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# A Study on the Development of the Tendency to Tolerance Scale and an Analysis of the Tendencies of Primary School Students to Tolerance Through Certain Variables\*

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#### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to develop the Tendency to Tolerance Scale and to analyze the tendencies of primary school students to tolerance through certain variables. The population of the study was comprised of 899 students who studied at five different primary schools located in Sakarya. The exploratory factor analysis yielded an 18-item measurement tool with 3 sub-factors, which accounted for 47.97% of the total variance. The sub-dimensions were "value", "acceptance" and "empathy". It was discovered that the internal consistency coefficient for the whole scale, the first factor, the second factor and the third factor are 0.89, 0.86, 0.70 and 0.63 respectively. The test-retest coefficient for the whole scale, the first factor, the second factor and the third factor are 0.84, 0.83, 0.73 and 0.82 respectively. The study found that the item-total correlation varied between 0.43 and 0.63 and all the differences between the 27% upper group and 27% lower group were significant. Furthermore, it was discovered that primary school students have a high tendency to tolerance, that female students are relatively more tolerant, that the tendency to tolerance is lowered as students proceed to higher grades, that the tendency to tolerance gets higher as mothers have a higher educational status, and that educational status of fathers has no influence on the tendency to tolerance.

## Kev Words

Value, Democratic Value, Tolerance, The Tendency to Tolerance Scale.

Tolerance is one of the fundamental values that individuals ought to have in our modern world that ensures and attaches importance to individual rights and liberties (Güven, 1999; Kaymakcan, 2007). Based on "respect for others" as a democratic value (Akbaş, 2011; Büyükdüvenci, 1990; Cookson, 2001; Güven & Akkuş, 2004; Leirvik, 2007; Yeşil & Aydın, 2007), tolerance refers to a situation in which an individual understands or tolerates opini-

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ons or behaviors he/she personally does not adopt. Tolerance is vital for achieving mutual understanding and respect (Tatar, 2009).

Establishing the balance in interpersonal relations and bringing people together, tolerance, as an emotional attitude, does not mean agreeing with, ignoring or being indifferent to all kinds of issues and making concessions on one's own beliefs and self-identity, but recognizing differences and tolerating different ideas and identities (Yürüşen, 2001). Tolerance does not coexist with irritation, bearing, putting up with or any internal problems. The reason is that tolerance comes from the heart. Nothing coming from the heart includes putting up with or uneasiness (Gürsoy, 1991). Tolerance should be regarded as understanding, not ignoring. Since they suggest irresponsibility, ignoring and indifference cannot be accepted as humane (Bilgin, 1998).

Tolerance is based on the idea that different opinions and beliefs can coexist with each other, regardless of their veracity (Öner, 1995). Tolerance is something that arises when an individual is faced with an unpleasant situation, which makes it so important. Therefore, it is not a one-sided attitude. In other words, it is essential that tolerance should not be considered as something that is expected by one of the parties and provided by the other all the time (Tatar, 2009). Tolerance is an important value that presents itself as an individual attitude and contributes to peace and order (Atalay, 2008). Tolerance requires one to accept others, no mother how much he/she might dislike them, and their inborn rights within the framework of universal human rights, or not to discourage such rights from being recognized (Aslan, 2001).

The basis of democracy, tolerance requires that the minority should not be crushed by the majority, and that the former should not make an attempt to replace the latter (Karakütük, 2001). The elements of tolerance can be listed as accepting and not preventing the legitimacy, being open to differences, not diverting from the self, not displaying negative attitudes and aiming social peace (Atalay, 2008). The basic principle of tolerance is not to force others to become as we are, but to provide them with the opportunity to become themselves (Yılmaz, 2004). This is only possible through a social structure in which tolerance is prevailing. In this sense, primary school plays a key role in enabling individuals to adopt tolerance and turn it into a life style (Demircioğlu, 2008; Deveci & Ay, 2009; Kıncal & Işık, 2003; Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı [MEB], 2005). The reason for this is that primary school students tend to voluntarily participate in activities towards attaining certain values and to recognize them (McGovan & Godwin, 1986). Another reason is that nearly all citizens undergo the process of primary school education, but not all of them proceed to secondary and higher education (Ersoy, 2007; Yeşil, 2002).

The literature includes theoretical studies on democratic values (Güven & Akkuş, 2004; Kıncal & Işık, 2003; Yeşil & Aydın, 2007), studies on developing certain scales (Akbaşlı, Yanpar-Yelken, & Sünbül, 2010; Selvi, 2006; Yeşil, 2010; Zencirci, 2003), certain implementations and descriptive studies (Akın & Özdemir, 2009; Atalay, 2008; Dilmaç, Bozgeyikli, & Çıkılı, 2008; Duman, 2010; Genç & Kalafat, 2008; Karadağ, Baloğlu, & Yalçınkayalar, 2006; Kaymakcan, 2007; Leirvik, 2007; Sağlam, 2000; Sarı, Sarı, & Ötünç, 2008; Şahin, 2011; Tatar, 2009; Yazıcı, 2011). Furthermore, a study on "human values" (Dilmaç, Kulaksızoğlu, & Ekşi, 2007), which

can be considered as a study on democratic values, was conducted through a 6-dimension scale, namely responsibility, friendship, pacifism, respect, tolerance and honesty. The scale, which included "tolerance" as one of its dimensions, was implemented on science high school students. Therefore, it can be concluded that the present study has a different purpose and content from those in the literature. The purpose of this study is to (i) develop a valid and reliable scale to measure the tendencies of primary school students to tolerance. Additionally, it is also aimed to determine whether they differ or not according the following parameters; (ii) understanding trends of primary school students, (iii) the gender of understanding trends, (iv) levels within the grade, (v) their parents' education levels.

#### Method

## Research Model

The study is based on a descriptive survey model, which makes an attempt to describe a past or present event as it was or is (Karasar, 2005).

## **Population**

The population of the study was comprised of 899 students, 480 (53.4%) of them being female and the remaining 419 (46.3%) being male, who were in the fifth (n=81), sixth (n=331), seventh (n=177) and eighth (n=310) grades and studied at five different primary schools located in Sakarya, namely Mehmet Zorlu, Yeni Yüzyil, Yeşiltepe, Yenimahalle and Beylice. The trial version of the "Tendency to Tolerance Scale" was implemented on the students, which was followed by an analysis of the data obtained through it. In addition, a total of 61 students, 31 of them (57.4%) being female and the remaining 26 (42.6%) being male, from Mehmet Zorlu Primary School were included in the study in order to determine the test-retest reliability of the scale. The criteria specified by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) were taken into consideration in order to determine the number of students who would constitute the population.

## **Data Collection Tool**

Firstly, a review of literature was conducted on the studies and theoretical information on tolerance as a democratic value. The review showed that there is an inadequate number of studies directly on the tendencies of students to tolerance and there is no specific scale for measuring the tendencies of

primary school students to tolerance. The authors created a pool of 39 items in accordance with the literature. Afterwards, these 39 items were submitted to 6 faculty members, who specialize in psychology, psychological guidance and counseling, testing and evaluation, in order to determine whether they were comprehensible, well-expressed and able to measure the tendency to tolerance. The underlying motive in this attempt was the idea proposed by Balcı (2004): "Content validity is concerned whether the scale measures what is intended to be measured and can be explained on the basis of learned opinion". Nine items were excluded from the study in the light of their evaluations and recommendations. The remaining 30 items were expressed in a way that is suitable for 5-point likert scale ("1" Strongly Disagree, "2" Disagree, "3" Neither Agree nor Disagree, "4" Agree, "5" Strongly Agree). Finally, the items were tested for validity and reliability purposes.

## **Data Collection and Analysis**

The trial version of the "Tendency to Tolerance Scale" was implemented on a total of 899 primary school students for validity and reliability purposes. The KMO coefficient was taken into account in order to determine whether the size of the sample was suitable for the analysis or not. An exploratory factor analysis and a confirmatory factor analysis were conducted for construct validity. The exploratory factor analysis is used for determining whether a tool has a single-dimension (Balcı, 1995) whereas the confirmatory factor analysis is employed for identifying whether a structure previously defined and limited based on a certain theory is confirmed or not. The total variance accounted for is required to be minimum 30% in single-factor designs (Büvüköztürk, 2006), unlike multi-factor ones in which it is required to be higher than 41% (Kline, 1994). The latter analysis includes a number of fit indices to determine whether the model is appropriate or not (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993). This study accepted the general criteria for these indices: GFI, CFI, NFI, RFI ve IFI >.90, RMSEA and RMR < .05 (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu, & Büyüköztürk, 2010; Gerbing ve Anderson, 1993; Tabachnick & Fidel, 2001). For reliability purposes, the scale was studied in terms of internal consistency, split-half test (Spearman Brown) and test-retest reliability coefficients. The item analysis was conducted through the corrected item-total correlation and a t test for the significance of the differences between the 27% upper group and 27% lower group.

#### Results

## Findings on Validity

Firstly, an analysis was conducted into the internal consistency of the scale for construct validity. In accordance with the analysis, 5 items (items 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25) were excluded from the scale on the grounds that they had low item-total correlation. The factor analysis of the 25-item scale reported that the KMO value is 0.96 and Barlett's sphericity test yielded significant findings ( $\chi$ 2= 7099.94; p<.01). It is recommended that a KMO test should yield a value of 0.60 or higher whereas Barlett's sphericity test should yield a statistically significant result (Jeong, 2004). A "varimax" rotation, a technique used in principal component analysis, was employed in order to test the construct validity of the 25-item scale. It was discovered that the scale has four dimensions whose eigenvalues are higher than 1.00. Each of the items which was not included in any of the factors or had too similar loadings to be distinguished from others (items 1, 8, 11, 13, 21, 26 and 28) was excluded from the scale one by one and the analysis was repeated. After the items were excluded from the scale, it had three factors. The remaining 18 items accumulated under the three factors. The first, second, and third factors account for 35.22%, 6.88% and 5.87% of the total variance (47.97%) respectively. The total variance accounted for is required to be minimum 30% in single-factor designs (Büyüköztürk, 2006), unlike multi-factor ones in which it is required to be higher than 41% (Kline, 1994). Therefore, it can be argued that the amount of variance accounted for in total is reasonable and adequate. As for the suitability of the items under each factor for the content and theoretical structure, it is possible to name the first factor "value", the second one "acceptance" and the third one "empathy". The factor loadings for the items vary between 0.41 and 0.75.

A look at the fit indices obtained through the confirmatory factor analysis suggests that the Chisquare value is significant ( $\chi$ 2=549.39, N=889, sd=128, p=.00). The fit indices have the following values: RMSEA=.061, NFI=.98, CFI=.98, IFI=.98, RFI=.97, GFI=.94, AGFI=.91 and SRMR=.04, which shows that the model has a good fit.

## Findings on Reliability

It is observed that the item-total test correlations for all the items included within the scale have values varying from 0.43 and 0.63. The values suggest that the items in the scale represent similar behaviors. Furthermore, the item-total correlation is expected to be positive and high (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). The internal consistency and test-retest reliability coefficients were analyzed in order to determine how reliable the scale was. The internal consistency coefficient for the scale was 0.89, Spearman Brown split-half coefficient was 0.85. It is especially observed here that the confidence coefficients for the third parameter are low. This may be attributed to the low number of items (4 items) for the corresponding factor. Kayış (2006), Green and Salkind (2005) note that the confidence coefficient equal or above .50 can be considered to be low confidence. It is observed in the confidence analyses performed using another scale that the scale had a reasonably high score as a whole, and that the low confidence only appears at the levels of sub-factor. Test-retest reliability coefficient was 0.84. These findings show that the scale is dependable. Through the t test, a comparison was made between the average scores of the participants included within the upper and lower groups. The t (sd=484) values for the discrepancy between the scores of the participants included within the 27% upper group and 27% lower group varied between 12.66 and 23.62. In addition, all the items were found to be significant at the level p<.001. The measurements through the scale concluded that primary school students have a high tendency to tolerance, that female students are relatively more tolerant, that the tendency to tolerance is lowered as students proceed to higher levels, that the tendency to tolerance gets higher as their mothers have a higher educational status, and that educational status of fathers has no influence on the tendency.

#### Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of the present study is to develop a scale to measure the tendencies of primary school students to tolerance and to analyze their tendencies through certain variables. For that purpose, a valid and reliable scale was designed. The exploratory factor analysis yielded a measurement tool with 3 sub-dimensions that accounted for 47.97% of the total variance. The internal consistency coefficient values were 0.89, 0.86, 0.70 and 0.63 for the 18-item scale, the sub-dimension "value", the subdimension "acceptance" and the sub-dimension "empathy" respectively. The test-retest reliability coefficient was 0.84 for the scale, 0.83 for the first factor, 0.73 for the second factor, and 0.82 for the third factor. It was concluded that these factors were both nameable and collectable.

The item analysis yielded that the corrected itemtotal correlation coefficients vary between 0.43 and 0.63. Considering that items with a value of 0.30 and higher can distinguish individuals in a proper way (Büyüköztürk, 2006), these coefficients can be regarded as suitable. Moreover, the t test for the scores of the 27% lower group and 27% upper group showed that there is a significant difference between the groups in the whole scale and sub-dimensions between. The internal consistency coefficient and split-half test correlation coefficient are 0.89 and 0.85. These values indicate that the items included in the scale are consistent with each other, and thus the scale is highly reliably in terms of internal consistency. Two tests, conducted at an interval of four weeks, were found to be correlated to each other (0.84), which suggests that both measured the same structure. All the findings reveal that the scale is valid and reliable, and it can be safely used in studies on determining the tendencies of students to tolerance.

The study concluded that primary school students have a high tendency to tolerance both in the factors and in total. The finding is in parallel with that of Dilmaç (1999), who found that Curriculum for Human Values plays a role in enabling students to attain certain values. Dilmaç et al. (2007) conclude that the scale of human values, and the levels of responsibility, peacefulness, respectfulness, honesty and understanding of the students, who attend the group guide education of human values, increase considerably at the end of the education program. The present study concluded that primary school students have a high tendency to tolerance, which might be explained by the fact that curriculum for primary schools makes an attempt to enable students to attach importance to and attain "tolerance" together with other similar values.

The present study found that female students are more tolerant when compared to male ones. This finding is in parallel with that of Sağlam (2000), Genç and Kalafat (2008). Akın and Özdemir (2009), who discovered in their study on three democratic values, namely right to education, solidarity and liberty, that male and female prospective teachers do not think differently about the right to education whereas there is a significant difference in favor of female ones in solidarity and liberty. In their study, Karadağ et al. (2006) reported that the gender of teachers is not a factor in the democratic values they adopt. Similarly, Yazıcı (2011) found that the democratic values of prospective social sciences teachers do not differ depending on their gender.

In the present study, it was discovered that primary school students have a lower tendency to tolerance as they proceed to higher grades. Once they have acquired the attitude of tolerance as a democratic value, they tend to be less tolerant as they proceed to higher grades, which is upsetting and destabilizing. The situation seems less upsetting when one takes into account the fact that 7th and 8th grade students might experience a number of problems linked to puberty, they undergo a process of transition during the period and especially 8th grade students get nervous and anxious owing to the SBS1. Furthermore, Yazıcı (2011) presented a comforting finding on the issue. The author found that the democratic values adopted by prospective social sciences teachers do not differ in grade. In their study, Karadağ et al. (2006) reported that age is one of the factors in the democratic values owned by teachers and that teachers who are 40 or older have a higher tendency towards democratic values. The finding is important, for it suggests that teachers adopt democratic values at a higher level as they get older. The idea is that life-related experiences lead teachers to adopt democratic values at a higher level as they get older. The finding is inconsistent with the one that suggests primary school students have a lower tendency to tolerance as they proceed to higher grades.

In the present study, it was discovered that students have a higher tendency to tolerance as their mothers enjoy a higher educational status. This finding is similar to that of Sağlam (2010), who found that students become more conscious consumers as their mothers enjoy a higher educational status and emphasized that educational status of mothers is a significant factor. Nevertheless, Yazıcı (2011), and Genç and Kalafat (2008) reported that educational status of mothers is not a factor in the democratic values adopted by prospective teachers. Another finding of the present study is that the tendencies of students to tolerance are not affected by the educational status of fathers. This finding is supported by that of Genç and Kalafat, who discovered that educational status of fathers is not a factor in the democratic attitudes displayed by prospective teachers. Since education is thought to change individuals for the better, it is surprising that educational status of fathers has no influence on the tendencies of students to tolerance. On the other hand, Yazıcı found in his study on the democratic values of prospective teachers that the level of democratic values is directly proportional to the educational status of fathers. It is recommended that further students should clarify the issue.

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Ek- 1. Hoşgörü Eğilim Ölçeği (HEÖ)

Boyutlar	Taslak M. No	Ölçek M. No	Hiç uygun değil (1), Uygun değil (2), Biraz uygun (3), Uygun (4), Tamamen uygun (5)	Rakam Değeri
	23.	1.	İnsanların farklı düşüncelere sahip olmasını anlayışla karşılarım	( )
	19.	2.	İnsanların farklı olması doğaldır	( )
	30.	3.	İnsanlar arasında hoşgörünün yaygınlaşması önemlidir	( )
Değer	24.	4.	İnsanları olduğu gibi kabul ederim	( )
	29.	5.	Başkalarının da düşünceleri doğru olabilir	( )
	18.	6.	Farklı düşünceleri hoşgörüyle karşılarım	( )
	22	7.	İnsanları severim	( )
	17.	8.	Küskünleri barıştırmak beni mutlu eder	( )
	9.	9.	Arkadaşlarım tarafından sevilen biriyim	( )
Kabul	12.	10.	Kimseden nefret etmem	( )
	3.	11.	Başkalarının hatalarını anlayışla karşılarım	( )
	2.	12.	Affedici bir kişiyim	( )
	16.	13.	Kavgacı biri değilim	( )
	6.	14.	İnsanları düşman olarak görmekten kaçınırım	( )
	14.	15.	Kendimi başkalarının yerine koyabilirim	( )
Empati	27	16.	Karşımdaki insanın ne hissettiğini anlayabilirim	( )
	7.	17.	Arkadaşlarımın içten davranmasını isterim	( )
	4.	18.	Arkadaşlarıma içten davranırım	( )