An Evaluation of Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching Social Skills to Fifth Grade Students within the Scope of Social Studies Lessons

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Abstract
The purpose was to evaluate teachers' perceptions of teaching social skills to Fifth grade students using social studies lessons. The survey model has been used as a research method. The 5th grade teachers working in elementary schools in Canakkale province included in the scope of the study have been interviewed and a questionnaire has been formulated in this direction. Statistical methods as "r-test", "F-test", "t-test" besides % (percentage) and mean ($\bar{x}$) have been used in terms of variables. Results of the study indicates that social skill levels found according to the social skill points in the research were adequate; teachers who have not participated in in-service training activities have the ability to teach students in observation skills better with respect to those who have not undergone such training. There was no significant relationship between effectively instructing students in sub-aspects of social skills by teachers and the educational status and occupational seniority of those teachers.

Key Words: Elementary education, social skills, class teacher, social studies lesson

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Introduction

Human beings feel the need for becoming a social being through each period of their lives. They have a tendency to meet these needs by making social contacts, existing in social environments, and interacting or participating within a group (Yildirim, 2006). It is rather important for an individual to have skills to be able to receive positive reactions by another people and prevent negative reactions. Bandura argues that individuals do not have to learn everything directly; rather, they can learn many things by observing the experiences of other people. Individuals perform the reinforced behaviors of models they observe while they do not perform the punished behaviors (Egen & Kauchack, 1992). In order to meet these requirements, we need to obtain some other skills necessary to live together with people beyond those characteristics with which we demonstrate at birth.

A number of skills are required for an individual to make mutual and healthy relationships with other people. These skills are called *social skills* (Yıldırım, 2006). Social skills are defined as understanding both one's own and other individuals' feelings, thoughts and behaviors related to various interactions, and behaving according to that understanding. Social skills are also defined as the "process of propounding the skilled behavior for a definite target" (Cubukcu & Gultekin, 2006). Gresham and Elliott (1990:1) describe social skills as "*learned behaviors accepted as social and giving an individual chance to make a stronger interaction with other people and avoiding socially unacceptable reactions*" (Seven, 2006). According to Hops (1983), social skills are a behavioral pattern performed in a social situation. According to Dowrick (1986), social skills are "the skill of being able to behave as to be accepted socially in a definite atmosphere and to be useful for both one's own and the one across." (p.5).

Gresham and Eliot (1990) have described social skills as "one's socially learned acceptable behaviors which provide interactions with other people by avoiding socially unacceptable behaviors." (p.3)

Kelly (1982) identifies social skills as learned behaviors which are used in the interpersonal relationships providing or maintaining positive reinforcements from the environment.

Social skills appear as behaviors, they have interpersonal properties, they are desirable behaviors for people, they have tendency to continue communication and interaction, and they can be repeated and determined. Skills for initiating interpersonal relationships, continuing them and completing them appropriately can be evaluated within the context of social skills (Yildirim, 2006). Social skills have an important role in an individual's life because it is an essential property that facilitates contact with other people. Furthermore, being proficient at interpersonal relations contains some variables (Yuksel, 2001).

Akkok (1996: 2-3) has classified social skills in six groups. These are:

- *Skills for Initiating the Relationship and Continuing*: Listening, initiating and continuing the conversation, thanking, introducing oneself, complimenting, asking for help, apologizing, giving directions, persuading.

- *Skills for Teamwork*: Trying to understand views of other people, getting responsibility, transmitting complaints.

- *Feeling-Oriented Skills*: Understanding one's own feelings, expressing feelings, understanding the feelings of other people, coping with the anger of the other party, expressing positive feelings, coping with fear.

- *Skills for Coping with Aggressive Behaviors*: Asking for permission, sharing, helping other people, expressing anger appropriately and controlling it.

- *Skills for Coping with Stressful Situations*: Coping with the unsuccessful situations, coping with group pressure, coping with being left alone.

- *Skills for Problem Solving and Planning:* Collecting information from the environment, determining goals, concentrating on the work.

The child beginning his or her elementary education enters into a new social environment and peer groups before adolescence facilitates the transition period from reliable family life to independent adult life for the child by definite relationships (Kaymak et al., 2003). Since social skills increase the life quality of individuals, it can be seen as an important element for realizing themselves. It is the aim of social skill training programs to decrease negative social behaviors and increase positive social behaviors (Yildirim, 2006).

Social skills training aims to teach effective interpersonal skills and assumes that social behaviors are learned and can be taught by means of structured teaching methods. Social skills training is a process whereby behavioral methods are taught and applies a performance-based approach as an active individual or as a group (Hasdemir, 2005). Van Dam-Baggen and Kraimaat (2000) have explained the methods related to social skill training as following. Social skills training methods used in order to obtain basic and special social skills consist of taking as a model, behavior rehearsal, progressive approaches and homework (Hasdemir, 2005). Social skills training is crucially important and essential because many children cannot gain these basic skills on their own. Gaining these skills can be an effective element in their school achievement, social relations and adaptation difficulties. Social skills are expected to be learned randomly and developed by cognitive maturity (Karakus, 2006). Social skill training consists of six steps. The first step is defining the skill to be taught – why this skill is important and how this skill will be useful for an interaction to be made must be determined. In the second step, a model of the skill should be displayed to the child selected for the skill training. In the third step, the child should perform a similar skill within the formed situation. In the forth step, feedback should be provided for the child related to the training by an educator. In the fifth step, appropriate chances should be given within small group works or working groups of two students or within other natural atmospheres for the skill to be used. In the last step, behaviors by the child should be observed and reinforcements should be given for the gained behaviors (Avcioglu, 2005).

The goal of social skill training is to enable individuals to become aware of their feelings and thoughts and develop behaviors, giving opportunity for positive social interactions. In order to accomplish this, individuals are required to be able to

interpret social events, to become aware of their own feelings and other people's feelings and to apply various cognitive strategies as it is needed (Cartledge & Milburn, 1983).

The most important grades in which social skills training is applied intensely are those within elementary education. Elementary is an important level of formal education in which minimum and common basic knowledge and skills are taught, which are required of all citizens in the society. The elementary education process brings individuals to a level of fundamental competence for solving possible problems, adapting to social values and applying established social rules. In brief, knowing about the environment, having a vision of the world, making corresponding connections in a healthy way with the society in which they live, obtaining necessary information to use their rights of citizenship, and bringing individuals to fundamental knowledge and skills at a minimum level in the society are the important functions of elementary education (Cubukcu & Gultekin, 2006).

According to Bandura (1986), parents and teachers each serve as a good model and hold a respectful position in the eyes of children, especially at the elementary education level. Both can bring children to many desired behaviors. There are two important goals of elementary education: teaching students cognitive skills and developing necessary skills for a child to live in a society. Knowledge and skills gained in elementary education become the basis for knowledge and skills to be gained at other educational levels. For this reason, other educational levels are also based on the elementary level. Therefore, this fundamental educational level affects negatively or positively not only the education system of the society but also the other systems (Fidan, 1994:10). As a result, courses placed in the elementary education level play a role for desired results of these effects. Social Studies is the most important of these courses.

Social Studies, at the elementary education level, is a course closely related to the society in which the child lives. When children are able to understand the past, present and future of the society in which they live, they thereby gain and internalize the expectations and ideals of the society (Sozer, 1998: 15). Social expectations related to the characteristics of the Information Age can be gained by children through Social Studies lessons. When this course is organized in an educational environment where children have been confronted with social life dynamics and current world improvements, it can be provided to educate individuals who think independently, solve problems, look from different perspectives, and direct the dynamics according to the society's needs. Social Studies is an elementary course that aims to help an individual to achieve their social existence; reflects social sciences and citizenship knowledge such as history, geography, economy, sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, politics and law; includes the combination of learning areas under a unit or theme; examines interactions of individuals with their social and physical environments in terms of the past, today and the future; and is constructed according to the collective teaching understanding (Elementary Education, 4th & 5th Grade Social Studies Educational Program, 2005). The main goal of a Social Studies lesson given in the 4th and 5th grade is to create socialized students by teaching them important social skills and educating them to be good citizens (Erden, 1992:2). Teaching social behaviors to students, supporting them as they behave appropriately and motivating them have been found as the bases of efforts to develop social skills of

children such as expressing oneself, gaining self-confidence, forming relationships with people in their family and environment, being accepted by their friends, and gaining independence. For this reason, great effort is required for students to learn, reinforce and improve their social skills at each educational level. Teachers should give place to activities and arrangements that will enable students to gain these skills (Cubukcu & Gultekin, 2006). Teaching social skills and their sustainability can be achieved by repetition of these skills in family, school and other areas of living. Besides family, school and environment, learning social skills becomes permanent throughout time (McClelland & Morrison, 2003).

Due to the recent interest in this subject, the number of studies done about social skills of students has increased. Chung and Watkins (1995) took the social skill training program prepared according to the needs of students from Hong Kong and applied it to 60 students at the elementary education level. At the end of the training in which verbal and non-verbal skills, skills for transferring ideas, behavioral methods, problem solving skills, relaxing skills and enterprising skills have been used, they stated that the study carried out had been effective in the development of self-respect in students. Martin (2003) made a comparison between pre-school social skills programs and elementary education programs in his research. As a result, he emphasized that beginning social skills education during the pre-school period would develop social skills and peer acceptance. Hatipoglu (1999) conducted research about the effect of social skills education on perceived social skills aspects and the sociometric status of students at the elementary education level. At the end of the research, it was stated that academic, feeling, enterprising and conflict management aspects of social skills had been perceived as common aspects by students, teachers and parents. Studies conducted about social skills have asserted that a social skills education program at the elementary level can have a positive effect on the social adaptation level of students.

It is especially important for the students at the elementary education level to adapt to life throughout their social and emotional development. Some of the skills that students need to gain are social skills. While students develop, family, friends, school and other socializing sources gain these skills by direct or indirect effect. However, some students cannot gain these skills adequately, requiring direct interference in order to learn these skills. It is therefore necessary to determine what kinds of skills that students are deficient in, primarily in the studies about social skills. Within this context, this research seeks to establish its importance.

Objective and Research Questions

The aim of this study is the evaluation of teaching social skills in social studies lessons according to the perception of 5th grade teachers. Within the framework of this basic objective, the following questions will be answered:

1. What is the level of teaching social skills in social studies lessons according to the perceptions of teachers?

2. Is there any significant difference related to gender in the effectiveness of teaching social skills in social studies lessons according to the perceptions of teachers?

3. Does participation in in-service training affect the effectiveness of teaching social skills in social studies lessons according to the perceptions of teachers?

4. According to the perceptions of teachers, is there any relationship between the effectiveness of teaching social skills in social studies lessons in terms of:

   a. Gender and participation level in in-service training
   b. Educational status, occupational seniority and place of work

5. According to the perceptions of teachers, is there any significant difference in the effectiveness of teaching social skills in social studies lessons related to the teacher's

   a. Educational status
   b. Occupational seniority

Method

The survey model has been used in this research, which is a descriptive study. This method is used in the researches that try to describe and explain events, objects, existences, institutions, groups and various areas (Kaptan, 1991).

In this research, teachers of 5th grade classes who are working in elementary education schools in the Canakkale province during the 2008-2009 academic year have been interviewed and a measuring instrument has been formed. In addition, an attempt has been made to state and describe the existing situation based on the theoretical framework of conceptual structure within the context of the objective and limitations of the research by searching the literature widely.

Research Participants

The scope of the research consists of 5th grade teachers working in elementary education schools in the district centers, villages and city center of Canakkale province. Since it is difficult to reach the broad scope of the research, a sample was selected from the scope randomly and 150 5th grade teachers from the city center, district centre and villages in Canakkale province have been chosen. The multi-stage sampling method has been used in selecting the sample (Erdogan, 1988). The aim of using this method was to represent the entire scope and to control factors thought to affect the results as much as possible.

The sample selection for the method used in the research has been based on possibility calculation. Since the selection completely depends on randomization, it has been assumed that the selected sample represented the whole amount in a high degree. In other words, deviations to be able to exist somehow in the elements placed in the sample will eliminate each other because the elements are in the adequate size and, as a result, a sample having the least deviation possibility will be obtained (Seyidoglu, 1995).

Table.1

Personal Qualifications of Teachers in the Sample

	QUALIFICATIONS	f	%
Gender			
	Female	85	56,7
	Male	65	43,3
	Total	150	
Occupational Seniority			
	0-5 year(s)	20	13,3
	6-10 years	20	13,3
	11-15 years	30	20,0
	16-20 years	65	43,3
	21 years and above	15	10,0
	Total	150	
Educational Status			
	Associate degree	50	33,3
	Undergraduate	80	53,3
	Graduate	10	6,7
	Other	10	6,7
	Total	150	
In-Service Training			
	Yes	100	66,7
	No	50	33,3
	Total	**150**	
Place of the Work			
	Province	70	46,7
	District	40	26,7
	Village	40	26,7
	Total	150	

As can be seen from Table 1, more than half of the teachers (56.7%) consist of female teachers and the rest of them (43.3%) are male. In terms of occupational seniority, it can be seen that 13.3% of teachers have been working for 0-5 year(s), 13.3% for 6-10 years, 20.0% for 11-15 years, 43.3% for 16-20 years and 10.0% for 21 years or more. It can be seen that most of the teachers (66.7%) have participated in in-service training and the rest (33.3%) have not participated. It has been stated that 33.3% of 5th grade teachers have Associate degrees, 55.3% of them have undergraduate degrees, 6.7% have graduate degrees and 6.7% of them have other educational degrees (e.g. teacher training school, etc.). Regarding their places of work, 46.7% of them work in the city center, 26.7% work in the district center and 26.7% work in the village.

Data Collection

A scale has been used in the research as a measurement tool. The scale has been developed by the researcher. Firstly, the literature has been scanned during the process of scale development. Benefiting from the Elementary Education 5th Grade Social Studies Curriculum, in addition to the works written about social skills, items for each social skill aspect have been composed. The draft scale prepared examined three linguists, three pedagogy experts and a group of 100 teachers in terms of context and expressing and necessary changes have been made in accordance with their suggestions. A Likert-type scale has been formed by 10 expressions for each aspect. There are answers for which teachers can reflect their thoughts related to that

expression as "I definitely agree", "I agree", I partially agree", "I disagree" and "I definitely disagree", regarding each expression. The sentences for each aspect have been composed of positive expressions. The expressions have been graded as 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1.

The reliability and validity properties of the measurement tool have been determined so that the desired level for that gathered data reflects the truth. Being in the desired level in terms of stated properties of the measurement tool is possible by means of development. For this reason, before the measurement tool is not applied to collect data, they state that it will be developed by taking the opinions of the experts in the subject area and making an application to another group that is similar to the sampling group (Baykul, Gelbal ve Kelecioglu, 2001).

At the end of this study, a draft teacher scale that includes the qualifications relating to personal information and the issue has been prepared. With each question sentence, the alternatives of "I definitely agree", "I agree", I partially agree", "I disagree" and "I definitely disagree" have been placed. In the research, the method with co-forms has been used. For this reason, "Spearman Brown Correlation Coefficient", "Kuder Richardson Formula" and "Cronbach Alpha Coefficient" have been used in the reliability calculations. The reliability of the survey has been tested by Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. The researchers state that it is sufficient as a measurement tool to be stated as reliable if the Alpha value is between 0.50-0.70 (Baykul, Gelbal & Kelecioglu, 2001:53; Sencer & Irmak, 1984). In the research, the value of Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the measurement tool according to its aspects has been seen in Table 2.

Table 2

Reliability Coefficient

Aspects	p value
Communication and Empathy Skills	0.93
Enterprising Skills	0.92
Observation Skills	0.90
Skills of Perceiving Change and Sustainability	0.93
Social Participation Skills	0.89
Whole Survey	0.91

Data Analysis

After the application period of data collection tools has been completed, the answering papers have been controlled and the papers having missing information have been cancelled and taken out of evaluation. Data obtained at the end of scales applied to 5th grade teachers have been examined individually by means of computer and they have been transferred to the SPSS (Statistic Program for Social Sciences) program.

In the first step of evaluation, the views of teachers within the context of the research have been categorized individually based on the items they marked as "I definitely agree", "I agree", I partially agree", "I disagree" and "I definitely disagree";

then, their arithmetic means have been calculated. After that, the views of parties have been categorized according to the 5-point Likert-type Rating Scale. This evaluation has been rated as "very poor" for points between 1-1.49, "poor" for 1.50-2.49 points, "partially poor" for 2.50-3.49 points, "adequate" for 3.50-4.49 points, and "very efficient" for 4.50-5.00 points. In addition, "r-test", "F-test" and "t-test" have been applied with respect to variables.

Findings and Interpretation

Table.3

Findings Related to the Levels of Brining in Social Skills according to the Perceptions of Teachers

Aspect	Mean ($\overline{X}$)	Standard Deviation (Sd)	Level
Communication and Empathy Skills	3,7807	,4578	Adequate
Enterprising Skills	3,7800	,5192	Adequate
Observation Skills	3,6847	,4806	Adequate
Skills of Perceiving Change and Sustainability	3,6427	,5520	Adequate
Social Participation Skills	3,6810	,4671	Adequate

The views related to the social skills levels according to the 5th grade teachers have been given in Table 2. As a result, students' skills of communication and developing empathy, enterprising, observation, perceiving change and sustainability and social participation have been determined as in the adequate level according to the perceptions of the teacher.

Table 4

Findings related to whether there are any significant differences related to gender in the effectiveness of teaching social skills in social studies lessons according to the perceptions of teachers

Aspect	Gender	N	$\overline{X}$	Sd	sd	t	p
Communication and Empathy Skills	Female	85	3,7694	,4593	148	-,343	,908
	Male	65	3,7954	,4591			
Enterprising Skills	Female	85	3,8235	,5081	148	1,176	,573
	Male	65	3,7231	,5318			
Observation Skills	Female	85	3,6459	,4283	148	-1,131	,462
	Male	65	3,7354	,5407			
Skills for Perceiving Change and Sustainability	Female	85	3,6612	,5363	148	,468	,395
	Male	65	3,6185	,5752			
Social Participation Skills	Female	85	3,6471	,4445	148	-1,016	,379
	Male	65	3,7253	,4951			

It has been seen that the communication and empathy developing skill has not led to any significant difference within the gender variable from Table 4 [$t^{(148)}$ = -3,43, p>0,05]. The level of teaching communication and empathy developing skills of female teachers ($\overline{X}$ =3,7694) and the level of teaching communication and empathy developing skills of male teachers have rather similar values and there has been no significant difference between them. However, it can be said that male teachers teach more communication and empathy developing skills compared to female teachers. As the change of enterprising skills according to gender has been examined, it can be said that there has been again no significant difference [t(1,176)=,573, p>0,05]. The level of teaching enterprising skills by female teachers ($\overline{X}$ =3,8235) and the level of teaching enterprising skills by male teachers ($\overline{X}$ =3,7231) are close to each other and there has been no significant difference noted. However, the level of teaching enterprising skill by female teachers is better compared to the level of teaching enterprising skill by male teachers. As Table 3 demonstrates, it can be seen that the observation skill has not formed a significant difference according to the gender variable [$t^{(-1,131)}$=,462, p>0,05]. When we look at the views of male and female teachers, the level of teaching observation skills by male teachers ($\overline{X}$ =3,7354) has been found to be more positive compared to that of female teachers ($\overline{X}$ =3,6459). In the difference of the skill of perceiving change and sustainability according to gender variable, it has been seen that there is not any significant difference between them [$t^{(,468)}$ =,395,   p>0,05]. Opposite to that, there has been no significant difference between the views of female and male teachers; it can be said that the degree of teaching the skill of perceiving change and sustainability by female teachers ($\overline{X}$ =3,6471) is higher than that of male teachers ($\overline{X}$ =3,6185). When we think that female teachers are open to change and innovations in their own life, such a result is an expected one. As teachers' level of teaching social participation skills have been examined according to the gender variable, there has been no significant difference between female and male teachers [$t^{(-1,016)}$ =,379, p>0,05]. However, the level of teaching social participation skills by male teachers ($\overline{X}$ =3,7253) has been seen as higher compared to the level of teaching social participation skills by female teachers ($\overline{X}$ =3,6471). On the other hand, this difference between them is not on a level to create a statistically significant difference.

Table 5

Findings related to whether participation in in-service training affects the effectiveness of teaching social skills in social studies lessons according to the perceptions of teachers

Aspect	Service-in Training	N	$\overline{X}$	Sd	sd	t	p
Communication and Empathy Skills	Yes	100	3,8050	,4620	148	,920	,493
	No	50	3,7320	,4501			
Enterprising Skills	Yes	100	3,8300	,5005	148	1,678	,298
	No	50	3,6800	,5460			
Observation Skills	Yes	100	3,6310	,4320	148	-1,952	,250
	No	50	3,7920	,5547			
Skills of Perceiving Change and Sustainability	Yes	100	3,7020	,5382	148	1,877	,558
	No	50	3,5240	,5655			
Social Participation Skills	Yes	100	3,6857	,4603	148	,176	,942
	No	50	3,6714	,4849			

According to Table 5, it has been seen that the skill of communication and empathy developing has not formed a significant difference according to the variable of participation in in-service trainings [t$^{(148)}$= -,920, p>0,05]. The level of teaching the skill of communication and empathy developing by teachers who participated in in-service training ($\overline{X}$=3,8050) and the level of teaching the skill of communication and empathy developing by teachers who did not participate in in-service training ($\overline{X}$=3,7320) have rather similar values and there has been no significant difference noted between them. However, it can be said that the teachers taking the in-service training have better taught the skill of communication and empathy developing compared to ones who did not take the training. As a result of this, it can be agreed that in-service training activities are useful for teachers, at least with respect to teaching the skill of communication and empathy developing.

When the difference of enterprising skills has been examined according to the participation in in-service training variable, it can be said that there has been, again, no significant difference [t$^{(1,678)}$= ,298, p>0,05]. The level of teaching enterprising skills by teachers who participated in in-service training ($\overline{X}$=3,8300) and the level of teaching enterprising skills by teachers who did not participate in in-service training ($\overline{X}$=3,6800) are close to each other and there has been no significant difference between them. Yet, the level of teaching enterprising skills by teachers who participated in in-service training has a more positive result compared to the level of teaching enterprising skills by teachers who did not participate in in-service training. As the in-service training activities increase the entrepreneurship of teachers, such a result is an expected situation.

When we examine Table 4, it has been found that there has also been no significant difference for the observation skill according to the variable of participation in in-service training [$t^{(-1,952)}$ =,250, p>0,05]. According to the views of teachers both taking in-service training and not taking in-service training, the level of teaching observation skills by teachers who took in-service training ($\overline{X}$ =3,6310) has been found to be less than the level of teaching observation skills by teachers who did not take in-service training ($\overline{X}$ =3,7920). The reason for that can be said to be that in-service training activities do not help developing teachers' ability to teach observation skills and the activities are not so effective toward that end-goal. As the difference of the skill of perceiving change and sustainability according to the variable of participation in in-service training has been examined, it has been seen that there has been no significant difference between them [$t^{(1,877)}$ = ,558, p>0,05].

Although there has not been any significant difference between teachers who took in-service training and those who did not take in-service training, it can be said that the skill of teaching change and sustainability by teachers who took in-service training ($\overline{X}$ =3,7020) is at a higher level compared to the teachers who did not take in-service training ($\overline{X}$ =3,5240).

When we consider that teachers taking in-service training follow changes and innovations in their own life, as well, it is an expected result that their level of teaching this skill has been found to be high. As the differences between the levels of effectively teaching social participation skills by teachers according to the variable of participation in in-service training have been examined, there has been no significant difference between them [$t^{(,176)}$ = ,942, p>0,05]. However, it has been seen that the level of teaching social participation skills by teachers who took in-service training ($\overline{X}$ =3,6857) is at a higher level compared to the level of teaching social participation skills by teachers who did not take in-service training ($\overline{X}$ =3,6714). On the other hand, this noted difference is not at a level that creates a statistically significant difference.

Table 6
Relationships between gender and participation rate for in-service training according to the perceptions of teachers

		Communication and Empathy Skills	Enterprising Skills	Observation Skills	Skills of Perceiving Change and Sustainability	Social Participation Skills
Gender	Pearson	,28	-,096	,093	-,038	,083
	p	,732	,242	,260	,640	,311
	N	150	150	150	150	150
Service-in Training	Pearson	-,075	-,137	,158	-,153	-0,14
	p	,359	,095	,053	,062	,861
	N	150	150	150	150	150

*Correlation is significant at .05 level.
** Correlation is significant at .01 level.

The relationships between gender and participation rates for in-service training of 5th grade teachers and their ability to teach students in social skills using social studies lessons have been seen in Table 6. In accordance with this, it has been determined that there has not been any significant relationship between gender and participation rates for in-service training and teachers' ability to teach students in sub-aspects of social skills. However, there exists a negative relationship (p<0.05, r-,096), at least, between the gender of teachers and the ability to teach the enterprising skill, which is a sub-aspect of social skills. In other words, it can be said that the gender of the teacher is less affective compared to other aspects in terms of developing enterprising skills of students. In addition, there exists a negative relationship (p<0.05, r-,153), at least, between the variable of participation in in-service training and the skill of perceiving changes and sustainability, which is a sub-aspect of social skills.

Table 7
Relationships between educational status, occupational seniority and place of work according to the perceptions of teachers

		Communication and Empathy Skills	Enterprising Skills	Observation Skills	Skills of Perceiving Change and Sustainability	Social Participation Skills
Educational Status	Pearson p N	-,041 ,614 150	-,101 ,221 150	-,007 ,932 150	-,141 ,086 150	,029 ,727 150
Occupational Seniority	Pearson p N	,000 ,997 150	-,093 ,264 150	-,018 ,826 150	-,102 ,215 150	,009 ,915 150
Place of Work	Pearson p N	-,065 ,432 150	-,121 ,140 150	,089 ,277 150	-,179(*) ,028 150	-,020 ,811 150

*Correlation is significant at .05 level.
** Correlation is significant at .01 level.

The relationships between educational status, occupational seniority and place of work for 5th grade teachers and their ability to teach students in social skills using social studies lessons, according to their perceptions, can be seen from Table 7. It has been determined that there is no significant relationship between educational status and occupational seniority of teachers and their ability to teach students in sub-aspects of social skills. However, there exists a negative relationship (p<0.05, r-,179), at least, between teachers' place of work and the skill of perceiving changes and sustainability, which is a sub-aspect of social skills. In other words, it can be said that teachers' place of work is less affective compared to other aspects in terms of developing the skill of perceiving changes and sustainability for students. In addition, it has been seen that there exists a negative relationship (p<0.05, r-,093), at least, between teachers' occupational seniority and the enterprising skill, which is a sub-aspect of social skills. According to this result, it can be said that teachers' occupational seniority is less affective compared to other aspects with respect to

teaching students about enterprising skills. Besides, there exists a negative relationship (p<0.05, r-,141), at least, between teachers' educational status and the skill of perceiving changes and sustainability, which is a sub-aspect of social skills.

Table 8
Findings related to the difference between educational status and the levels of teaching social skills using social studies lessons according to the perceptions of teachers

Educational Status			N	$\overline{X}$	Ss
Associate degree			50	3,7379	,3638
Undergraduate			80	3,7192	,3580
Graduate			10	3,6009	,4129
Other			10	3,6633	,5173
Total			150	3,7138	,3731
Variation Analysis	**Total of Squares**	**Degree of Freedom**	**Mean of Squares**	**F Value**	**Significance Level**
Between-Groups	,184	3	6,141	,436	,727
Within-Group	20,554	146	,141		
Total Squares	20,738	149			

p>0.05

In Table 8, the results have been placed based on whether there is a significant difference between teachers' ability to teach social skills using social studies lessons and their educational status, according to the perceptions of teachers and as controlled by the F-test. As Table 7 is examined, it can be seen that there is no significant difference between the levels of teaching social skills using social studies lessons by teachers and their educational status [$F_{(3-146)}$ = ,436, p>0,05)]. When the answers given by teachers related to the questions to determine their levels of teaching social skills using social studies lessons, it can be seen that the values related to their levels are similar to each other, but the group of teachers that has the highest level of teaching social skills are the teachers who have an associate degrees ($\overline{X}$ =3,7379). Although there has not been any significant difference between the levels of teachers having undergraduate degrees ($\overline{X}$ =3,7192), the levels of teachers having graduate degrees ($\overline{X}$ =3,6009) and the levels of teachers who have graduated from other types of schools ($\overline{X}$ =3,6633), it has been found that the level of teaching social skills by teachers having associate degrees is higher.

Table 9

Findings related to the difference between occupational seniority and the levels of teaching social skills using social studies lessons according to the perceptions of teachers

Occupational Seniority			N	$\overline{X}$	Ss
1-5 year(s)			20	3,6556	,3678
6-10 years			20	3,8454	,3294
11-15 years			30	3,7181	,3969
16-20 years			65	3,7201	,3559
21 years and above			15	3,5798	,4425
Total			150	3,7138	,3731
Variation Analysis	Total of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean of Squares	F Value	Significance Level
Between-Groups	,687	4	,172	1,241	,296
Within-Group	20,051	145	,138		
Total Squares	20,738	149			

p>0.05

According to the results from Table 9, it can be seen that there is no significant difference in terms of the levels of teaching social skills using social studies lessons by teachers and their service life [$F^{(4-145)}$=1,241, p>0,05)]. As the levels of teaching social skills using social studies lessons by teachers have been examined, it can be seen that the values are close to each other, while the ones that have the most positive approach are the teachers having a seniority of 6-10 years ($\overline{X}$=3,8454). Even though there has been no significant difference between the levels of teachers having a seniority of 1-5 year(s) ($\overline{X}$=3,6556), the levels of teachers having a seniority of 11-15 years ($\overline{X}$=3,7181), the levels of teachers having a seniority of 16-20 years ($\overline{X}$=3,7201) and the levels of teachers having a seniority of 20 years and above ($\overline{X}$=3,5798), it has been found that the teachers having a seniority of 16-20 years are more effective in teaching social skills. The least effective teacher group is composed of the teachers having a seniority of 21 years and above ($\overline{X}$=3,5798).

Discussion

Data obtained from the research examined related to the ability to teach social skills using social studies lessons according to the perceptions of 5th grade teachers have corresponded to many bodies of research related to the subject. On the other hand, some of the similar researches in respect to this issue have not overlapped with the results of this study.

According to the views of 5th grade teachers, it can be seen that they are in the "adequate" level in terms of teaching students about social skills. However, the reason that the skill of perceiving change and sustainability has achieved proficiency at a

lower level than other skills can be related to the fact that teachers do not know much about the social environment, family and cultural properties of students and do not have an approach that takes into consideration the personal qualifications of students.

No significant difference has been found between communication and empathy, enterprising, observation, perceiving change and sustainability and social participation skills in respect to the levels of teaching social skills using social studies lessons and the gender of the teacher and participation in in-service training according to the perceptions of teachers. It can be said that in-service training developed the social participation skills of teachers and, therefore, the teachers who attended in-service trainings are more effective at teaching students about social skills. This finding obtained from the study supports the finding that female teachers perform more social skills than male teachers – a finding obtained by Jamyang-Tshering (2004), Kazdin (1985) and Raine, (1993). However, no significant relationship has been found between gender and participation rate in in-service training and the ability to teach students in sub-aspects of social skills. This obtained finding has been seen as opposite to the findings of Phillipsen, Bridges, McLemare and Saponora (1999). However, results of Anderson, Carnavey and Eubanks (2003) have parallelism with the findings of Huesman, Moise-Titus, Podolski and Eron (2003). There may have been several reasons for the fact that female teachers' social skill grades are less than those of male teachers'. When we look at the effect of the gender variable, opposite to the literature, it has been determined that the rate of teaching students about social skills by female teachers is higher than that of male teachers. This finding has been seen as the opposite of the findings of Phillipsen, Bridges, McLemare, and Saponora (1999). On the other hand, the results have parallelism with the findings of Anderson, Carnavey and Eubanks (2003) and Huesman, Moise-Titus, Podolski and Eron (2003). These stated that there have been many reasons that social skills are taught at higher levels by female teachers compared to male teachers. For example, some female teachers are more successful in terms of communication and empathy skills.

According to the findings obtained as a result of relationships between educational status, occupational seniority and place of work and teaching students about social skills during social studies lessons according to the perceptions of teachers, no significant relationship has been found between educational status and occupational seniority of teachers and their ability to teach students in sub-aspects of social skills. As the views of the teachers have been examined generally, it can be seen that they have been thinking similarly to each other; however, teachers having a 1-5-year seniority and those having 21-year and above seniority are less effective in teaching students about social skills using social studies lessons compared to the teachers having other seniorities. Although the result is an expected situation when the lack of experience of teachers having 1-5-year seniority is taken into account, it is a surprising situation that the levels of teachers having 21-year and above seniority have been found as low. The reason for this can be posed that teachers having much occupational seniority have not improved themselves with respect to change and innovations, and due to their ages, their approaches related to the development of social skills of students have been affected in a negative way. However, there exists a negative relationship (p<0.05, r-,179), even though it is low, between the place of work and skill of perceiving change and sustainability, which is a sub-aspect of social skills. In other words, it can be said that the teacher's place of work is less affective compared to the other aspects in terms of developing the skill of perceiving change

and sustainability of students. According to the obtained finding, the related elements composing social skills makes it necessary for teachers to have the variables comprising social skills as a whole. Having one or more of these variables is not enough to effectively teach social skills. For example, a teacher can express him/herself and manage the class, but if s/he is not sensitive, s/he will have an inadequate performance with respect to understanding students (Riggio, 1986). This can prevent teachers from achieving some objectives planned related to teaching. Students may not want to listen to a lesson from a teacher who does not and/or cannot listen themselves. A teacher can be expressive and sensitive, but if s/he does not possess controlling skills, s/he can become angry easily with ignorable and negligible events and give reactions that put him/her in a difficult position. However, they can avoid such negative reactions by means of having affective and social controlling skills. In other words, a teacher needs to have skills of expressing, being sensitive and controlling in terms of social and affective aspects. It is considered incompetence to have some of these skills, while not having others.

As a result, it can be said that teachers' ability to teach students about skills of communication and empathy, enterprising, observation, perceiving change and sustainability and social participation are important contributions for students' academic achievement with respect to teaching students in social skills using social studies lessons, according to teachers' perceptions. When we consider that teaching students about social skills will take a rather long period of time, applications related to social skills in the lessons should be organized by taking the orientation periods into account. Teachers should incorporate the aspects comprising social skills as a whole. Planning can be made such as to bring teacher candidates in the teacher training institutions and teachers in the in-service training programs; furthermore, courses can be created regarding teaching social skills in accordance with these programs. Behaviors related to social skills within the context of courses placed in other programs of faculties of education can be examined and studies directed to different aspects of social skills can be done. This situation has increased the necessity for the studies researching the effect of the objectives of social skills in cognitive, affective and psycho-motor domains.

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