

## LEVELS OF PEER RELATIONSHIPS OF ATYPICALLY AND TYPICALLY DEVELOPING CHILDREN IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

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**Abstract:** The aim of the present study was to determine peer relationship levels of preschool children showing atypical and typical development. The study group consisted of 60 children with atypical development and 60 children with typical development who participated in the inclusion practices in the formal preschools and nursery classes of primary schools in the city centers of Burdur and Isparta and in Soma district of the city of Manisa in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years. The data was collected using the Child Behavior Scale developed by “Ladd and Profilet (1996)”. The data were analyzed by t-test and correlation calculations. The results of the study showed significant correlations between developing prosocial behavior, being anxious-fearful with peers, developing asocial behavior and hyperactivity among the peer relationships of the children with typical and atypical development attending preschool education.

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## INTRODUCTION

Preschool period is the time when the fastest development occurs in all areas of development for children and the foundations are set for future learnings (Tıkıroğlu, 2019). During this period, children make efforts to adapt to the society they live in and to integrate themselves with the society. To this end, they try to acquire fundamental habits and social behaviors (Yaşar, 2008). Being a part of the society and socializing of a child is possible through a proper educational environment. Institutions of preschool education also provide a good educational setting for children to develop such behaviors as sharing, communicating and taking responsibility (Morrison, 1998).

In institutions of preschool education, children recognize themselves as individuals in the society, while realizing what the society expects from them and what they can add to the society. During this period, children learn about the customs and traditions of their society and develop appropriate behaviors. They also acquire daily life and self-care skills that will make their life easier and help them live more independently in the society (Yıldırım and Durmuşoğlu, 2009).

Each child is different from another in physical, emotional and mental aspects. When these differences are within certain limits, all children can benefit from general educational services. However, when the differences get bigger, general educational services remain inadequate and a need comes up for special education services (Kırcaali-İftar, 1998). Like all children, it is critical to encounter quality stimuli for children with atypical development for their development (Tıkıroğlu, 2019). Considering the development characteristics and paces of children attending preschool education, joining their peers through inclusive education will be highly beneficial for children with atypical development during preschool period (Yaşar, 2008). Inclusive education is a practice that enables children with atypical development to interact and communicate with other peers in the same environment with their typically developing peers full-time or part-time in special education classes (MNESESR, 2017). The aims of the program include helping children with atypical development to adapt to their environment and society, keep up with their peers developmentally and enhance their socialization and communication skills (Odom, Deciyan and Jenkins, 1984).

Inclusion practices provide atypically developing children with the opportunity to communicate with, model, observe, imitate, share, cooperate and interact with other children displaying typical development who have different developmental characteristics from themselves. In addition, games that children with atypical development play with their typically developing peers enable them to learn many skills latently and most importantly, to notice that they are accepted by other individuals. Inclusion teaches many positive behaviors to children with typical development as well. It helps them learn to help, cooperate, share, show empathy and tolerance as well as noticing the existence of individuals that are different from themselves, internalizing them, respecting their individual differences and maintain their life together with them within the environment they live in. This way, normal individuals can have higher self-confidence levels in the society (Artan and Uyanık, 2003; Darica, 1992).

Children with atypical development have their first experiences and interactions with their peers in preschool classrooms (Wood, Cowan and Baker, 2002). Therefore, peer relationships are very important for both children with typical development and those having atypical development (Menteş, 2020). Peer relationships can be defined as the total interaction going on between persons of the same age or developmental stage having similarities in terms of background, values, experiences and social context (Gülay, 2008).

Among the theories on peer relationships, Piaget (1932), stated that peer interaction is helpful in discovering the differences between their own knowledge and their peers' knowledge and in maintaining balance. Piaget's approach remarks that working with peer groups brings more benefits than working individually in cognitive terms (Fawcett and Garton, 2005; cited by Gülay, 2008) Vygotsky (1978) highlights the necessity and importance of children's interactions with their peers. Activities performed with peers are reported to provide cognitive benefits as well as affecting social development (Salkind, 2004; cited by Gülay, 2008). Bandura (1960) claims that individuals learn reinforced behaviors by observing imitating others while avoiding behaviors that are punished (Senemoğlu, 2005).

Within the general structure of peer relationships during the preschool period, determining important factors in children's interactions in this period is significant in terms of understanding and expressing peer relationships clearly (Gülay, 2008). Such positive behaviors as cooperation, kindness, helpfulness begin in this period and develop in time. Similarly, disagreement and aggression are among the variables that can influence the course of preschool peer relationships (Hay et al 2004; cited by Gülay, 2008).

When the basic qualities of peer relationships are evaluated in the preschool period, it is seen that approval is a critical social support for the child in this period. Accepting the help offered by peers and helping peers when necessary are other factors that can improve relationships. Appropriate expression of negative feelings can also affect relationships positively. While kindness enhances relationships positively, avoiding disagreement is also important in terms of peer relationships (Ladd, Kochenderfer-Ladd and Coleman, 1996; cited. Gülay, 2008).

Children who get into interaction with their peers make progress in physical, emotional and social development. They learn many behaviors through modeling during peer interaction. While playing with their peers, children learn social roles like sharing, helping, taking turns, empathizing and anger management. Children with developed peer relationships spend time with their peers by establishing emotional bonds with their peers and feel themselves better. A child who fails to build positive relationships with peers will have reduced self-confidence when he/she is refused and face problems like loneliness, anxiety and depression. Moreover, peer relationships also affect children's social development in the future; children who have healthy relations with their peers have positive its effects on their social development and other developmental domains (Arslan, 2015; Gülay, 2008; Neslitürk, 2013). Children with atypical development attending preschool education have the opportunity to display behaviors they learn from their typically developing peers and develop necessary skills for an independent life by modelling children with typical development to improve their social behaviors (Wolary and Wilbers, 1995).

When studies conducted in and outside Turkey concerning peer relationships, it is seen that the literature includes studies approaching different dimensions of peer relationships. Some of these studies are presented below.

The experimental study titled "The Child Behavior Scale: A Teacher-Report Measure of Young Children's Aggressive, Withdrawn, And Prosocial Behaviors" conducted by Ladd and Prolifet (1996) was participated by preschool children of the same age and similar characteristics from 2 different regions. The results of the study showed that the boys' aggressive behaviors and hyperactivity were significantly different from the girls, and the girls' prosocial behaviours were significantly different from the boys. Moreover, the study found that aggressiveness was a significantly and positively related with exclusion and hyperactivity, and a negatively related with prosocial behaviour. Withdrawn behaviour was found to have a significant positive relationship with being asocial, fearful and anxious as well as exclusion. Positive relationships were found between fearful depression and being asocial and between fearful-anxious behaviour and exclusion. In addition, social problems had a positive relationship with aggressiveness, asocial behaviour, fearful-anxious behaviour, hyperactivity and a negative significant relationship with prosocial behavior.

In Persson's study, which dealt with the sub-scales of the "Child Development Scale" developed by Ladd and Profilet (1996) and titled "Developmental perspectives on prosocial and aggressive motives in preschoolers' peer interactions", it was found that prosocial behaviour improved as children grew older, while aggressive behaviour had no impact. Moreover, no relationship was found between aggressiveness and gender.

The study titled "A Study on the Reliability and Validity of Peer Relationship Scales for 5-6 year-old Children and Examination of Peer Relationships in terms of certain Variables" conducted by Gülay (2008) found a significant difference between the childrens' hyperactivity levels depending on their gender. It was found that boys were more hyperactive than girls.

In addition, in other studies concerning peer relationships, it was seen that Al Jaber Mortada, 2017, Menteş, 2020 and Öztürk-Özgenel and Girli, 2016 examined the peer relationships of children with autism in classes where inclusive education is implemented; Beyazkürk, Anliak and Dinçer, 2007 and Beydoğan, 2019 investigated peer relationships during childhood; Çulhaoğlu-İmrak, 2009; Uluyurt, 2012; Yeğen, 2019 and Yorgun, 2017 studied peer relationships in inclusion classes; and Yücel, 2009 and Zorbaz, 2013

examined peer relationships during adolescence. Among the sub-dimensions of peer relationships, it is seen that studies have focused on aggressive behaviors (Al Sayed, 2018; Dalbudak, 2012; Özkatar-Kaya, 2010; Satar Abo El Fadl, 2014; Saydanoğlu, 2011; Yavuz; 2007; Yeğen, 2008; Yıldırım-Doğru et al., 2013) prosocial behaviors (Baczała, 2016; Dinç, 2002; Sarı, 2007; Tıkıroğlu, 2019; Uluyurt, 2012; Worden, 2002), and childrens' school adaptation (Erten, 2012; Gülay-Ogelman and Erten Sarıkaya, 2013; Ladd, Birch and Buhs 1999).

When studies on peer relationships of preschool children with typical and atypical development in Turkey are examined, it is seen that the studies are mostly conducted at primary and secondary education level, and a limited number of studies can be found at preschool level. Therefore, there is a need for studies to be conducted on peer relationships of children with typical and typical development in the preschool period. Thus, the data to be obtained from the present study will be useful to examine the problems faced by preschool children with typical and atypical development in peer relationships and to take necessary measures to solve these problems. In addition, the study is believed to fill in this gap in the field to a certain degree and to set an example for similar studies to be conducted on the issue.

The aim of the present study was to determine peer relationship levels of preschool children with typical and atypical development. The following questions will be answered to this end:

1. What is the level of peer relationship of the atypically developing children who participated in the study?
2. What is the level of peer relationship of the typically developing children who participated in the study?
3. Is there a significant difference between the levels of peer relationship of atypically and typically developing preschool children?

#### LIMITATIONS

The present study is limited to;

1. The opinions of preschool teachers of inclusion students at primary schools and kindergardens in Burdur and Isparta city centers and Soma district of Manisa in 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 academic years;
2. "The Child Behavior Scale" used as the data collection instrument in the study.

#### METHOD

##### RESEARCH MODEL

In order to determine the levels of peer relationship of atypically and typically developing children who attend preschool education, the present study used descriptive and correlational survey model. Survey model is appropriate for studies that aim at describing a past or existing phenomena without any manipulation (Karasar, 1999).

##### RESEARCH GROUP

The study group consisted of children with typical development in the classes of atypically developing children who participated in the inclusion practices in the formal preschools and nursery classes of primary schools in the city centers of Burdur and Isparta and in Soma district of the city of Manisa in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years. The study was conducted at the schools in the cities and towns specified with the permission of the Ministry of National Education dated 30/12/2011 and numbered B.30.02.MAE.0.72.00.00.1184-6852. The study group was participated by 60 atypically developing children who were given inclusion reports by Guidance Research Centers and 60 children who were selected randomly from among 194 typically developing children attending these children's classes. 23 (19.2%) of the atypically developing children were girls and 37 (30.8%) were boys; while 21 (17.5%) of the typically developing children were girls and 39 (32.5%) were boys. 26 (21.7%) of the atypically developing children aged 48-59 months and 34 (28.3%) of them aged 60-72 months whereas 16 (13.3%) of the typically developing children aged 48-59 months and 44 (36.7%) of them aged 60-72 months.

While selecting the 60 children with typical development, first the names of the 194 typically developing children included within the scope of the study were written down on a piece of paper and each child was given a number from one to 194. Later, numbers were written on small pieces of paper from one 10 194 and put into a bag. After mixing the pieces of paper thoroughly in the bag, numbers were drawn from the

bag one by one. The children with the number drawn from the bag were included in the study group. This was repeated until the last child was selected and the study group was created.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The present study employed the “Ladd and Profilet Child Behavior Scale”. In order to determine the peer relationships of the participating children with typical and atypical development, the study used the Child Behavior Scale, which was originally developed by “Ladd ve Profilet (1996)” and adapted into Turkish by Gülay (2008). Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients of the scale are .87 for aggression, .91 for prosocial behaviors, .84 for asocial behavior, .78 for anxious-fearful behaviors, .89 for exclusion, and .82 for hyperactivity. The instrument is a 3-point Likert Type scale consisting of 44 items in total. The Scale includes 6 subscales as 1. Displaying Aggressive Behavior to Peers 2. Displaying Prosocial Behavior to Peers, 3. Displaying Asocial Behavior to Peers, 4. Displaying Anxious-Fearful Behavior to Peers, 5. Hyperactivity and 6. Exclusion by Peers.

The “Child Behavior Scale” as assessed over total scores. Total scores obtained from the subscales are used separately. High scores on the subscales reveal the frequency of the related behaviors in the child.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected at the end of the study were computerized on SPSS 16.0 (Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences) by the researcher. The relationship among the subscales and the level and direction of the relationship of the typically and atypically developing preschool children was determined using simple correlation. The correlation between the levels of peer relationship of typically and atypically developing children was analyzed with independent samples t-test. Independent samples t-test is performed to test whether the difference between the means of two independent samples is significant or not.

FINDINGS

T-Test was applied to examine the difference between the levels of peer relationship of atypically and typically developing preschool children. The results are presented in Tables below.

Table 1. Levels of Peer Relationship of the Participating Children and t-Test Results

Subscales		N	$\bar{X}$	S	sd	t	p
1. Aggression	A.D.C.	60	3,03	3,68	118	0,12	.900
	T.D.C.	60	2,95	3,57			
2. Prosocial Behavior	A.D.C.	60	9,53	5,28	118	2,31	.023
	T.D.C.	60	11,70	4,99			
3. Asocial Behavior	A.D.C.	60	4,81	3,93	118	4,19	.000
	T.D.C.	60	2,11	3,05			
4. Anxious-Fearful	A.D.C.	60	5,36	3,43	118	2,01	.004
	T.D.C.	60	3,98	4,05			
5. Exclusion	A.D.C.	60	3,73	3,73	118	2,16	.036
	T.D.C.	60	2,38	3,20			
6. Hyperactivity	A.D.C.	60	3,83	2,55	118	2,43	.017
	T.D.C.	60	2,70	2,54			

Note: A.D.C : Atypically developing child, T.D.C: typically developing child

1. Examining Table 1 showing the children’s levels of peer relationships and t-test results; is seen that the scores of atypically and typically developing children on the aggression towards peers subscale are ( $\bar{X}$  =3,03) and ( $\bar{X}$  =2,95) respectively. This difference occurring between aggression towards peers scores of the atypically and typically developing children is not statistically significant [ $t(118)=0,12, p>0.05$ ].

2. Mean scores on the prosocial behavior subscale are ( $\bar{X}$  =9,53) and ( $\bar{X}$  =11,70) for atypically and typically developing children respectively. This difference occurring between atypically and typically developing children’s mean scores on the prosocial behavior subscale aiming at helping peers is statistically significant [ $t(118)=2,31, p <0.05$ ].

3. Mean scores on the developing asocial behavior towards peers subscale appear as ( $\bar{X}=4,81$ ) in atypically developing children and as ( $\bar{X}=2,11$ ) in typically developing children. This difference occurring between the atypically and typically developing children's mean scores on developing asocial behavior towards peers is statistically significant [ $t_{(118)}=4,19, p <0.05$ ].
4. Mean scores on being anxious-fearful to peers subscale were found as ( $\bar{X}=5,36$ ) for children with atypical development and as ( $\bar{X}=3,98$ ) for those with typical development. This difference occurring between the mean scores of atypically and typically developing children on being anxious-fearful to peers subscale is seen to be statistically significant [ $t_{(118)}=2,01, p <0.05$ ].
5. Mean scores on the exclusion by peers subscale were found as ( $\bar{X}=3,73$ ) for atypically developing children and ( $\bar{X}=2,38$ ) for typically developing ones. The difference between the mean scores of children with atypical development and typical development on exclusion by peers subscale was found to be statistically significant [ $t_{(118)}=2,16, p <0.05$ ].
6. Hyperactivity scores appear as ( $\bar{X}=3,83$ ) in children with atypical development and as ( $\bar{X}=2,70$ ) in those with typical development. The difference between the mean scores on hyperactivity of atypically and typically developing children is seen to be statistically significant [ $t_{(118)}=2,43, p <0.05$ ].

Basic correlation technique was used to examine the relationships between the levels of peer relationship of children with atypical and typical development. In simple correlation, a correlation coefficient of 1.00 between two variables shows a perfect positive relationship; a coefficient of -1.00 indicates a perfect negative relationship and 0.00 reveals the absence of a relationship. In terms of interpreting the magnitude of the correlation coefficient, an absolute value between 0.70 and 1.00 is defined as a high level of correlation; one in the range of 0.70-0.30 shows a moderate correlation and a value of 0.30-0.00 indicates a low level of correlation (Büyüköztürk, 2012). The findings obtained are presented below.

Table 2. Correlations between the Levels of Peer Relationship of Preschool Children with Atypical Development

Subscales	N	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Aggression	60	1					
2. Prosocial Behavior	60	-,630**	1				
3. Asocial Behavior	60	,465**	-,586**	1			
4. Anxious-Fearful Behavior	60	,551**	-,458**	,593**	1		
5. Exclusion	60	,705**	-,678**	,684**	,643**	1	
6. Hyperactivity	60	,748**	-,701**	,485**	,625**	,636**	1

\*\*p<.05

When Table 2 showing the correlations between the levels of peer relationship of the participating preschool children with atypical development, it can be seen that the correlation between their levels of peer relationship is significant at the level of .05 and the correlation coefficients of the subscales range between ,458 and ,748. Based on this finding, the highest correlation is between hyperactivity and aggression while the lowest level of correlation is between anxious-fearful behavior and prosocial behaviors.

It is seen in Table 2 that the atypically developing children's aggression towards their peers has a moderate negative significant relationship ( $r=-0,630$ ) with their prosocial behaviors; a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,465$ ); with displaying asocial behavior to peers; a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,551$ ) with showing anxious-fearful behavior to peers; a strong positive significant relationship with exclusion by peers ( $r=0,705$ ); and a strong positive significant relationship with hyperactivity ( $r=0,748$ ).

The atypically developing children's prosocial behavior has a moderate negative significant relationship ( $r=-0,586$ ) with showing asocial behavior to peers, a moderate negative significant relationship ( $r=-0,458$ ) with being anxious-fearful towards peers; a moderate negative significant relationship ( $r=-0,678$ ) with exclusion by peers; a strong negative significant relationship ( $r=-0,701$ ) with hyperactivity.

It is seen that the atypically developing children's prosocial behavior has a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,593$ ) with being anxious-fearful towards peers; a moderate positive significant

relationship with exclusion by their peers ( $r=0,684$ ); and a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,485$ ) with hyperactivity.

The atypically developing children's anxious-fearful behavior towards their peers has a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,643$ ) with exclusion by their peers and a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,625$ ) with hyperactivity.

A moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,636$ ) is seen between the participating atypically developing children's exclusion by peers and their hyperactivity.

Table 3. Correlations between the Levels of Peer Relationship of Preschool Children with Typical Development

Subscales	N	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Aggression	60	1					
2. Prosocial Behavior	60	-,467**	1				
3. Asocial Behavior	60	,390**	-,257*	1			
4. Anxious-fearful Behavior	60	,537**	-,420**	,768**	1		
5. Exclusion	60	,713**	-,324*	,676**	,584**	1	
6. Hyperactivity	60	,724**	-,486**	,345**	,602**	,565**	1

\*\* $p < .01$  \* $p < .05$

When Table 3 showing the correlations between the levels of peer relationship of the participating preschool children with typical development, it is seen that the relationships of peer relationship levels with each other are significant at .01 and .05 level and the correlation coefficients of the subscales range between ,257 and ,768. Based on these findings, the highest level of relationship is between asocial behavior and anxious-fearful behavior while the lowest level of relationship is between prosocial behavior and asocial behavior.

It is seen that the typically developing children's aggressive behavior towards their peers has a moderate negative significant relationship ( $r=-0,467$ ) with prosocial behavior; a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,390$ ) with asocial behavior towards peers; a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,537$ ) with being anxious-fearful towards peers; a strong positive significant relationship ( $r=0,713$ ) with exclusion by peers and a strong positive significant relationship ( $r=0,724$ ) with hyperactivity.

Prosocial behavior of the typically developing children who participated in the study has a low negative significant relationship ( $r=-0,257$ ) with showing asocial behavior towards their peers; a moderate negative significant relationship ( $r=-0,420$ ) with being anxious-fearful towards their peers; a moderate negative significant relationship ( $r=-0,324$ ) with exclusion by peers and a moderate negative significant relationship ( $r=-0,486$ ) with hyperactivity.

Asocial behavior displayed towards their peers by the typically developing children who participated in the study has a strong positive significant relationship ( $r=0,768$ ) with being anxious-fearful towards peers; a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,676$ ) with exclusion by peers and a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,345$ ) with hyperactivity.

Anxious-fearful behavior of the typically developing children towards their peers has a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,584$ ) with exclusion by peers and a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,602$ ) with hyperactivity.

The typically developing children's exclusion by peers has a moderate positive significant relationship ( $r=0,565$ ) with hyperactivity.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The first subquestion of the study analyzed any possible difference between atypically and typically developing children and their levels of peer relationship. The results of the study showed a significant difference between aggressive behaviors of atypically and typically developing children towards their peers. This finding is parallel with the findings of the studies conducted by Sucuoğlu and Özokçu (2004) and Akalın (2007). Comparing the findings relatively, it can be said that peer aggression scores of atypically and typically developing children are very close to each other and that peer aggression behaviors

of both groups are low. In other words, it can be asserted that children with atypical development display as many aggressive behaviors as their typically developing peers.

The study found that prosocial behaviors of the typically developing children who participated in the study were significantly higher compared with the children with typical development. The literature states that such factors as having a disability or lower intelligence levels affect atypically developing children's relationships with their peers. Drawing on the findings obtained, it could be said that atypically developing children display less helpful, sharing and cooperative behavior towards their peers than children with typical development; their social skills and academic competency fall behind their typically developing peers while they exhibit more problem behavior. The finding is similar to those obtained in the studies carried out by Sucuoğlu and Özokçu (2004), Baysal (1989), Uysal (1999) and Çulhaoğlu-İmrak (2009) showing a significant difference between prosocial behaviors of atypically and typically developing children.

As another result of the study, it was seen that atypically developing children show significantly higher levels of asocial behaviors towards their peers compared with children with typical development. Considering the fact that asocial behaviors include behaviors like preferring to play alone, unwillingness to be engaged in something, avoiding peer activities etc. in the literature and in the light of the findings obtained; it can be asserted that children with atypical development exhibit solitary, shy, less sharing and unhelpful behaviors compared with typically developing children. The finding is parallel with the one reported by Deschamps and colleagues (2014) revealing a significant difference between atypically and typically developing children and their development of asocial behaviors.

The study also found that children with atypical development are more anxious-fearful towards their peers-at a significantly higher level than typically developing children. Based on this finding, it can be said that children with atypical development are rather unhappy, distressed, tearful, shy and fearful compared with typically developing children. The finding supports Saylor and Leach's (2008) finding that shows a significant difference between atypically and typically developing children and their fearful behaviors towards their peers.

The results indicated that children with atypical development experience significantly higher level of exclusion by their peers compared with atypically developing children. In the study carried out on social acceptance levels of children with mental disabilities in inclusion classrooms, Şahbaz (2004) states that children with typical development do not like atypically developing children, they do not want to play and study together, see them as the laziest students in the class who annoy their classmates with their jokes or disturb them during the lesson; that is, they do not accept their atypically developing peers socially. Baydık and Bakkaloğlu (2009) examined the sociometric statuses of children who do and do not display atypical development and reported that one of the two variables that strongly predict the social acceptance of atypically developing children was academic competency and the other one was physical appearance. In the light of these findings, it can be said that children with atypical development are excluded, not liked very much, rejected, not chosen as playmates and ignored by their peers. The finding obtained from the present study is parallel with those of Hoza and colleagues (2005) and Kabasakal and colleagues (2008) in which significant differences were observed between atypically and typically developing children and their exclusion by peers.

The study found that hyperactivity levels of children with atypical development were significantly higher than compared with typically developing children. Based on this finding, it could be asserted that children with atypical development are more active and hastier, more difficult to stand still, harder to remain inactive, more careless and messier than typically developing children.

The second subquestion of the study compared the subscales of atypically developing children's levels of peer relationships with each other. According to the results of the study, atypically developing children's development of prosocial behavior, which aims at the positive social behavior of helping peers, has a negative and significant relationship with their aggressiveness, developing asocial behavior, being anxious-fearful, excluded by peers and hyperactivity. The related literature states that being excluded by their peers causes decreased prosocial behavior, increased aggressive behavior and more asocial behavior in children



with atypical development. This finding of the study is similar to those obtained by Uz-Baş and Siyez (2011) and Sucuoğlu and Özokçu (2004).

The third subquestion compared the subscales of typically developing children's levels of peer relationships with each other. According to the results of the study, typically developing children's development of prosocial behavior, which aims at the positive social behavior of helping peers, has a negative and significant relationship with their aggressiveness, developing asocial behavior, being anxious-fearful, excluded by peers and hyperactivity. These findings are parallel with the findings obtained by Crick and Ladd, (1993), Ladd and Profilet (1996), and Uluyurt (2012).

In conclusion, although children with atypical development exhibit as much aggressive behavior as atypically developing children, it can be suggested that being excluded by their peers causes these children to choose to play in isolation, feel unhappy, anxious, and fearful or display less sharing, more unhelpful and shy behaviors. In addition, the findings of the study also support the fact that children with atypical development are more active and hastier than their typically developing peers.

The study makes the following recommendations for further research:

- The present study was limited to the city centers of Burdur and Isparta and Soma district in the city of Manisa in discovering the problems in peer relationship levels of atypically and typically developing children. Studies can be conducted with different and variable sample groups.
- Studies could be conducted on the effects of the type and degree of the requirements of atypically developing children on their levels of peer relationships.
- Seminars can be organized to inform parents and teachers about the problems faced by children with atypical and typical development in their peer relationships and the effectiveness of these seminars could be assessed.

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