressiveness and basic life skills, has been revised per the

level of students to meet this need, and a program based on cognitive-behavioral approach has been implemented under the name of "Violence Reduction Psychoeducation Program (VRPP) for Students 11-18 Years Old".

This study aimed to examine the effects of the "Violence Reduction Psychoeducation Program (VRPP) for Students 11-18 Years Old" which was applied to students studying in 7th and 8th-grades. Therefore, the following hypotheses have been tested:

1. VRPP for students 11-18 years old affects the "Anger" levels of the students.
2. VRPP for students 11-18 years old affects "Violence" levels of students.
3. VRPP for students 11-18 years old affects "Aggression" levels of students.

## METHOD

### Research Model

In this research, a semi-experimental design defined as the "Pretest-Posttest Control Group Model" was used. The symbolic view of the semi-experimental design is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Pretest-Posttest Control Group Model

Groups	Neutrality	Measurement 1 (Pretest)			Experimental Application	Measurement 2 (Posttest)		
		A. Scale	V. Scale	A. Scale		A. Scale	V. Scale	A. Scale
Experiment	R	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Control	R	X	X	X		X	X	X

As can be seen in Table 1, the students were divided into two groups with random sampling, as the experimental group and the control group. The pretests before the application and posttest after the application were applied to both groups. While the "Violence Reduction Psychoeducation Program (VRPP) for Students 11-18 Years Old" was applied to the experimental group of the study, no applications were made to the control group. The independent variable of the study is "VRPP for Students 11-18 Years Old," and the dependent variables are the anger, violence, and aggression levels of the students.

### Participants

The sample of the study consisted of 114 students studying in Selçuklar secondary school affiliated to Mersin Provincial Directorate of National Education in the 2018-2019 academic year. One per class (7-C and 8-A) was selected from the 7th and 8th-grades as the experimental group via simple random sampling, and one per class (7-D and 8-B) was selected via simple random sampling as the control group. Information about the participants of the study is given in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Demographic Information Related to the Participants of the Study

Variables		Experimental	Control	Total	
		Frequency (n)	Frequency (n)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Girl	27	31	58	50,9
	Boy	29	27	56	49,1
Class Level	7-C	31		31	27,2
	7-D		32	32	28,1
	8-A	25		25	21,9
	8-B		26	26	22,8

When Table 2 is examined, 50.9% (58 students) of the participants constituted the control group and 49.1% (56 students) of the participants constituted the experimental group. 50.9% (58 students) of the participants were boys and 49.1% (56 students) were girls. Of the participants, 55.3% (63 students) were in the 7th-grade and 44.7% (51 students) were in the 8th-grade. There were 27 girls and 29 boys in the experimental group and 31 girls and 27 boys in the control group. The number of male and female participants and the 7th and 8th-grade participants in both groups may be considered positive in terms of homogeneity for the experimental process not to be affected by the variable of gender and class.

Before the implementation of the psychoeducation program, whether the participants in the experimental and control groups were equivalent (equivalent) in terms of anger, violence, and aggression levels were examined with T-Test for unrelated measurements and the results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3:** t-Test Results of Comparison between Pretest Scores of Experimental and Control Groups

Pretests	Group	N	X	Sd	t	Sig(p)
<b>Continuous Anger and A. E. S. Scale</b>	Experimental	56	76.88	14.37	0.892	0.374
	Control	58	79.08	12.60		
<b>Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire</b>	Experimental	56	89.44	14.26	0.944	0.347
	Control	58	86.78	16.41		
<b>Aggression Scale</b>	Experimental	56	21.93	2.91	1.349	0.180
	Control	58	21.21	2.92		

As shown in Table 3, no statistically significant difference was found between the mean scores of the groups according to the pretest results of all scales (Continuous Anger and Anger Expression Style Scale).  $p = 0.374$ ; Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire  $p = 0.347$ ; Aggression Scale  $p = 0.180$  ( $p > 0.05$ ). In other words, it was determined that the level of the groups was homogeneous before the application.

### Measurement

To test the effectiveness of the program, the "Continuous Anger and Anger Expression Style Scale," "Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire" and "Aggression Scale" were applied to the experimental and control groups as pretest and posttest. Information about these measurement tools are as follows:

**Continuous Anger and Anger Expression Style Scale:** It is a 4 point Likert scale with 34 items developed by Spielberger et al. (1983) for individuals over the age of 11 and adapted to Turkish by Özer (1994). The internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.079, 0.78, 0.62, and 0.84 for the sub-dimensions. The high scores that could be obtained on the scale would indicate that the empathy skill levels of the students were high. The lowest possible score that can be obtained from the scale is 34 and the highest possible score is 144.

**Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire:** The Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire was used to measure students' levels of violence since it has sub-dimensions related to violence, which is an expression of aggression such as physical aggression and verbal aggression. It is a 4-dimension, 5 points Likert scale with 29 items developed by Buss and Perry (1992) for individuals over the age of 13 and adapted to Turkish by Madran (2012). The internal consistency coefficient of the scale is 0.91

for the whole scale and 0.85, 0.59, 0.74, 0.75, and 0.53 for sub-dimensions; the test-retest reliability coefficient was found as 0.85 for the whole scale. The high scores that could be obtained on the scale would indicate that the aggression levels of the students were high. The lowest score is 29 and the highest score is 145 in the scale.

**Aggression Scale:** It is a one-dimensional, triple-Likert scale developed by Gültekin (2008) for secondary school students. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.82 and the test-retest reliability coefficient was found to be 0.64. The high scores that could be obtained on the scale would indicate that the aggression levels of the students were high. The lowest score is 15 and the highest score is 45 in the scale.

### **Procedure**

In this study, "Violence Reduction Psychoeducation Program (VRPP)," which was developed by Akan (2018) and observed to be effective on aggression and basic life skills of adults, was used after the adaptation of the program to the levels of adolescents. First of all, a literature review was made to develop the program, and other programs related to research were examined in detail. After the frame of the program became clear, detailed evaluations have been made with the two experts, one in the field of psychological counseling and guidance, and one in the field of program development. After forming the framework of the program, a pilot application was conducted with two students for two sessions in Selçuklar secondary school affiliated with Mersin Provincial Directorate of National Education and it was found that the program was suitable for the level of students. The application of the program was conducted with 114 students studying at the Selçuklar secondary school affiliated to Mersin Provincial Directorate of National Education in the 2018-2019 academic year after obtaining the ethical approval. Before starting the program, pretest scales were applied to all groups by giving information about the purpose of the study and the scales. An intake interview was held with 56 students in the experimental group and students were provided with descriptive information such as the purpose of the program, the place of application, the time, and the duration. The program was implemented between February 20, 2019, and April 10, 2019. The program was implemented to the experimental group at 11 o'clock on Wednesdays in the conference hall of the school for eight consecutive weeks as one session per week and 60-70-minutes per session. The school's guidance teacher supported the implementation of the program as the assistant group leader. The control group did not receive any treatment. Finally, as soon as the application was over, post-test scales were applied to all groups. Since the whole study group could not be reached, a monitoring test could not be applied. Each session in the program consisted of the following topics:

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Session = Communication Skill

3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Session = Conflict Resolution Skill

Session 5 = Emotion Regulation Skill

Session 6 = Empathy Skill

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Session = Anger Management Skill

As an example of the sessions, the first session was implemented as follows: Group members were informed about the objectives of the first session. Group members were informed about the communication through the given "Communication Elements" form. Then, the items in the "Interpersonal Communication" form distributed to the group members were explained and the members were asked to mark the items which were suitable for them. 1 volunteer member shared the items he marked with the group. The group leader and a volunteer group member talked to each other, firstly by standing back to back and then by facing each other through eye communication. The group members were paired with their peers, and they were also asked to talk firstly by standing back to back

and then by facing each other. Afterward, the difference was asked and the group leader emphasized the importance of non-verbal communication after receiving the answers. “A Simple Salute” story was read to the group members about the importance of communication and opinions of a few group members were received about the story. In the end, the group session was summarized and the session was ended by giving homework as “speaking with the people they meet according to the interpersonal communication elements during a week”.

### Data Analysis

Before analyzing the data, extreme values were examined in each of the scale items and item combinations, and the missing values in the data set were examined, and it was revealed that the missing values in all data sets were below 5% and did not display any pattern. The skewness values of the pretest scales 0.046, -0.155 and -0.069; posttests 0.594, -0.138 and -.was found. The kurtosis values for pretests 0.361, -0.393 and -0.539; for posttests 0.443, -0.696 and found as 0.083. If skewness and kurtosis values are between -3 and +3, it shows that the data is normally distributed (Kalaycı, 2014). Furthermore, the normality test was performed to determine whether the data showed normal distribution, and the Levene test was performed to test the homogeneity of variances. Data on normality and homogeneity testing are given in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Findings of Normality and Homogeneity Test

Scale	Group	N	Normality Test "Kolmogrow-Smirnov" Sig. (p)		Homogeneity Test Sig. (p)	
			Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
<b>Continuous Anger and A. E. S. Scale</b>	Experimental	56	0.200*	0.200*	0.315	0.664
	Control	58	0.200*	0.200*		
<b>Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire</b>	Experimental	56	0.200*	0.200*	0.594	0.795
	Control	58	0.200*	0.200*		
<b>Aggression Scale</b>	Experimental	56	0.050	0.054	0.587	0.377
	Control	58	0.172	0.092		

Data must meet the of normality (Büyüköztürk, 2012) and homogeneity (Kalaycı, 2014) assumption to be able to use the widely used parametric tests such as ANOVA, ANCOVA, and t-test. In normality and homogeneity tests and other analyzes performed, the significance value  $p < 0.05$  was accepted as a criterion (Büyüköztürk, 2012). For the normality test, when the number of data is higher than 30, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is performed (Kalaycı, 2014). When Table 4 is examined, since the "p" values of the "Kolmogorov-Smirnov" test for all scales in the normality test are higher than 0.05, it can be said that the data showed normal distribution for all groups. P values in the Levene test are examined to test the homogeneity of the variances (Kalaycı, 2014). Besides, since the "p" values for all the scales are higher than 0.05 in the homogeneity test, the variances of the groups are homogeneous. Based on these results, it was decided to use parametric tests for the analysis of all data meeting the assumption of normality and homogeneity.

After determining the experimental and control groups, “T-Test for Unrelated Measurements” was performed to determine the group comparison. Two analyzes were used to test the research hypothesis. Firstly, “Two-Way Anova (Repeated) for Mixed Measurements” was carried out. According to Büyüköztürk (2012), it is considered appropriate to use “Two-Way Anova for Mixed Measurements (Split Plot ANOVA)” in pretest-posttest control group designs in which repeated measurements are made on a single factor. Data must meet the assumption of normality (Büyüköztürk, 2012) and homogeneity (Kalaycı, 2014) to perform the “Two Way Anova for Mixed Measurements”.

The pretesting effect was taken under control, and “Covariance Analysis (ANCOVA)” was performed. Covariance analysis is generally used to test whether there is a significant difference between the posttest measurements of the experimental and control groups in the pretest-posttest control group designs. Here, pretest measurements are defined as common variables, and the effect of pretest on posttest is controlled. Data must be normal, the variances must be homogeneous and the slope of the regression lines must be equal to make a covariance analysis (Büyüköztürk, 2012).

## RESULTS

In this section, the findings of this research related to the effect of “VRPP for Students 11-18 Years Old ” on anger, violence, and aggression levels are presented.

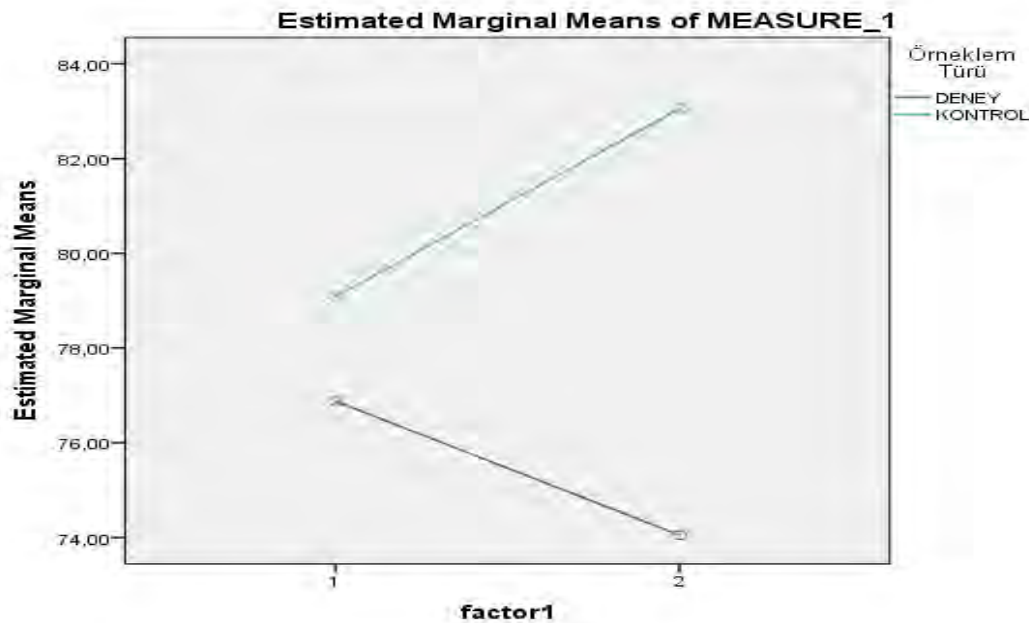
### *Findings Related to the Effect of the Program on "Anger" Levels of Students*

The mean and standard deviations were calculated for the "Continuous Anger and Anger Expression Style Scale" pretest and posttest of the experimental and control groups, and the results are given in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Anger Scale Pretest and Posttest Scores of Experimental and Control Groups

Scale	Group	N	Pretest		Posttest	
			X	ss	X	ss
Anger Scale	Experimental	56	76.88	14.37	74.05	13.77
	Control	58	79.08	12.60	83.04	14.13

When the data in Table 5 are examined; there is a decrease in the Anger Scale mean scores of the experimental group between pretest and posttest ( $X_{post}74.05 - X_{pre}76.88 = -2.83$ ), and a slight increase in the mean score of the control group ( $X_{post}83.04 - X_{pre}79.08 = +3.6$ ). The graphical representation of this finding is given in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** Two Way Anova Graph of Experimental and Control Groups for Anger Scale Scores



As shown in Figure 1, the Anger Scale scores of the experimental group decreased slightly over time, while there was a slight increase in the scores of the control group. Whether the difference between the mean scores of the pretest and posttest is significant was tested with “Two Way Anova for Mixed Measurements” and the results of the analysis are given in Table 6.

**Table 6:** ANOVA Results of the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups for Anger Scale

Source of the Variance	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Squares	F	Sig (p)
Pretest/Posttest	19.376	1.000	19.376	0.249	0.619
<b>Anger Scale</b>					
Group (Experiment/Control)	1880.723	1.000	1880.723	6.279	0.014
<b>Measurement*Group</b>	692.943	1.000	692.943	8.906	<b>0.003</b>
Error	9181.120	112,000	77.806		

As seen in Table 6, measurement \*group effect was significant ( $F = 4.42$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). According to the results of the analysis, the increase in the scores of the experimental group for the Anger Scale was found to be statistically significant ( $p = 0.039$  and  $p < 0.05$ ). Covariance analysis (ANCOVA) was conducted to determine whether the difference between the posttest means of the experimental and control groups regarding the Anger Scale was significant without the effect of the pretest.

As seen in Table 4, to perform covariance analysis, the normal distribution of all data (Experiment pretest:  $p = 0.200^{**}$ , posttest:  $p = 0.200^*$ ; Control pretest:  $p = 0.200^*$ , posttest:  $p = 0.200^*$ ) homogeneous variances (pretest:  $p = 0.315$ , posttest:  $p = 0.664$ ) and equal slope of the regression lines ( $p = 0.113$   $p > 0.05$ ) were assured. The results of the covariance analysis regarding the Anger Scale posttest scores of the experimental and control groups are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7:** Results of Covariance Analysis (ANCOVA) for Posttest Scores of Experimental and Control Groups for Anger Scale

Source of the Variance	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Squares	F	Sig(p)
Scale Pr. Total	7948.964	1	7948.964	61.801	0.000
<b>Group</b>	1748.484	1	1748.484	13.594	<b>0.000</b>
Error	15048.736	111	128.622		
Total	767253.000	114			

There was a significant difference between the mean scores of the post-test corrected of students compared to their Anger Scale pretest scores. The p-value of the posttest scores between the sample types was found to be  $p = 0.000$  without the effect of the pretest ( $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, it was observed that the difference between the posttest scores of the experimental and the control groups is significant without the effect of the pretest on the Anger Scale.

Whether the difference between the mean scores of pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group is significant in terms of gender (girl/boy) and grade (7th-grade/8th-grade) was tested with “Two-Way Anova for Mixed Measurements”. The results show that there is no significant difference in terms of gender ( $F = 0.317$ ;  $p = 0.379$ ) and grade level ( $F = 0.351$ ;  $p = 0.556$ ) and the program has been effective in reducing the anger levels of both girl/boy and 7th-grade / 8th-grade students in the experimental group.

These results show that “VRPP for Students 11-18 Years Old” leads to a significant difference in anger levels between experimental and control groups. These results show that the program is effective in reducing the anger levels of students in the experimental group.

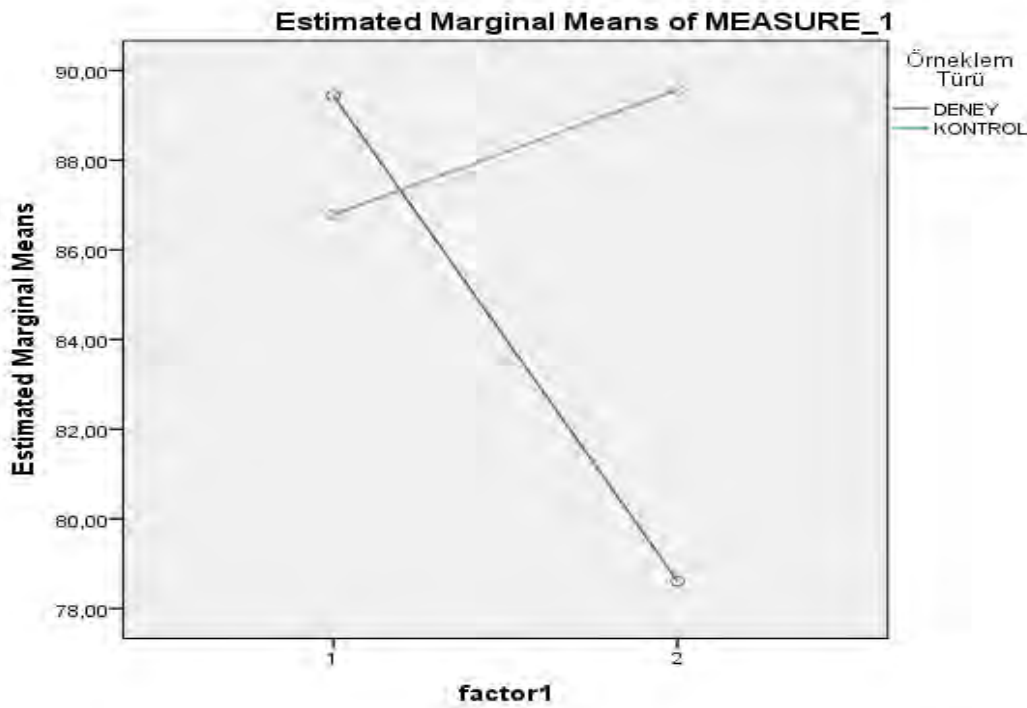
***Findings Related to the Effect of the Program on "Violence" Levels of Students***

The Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire, which has sub-dimensions related to violence such as physical aggression and verbal aggression, was used to measure the level of violence, which is an expression of aggression. The mean values and standard deviations for the pretest and posttest scores of experimental and control groups for the Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire were calculated and the results are given in Table 8.

**Table 8:** Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire Pretest and Posttest Scores of Experimental and Control Groups

Scale	Group	N	Pretest		Posttest	
			X	ss	X	ss
<b>Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire</b>	Experiment	56	89.44	14.26	78.61	18.07
	Control	58	86.78	16.41	89.57	18.38

When the data in Table 8 are examined; there is a decrease in the mean score of the Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire of the experimental group between pretest and posttest ( $X_{\text{post}}78.61 - X_{\text{pre}}89.44 = -10.8$ ), and a slight increase in the mean score of the control group ( $X_{\text{post}}89.57 - X_{\text{pre}}86.78 = +2.8$ ). The graphical representation of this finding is given in Figure 2.



**Figure 2:** Two Way Anova Graph of Experimental and Control Groups for Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire Scores

As shown in Figure 2, the Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire scores of the experimental group decreased slightly over time, while there was a slight increase in the scores of the control group. Whether the difference between the mean scores of the pretest and posttest is significant was tested with “Two Way Anova for Mixed Measurements” and the results of the analysis are given in Table 9.

**Table 9:** ANOVA Results of the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups for Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire

Source of the Variance		Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Squares	F	Sig (p)
<b>Buss Perry</b>	Pretest/Posttest	0.970	1.000	0.970	7.220	0.008
<b>Aggression</b>	Group (Experiment/Control)	1035.506	1.000	1035.506	2.380	0.126
<b>Questionnaire</b>	<b>Measurement*Group</b>	2780.729	1.000	2780.729	20.692	<b>0.000</b>
<b>e</b>	Error	15857.267	112,000	134.384		

Table 9 shows that measurement \*group effect was significant ( $F = 20.69$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). According to the results of the analysis, the increase in the scores of the experimental group for the Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire was found to be statistically significant ( $p = 0.000$  and  $p < 0.05$ ). Covariance analysis (ANCOVA) was conducted to determine whether the difference between the posttest means of the experimental and control groups regarding the Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire was significant without the effect of the pretest.

As seen in Table 4, to perform covariance analysis, the normal distribution of all data (Experimental pretest:  $p = 0.200^{**}$ , posttest:  $p = 0.200^*$ ; Control pretest:  $p = 0.200^*$ , posttest:  $p = 0.200^*$ ), homogeneous variances (pretest:  $p = 0.594$ , posttest:  $p = 0.795$ ) and equal slope of the regression lines ( $p = 0.728$   $p > 0.05$ ) assumptions were assured. The results of the covariance analysis for the Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire posttest scores of the experimental and control groups are shown in Table 10.

**Table 10:** Results of Covariance Analysis (ANCOVA) for Posttest Scores of Experimental and Control Groups for Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire

Source of the Variance	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Squares	F	Sig(p)
Scale Pr. Total	11252.738	1	11252.738	47.060	0.000
<b>Group</b>	4761.157	1	4761.157	19.912	<b>0.000</b>
Error	27976.214	111	239.113		
Total	893254.000	114			

There was a significant difference between the mean scores of the post-test corrected comparing to their Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire pretest scores. The p-value of the posttest scores between the sample types was found to be  $p = 0.000$  without the effect of the pretest ( $p < 0.05$ ). Thus, it is seen that the difference between the posttest scores of the experimental and the control groups is significant without the effect of the pretest on the Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire.

Whether the difference between the mean scores of pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group is significant in terms of gender (girl/boy) and grade (7th-grade/8th-grade) was tested with "Two-Way Anova for Mixed Measurements". The results showed that there is no significant difference in terms of gender ( $F = 0.317$ ;  $p = 0.912$ ) and grade level ( $F = 1.033$ ;  $p = 0.314$ ) and the program was found to be effective in reducing the violence levels of both girl/boy and 7th-grade / 8th-grade students in the experimental group.

These results show that "VRPP for Students 11-18 Years Old" leads to a significant difference in aggression levels between experimental and control groups. These results show that the program is effective in reducing the violence levels of students in the experimental group.

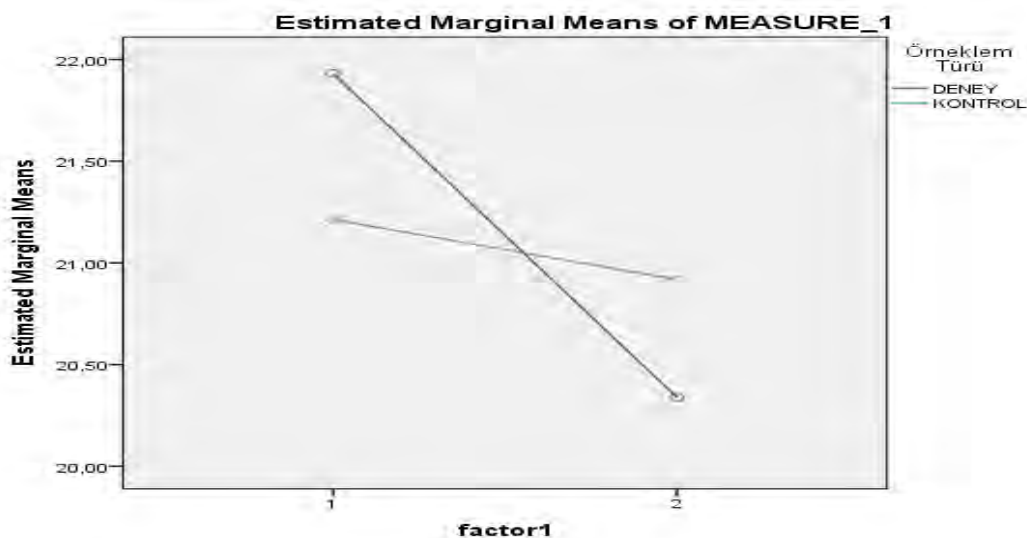
#### ***Findings Related to the Effect of the Program on "Aggression" Levels of Students***

Mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental and control groups for the "Aggression Scale" and the results are given in Table 11.

**Table 11:** Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Pretest and Posttest Scores of Experimental and Control Groups for Aggression Scale

Scale	Group	N	Pretest		Posttest	
			X	ss	X	ss
<b>Aggression Scale</b>	Experiment	56	21.93	2.91	20.33	2.68
	Control	58	21.21	2.92	20.91	3.19

When the data in Table 11 are examined; there was a slight decrease in the Aggression Scale score average of the experimental group between the pretest and the posttest ( $X_{post}20.33 - X_{pre}21.93 = -1.60$ ), and a slight decrease in the mean score of the control group ( $X_{end}20.91 - X_{front}21.21 = -0.30$ ). Figure 3 shows the graphical representation of this finding.



**Figure 3:** Two Way Anova Graph of Experimental and Control Groups for Aggression Scale Scores

As seen in Figure 3, the Aggression Scale scores of the experimental group decreased slightly over time compared to the scores of the control group. Whether the difference between the mean scores of the pretest and posttest is significant was tested with “Two Way Anova for Mixed Measurements” and the results of the analysis are given in Table 12.

**Table 12:** ANOVA Results of the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups for Aggression Scale

Source of the Variance	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Squares	F	Sig(p)
Pretest/Posttest	53.470	1.000	53.470	18.978	0.000
<b>Aggression Scale</b> Group (Experiment/Control)	0.294	1.000	0.294	0.020	0.887
<b>Measurement*Group</b>	25.270	1.000	25.270	8.969	<b>0.003</b>
Error	332.463	112,000	2.817		

Table 12 shows that measurement \*group effect was significant ( $F = 5.62$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). According to the results of the analysis, the increase in the scores of the experimental group for the Aggression Scale was found to be statistically significant ( $p = 0.039$  and  $p < 0.05$ ). Covariance analysis (ANCOVA) was conducted to determine whether the difference between the posttest means of the experimental and control groups regarding the Aggression Scale was significant without the effect of the pretest.

As seen in Table 4, the normal distribution of data (Experimental pretest:  $p=0.050^*$ , posttest:  $p=0.054$ ; Control pretest:  $p=0.172$ , posttest:  $p=0.092$ ), homogeneous variances (pretest:  $p=0.587$ , posttest:  $p=0.377$ ) assumptions were met and the slope of the regression lines were equal ( $p=0.060$   $p>0.05$ ). The results of the covariance analysis regarding the Aggression Scale posttest scores of the experimental and control groups are shown in Table 13.

**Table 13:** Results of Covariance Analysis (ANCOVA) for Posttest Scores of Experimental and Control Groups for Aggression Scale

Source of the Variance	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Squares	F	Sig(p)
Scale Pr. Total	467.020	1	467.020	97.090	0.000
<b>Group</b>	33.754	1	33.754	7.017	<b>0.009</b>
Error	562.791	111	4.810		
Total	52128.000	114			

According to Table 13, there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the posttest corrected comparing to their Aggression Scale pretest scores. The p-value of the posttest scores between the sample types was found to be  $p=0.009$  without the effect of the pretest ( $p<0.05$ ). Thus, it is seen that the difference between the posttest scores of the experimental and the control groups is significant without the effect of the pretest on the Aggression Scale.

Whether the difference between the mean scores of pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group is significant in terms of gender (girl/boy) and grade (7th-grade/8th-grade) was tested with “Two-Way Anova for Mixed Measurements”. The results demonstrated that there was no significant difference in terms of gender ( $F=3.755$ ;  $p=0.058$ ) and grade level ( $F=0.162$ ;  $p=0.689$ ) and the program has been effective in reducing the aggression levels of both girl/boy and 7th-grade / 8th-grade students in the experimental group.

These results show that “VRPP for Students 11-18 Years Old” leads to a significant difference in aggression levels between experimental and control groups. These results show that the program is effective in reducing the aggression levels of students in the experimental group.

## DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND SUGGESTIONS

The “Violence Reduction Psychoeducation Program for Students between 11-18 Years Old” is effective in reducing the violence and aggression levels of the students in the experimental group. Some research has been conducted related to the effect of intervention programs on violence and aggression levels of students and similar results with the literature have been found in the study. According to the results of the meta-analysis study conducted by Bacioğlu, (2014), which examined 22 experimental studies on the effectiveness of intervention and prevention programs in reducing violence and aggression, intervention and prevention programs were found to be effective in reducing the violence and aggression levels of children and adolescents. Latipun, Zainah, Nasir, and Khairudin (2012) found a significant difference between the aggression levels of adolescents who received conflict resolution training and adolescents who did not receive this training. According to the results of the study conducted by Cunningham, Cunningham, Martorelli, Tran, Young, and Zacharias (1998) with 5th-grade students, it has been determined that there is a 90% decrease in the violent behaviors of the students who has taken conflict resolution education. According to the study conducted by Akgün and Araz (2014), the “We can solve our conflicts” program has positively affected students' conflict resolution skills, improved their social skills, and reduced their aggression levels. In the research conducted by Güner (2007), it was found that group guidance to improve conflict resolution skills has a significant effect in increasing problem-solving skills and reducing aggression levels of high school students. Kurtyılmaz (2005), on the other hand, found that there is a significant negative correlation between communication skills and aggression behaviors, and aggression scores decrease as communication skills scores increase. In a study, it has been revealed that social skills education has

positive effects on reducing the aggressive behaviors of students (Conner & Fraser, 2011). In studies conducted by Erken (2009) and Rehber (2007), it was revealed that students with a low level of empathic tendency had high aggression tendency and their aggression levels decreased as students developed empathic skills. According to the results of the studies related to the effect of psychological counseling intervention programs with the activity-based group on violence and aggression levels, activity-based group counseling intervention program has been found effective in reducing the aggression levels of students (Gebeş, 2011; Gürbüz, 2008; Serin & Genç, 2011). As a result, in many studies, it has been revealed that intervention and prevention programs involving communication, empathy, conflict resolution, peer mediation, anger control, peace education and violence prevention are effective methods to reduce students' violent and aggressive behaviors (Karataş, 2011; McCart, Prierter, Davies & Azen, 2006; Sadri-Damirchi & Bilge, 2014; Sağkal, 2011; Türnüklü, Kaçmaz, Gürler, Şevkin, et al., 2010; Sukhodolsky, Kassinoe & Gorman, 2004).

According to this research, it has been observed that the “Violence Reduction Psychoeducation Program for Students between 11-18 Years Old” is effective in reducing the violence and aggression levels of the students in the experimental group. Some research has been done about the effect of intervention programs on the anger levels of students and similar results have emerged. According to the result of the study that examined the effect of anger management education on adolescents' coping with anger by Öz and Aysan (2011), after the anger management education, there was a statistically significant improvement in the anger control level and communication skills of the experimental group, whereas there was a significant decrease in their trait anger, internal anger, and external anger levels. According to the results of the research conducted by Serin and Genç (2011) about the effect of group anger management education program on anger management skills of adolescents; it was revealed that there was a significant increase in the anger management levels of the experimental group students participating in the anger management training program with the group, and there was a statistically significant decrease in the anger, anger-in, anger-out, and anger-control levels. According to the results of the research conducted by Özbay and Erden (2011) on the examination of anger management education programs on detained adolescents, the “Anger Management Education Program” is effective on the anger management levels of detained adolescents. In a study conducted by Duran and Eldeleklioğlu (2005), it was shown that the cognitive-behavioral approach-based anger management program applied to high school students significantly increased their anger management levels and significantly decreased their anger levels. According to the results of the research conducted on adolescents by Hermann and McWhirter (2003), the anger program was found to be effective in reducing the anger levels of adolescents and increasing their anger management levels. There are many similar studies in the literature regarding anger management programs that decrease the anger levels of students and increase their anger management skills (Akgün & Araz, 2014; Gebeş, 2011; Gültekin, 2011; Özkamalı & Buğa, 2010; Sütçü, Aydın & Sorias, 2010). In particular, anger intervention programs based on the cognitive-behavioral approach have been emphasized in some studies conducted to reduce the anger levels of students (Cenkseven, 2003; Görgü and Sütçü Tekinsav, 2015). According to the results of the research conducted with students staying in orphanages by Çalikoğlu (2010) and Yıldırım (2006), there was a linear relationship between anger management skills and problem-solving skills, and it was revealed that anger management skills increased as the problem-solving skills increased. In another study, it has been shown that interpersonal problem-solving skill training program had an important effect in decreasing trait anger levels and increasing constructive problem-solving skill levels of adolescents (Bedel & Arı, 2011).

When studies on violence, aggression, and anger were examined, it was indicated that especially adolescent students were inadequate in solving problems, had difficulties in controlling their emotions, and had problems in dealing with anger and aggression. Having a healthy adolescence period is significantly predictive for their later life. Adolescence period problems such as anger may persist over time and may lead to negative situations such as aggressive behavior in further years. Since anger, violence, and aggression can negatively affect students' entire lives, intervention programs have become important in minimizing or eliminating anger, violence, and aggression.

Schools are the most suitable places for students to develop and implement these intervention programs from an early age. Students necessarily spend at least 12 years of their life in schools and shape their future lives in terms of the time they spend in schools and the quality of education they receive. Throughout school life, students are expected to learn useful information for their mental development and to gain positive behavior for their character development. However, while schools create opportunities for students' cognitive development, they may not support their character development sufficiently and negative behaviors such as violence can be widely seen in students. Especially in recent years, incidents of violence among students have been increasing in schools and these aggressive behaviors of students need to be intervened as soon as possible (Ümit, 2010). It is important to develop and implement early intervention methods in schools for risky students who display negative behaviors such as violence. Implementation of early intervention programs such as anger management and conflict resolution training to students prevents the formation of a personality that encourages violence and crime in the future and provides skills that can be expressed properly without turning to violence. Basic skills acquisition and intervention programs that will provide students with character development and prevent negative behaviors such as violence should be widely applied in schools within a structured framework. Such programs can be offered by practitioners who have received adequate training in these areas in schools. In this regard, this responsibility mostly falls on the school psychological counselors who work in schools. The need for psychological counseling and guidance services in schools to solve problems such as violence, aggression, and anger and school psychological counselors who will provide these services are understood better day by day.

Solving negative behaviors such as violence with “zero-tolerance policies” that involve discipline and oppression methods in schools cannot be effective and permanent in the long run even if it works in a short time (Casella, 2003). To prevent negative behaviors and violence, programs that will provide students with basic life skills and provide character development should be developed and applied to students from an early age. School psychological counselors are experts and ideal people who will implement these programs developed to solve problems such as bullying, aggression, violence, anger, and conflict in their schools. There is not enough awareness in our country about the importance of psychological guidance services and the vital duties of school psychological counselors. Schools' psychological counseling and guidance services need to be revised and school psychological counselors need to implement more preventive and developmental guidance work that will give students basic life skills and develop their character.

Considering the basis of the violence displayed by adult individuals, it is revealed that they do not have the basic life skills to solve the problems constructively and they see violence as a solution. Providing individuals with basic skills such as communication, anger management, conflict resolution, emotion management, and empathy at an early age is very important to solve problems in constructive ways instead of violence in the future. The most suitable environment that can bring these basic skills to individuals at an early age is the school environment. Therefore, there is a need for programs that will provide the students with basic life skills and character development in the school environment. To respond to this need, the “Violence Reduction Psychoeducation Program (VRPP)”, which has been applied to adult individuals and has been shown to provide some basic skills such as emotion management skills, and has been shown to reduce adult violence and aggression levels, has been revised per the level of students and a program based on cognitive-behavioral approach was implemented under the name of “Violence Reduction Psychoeducation Program (VRPP) for Students 11-18 Years Old.” The program includes communication skills, anger management skills, conflict resolution skills, emotion management skills, and empathy skills. The program was applied to 7th and 8th-grade students and as a result of the research, it was revealed that the program reduced violence, aggression, and anger levels of students.

This study was conducted only on 7th and 8th-grade students in a school in a certain region. Further experimental studies can be conducted on a wider inter-regional sample and different age groups. The number of such programs that will provide character and value development in students should be increased and more experimental studies should be conducted on this subject. Such programs for preventing anger, violence, and aggression in students should be placed based on the education system and school curricula within the scope of preventive and developmental guidance and should be applied to students in a certain system by school psychological counselors, starting from an early age. Awareness-raising activities should also be conducted on teachers and parents, who are the other pillars of the education system and directly affect the behavior of students, and seminars and training should be conducted for teachers and parents on subjects such as anger control, communication skills, conflict resolution skills, emotion management, empathic skills by school psychological counselors.

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