



## The Effect of Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence on Social Skills and Child Depression

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### Abstract

#### Keywords:

Emotional intelligence,  
Social skills,  
Child depression,  
Psychology,  
School management,

Children, who are our future, face with some problems both at school environment and in their social lives. These problems can cause children to experience stress to some extent. Social skill problems were observed in the presence of stress. Emotional intelligence is the best indicator of how children communicate with their environment and people in their surroundings. Examination of the interaction between the sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence, social skills, and child depression using multiple regression provides sufficient information about the basic features of the problem. In the research conducted for this purpose, "Matson Social Skills Assessment Inventory for Children" (1983) was used to measure the level of social skills, "Emotional Intelligence Scale for Children" developed by Küçükkaragöz and Kocabaş (2012) to determine the emotional intelligence levels of primary school students, and "Emotional Intelligence Scale for Children" to measure the depression levels of children. "Beck Depression Scale for Children" adapted by Öymen (1990) was used children depression. The analysis suggests that empathy, managing emotions, emotional awareness, and motivation subdimensions of emotional intelligence affect both the level of social skills and child depression. It has also been shown that if a child's behavior in the course of development is evaluated as positive and supported by some indirect or direct reinforcements, this will become its personality; thus, educational and administrative arrangements should be made at schools to support this process.

### Duygusal Zekâ Boyutlarının Sosyal Beceriler ve Çocukluk Depresyonu Üzerindeki Etkisi

#### Özet

#### Anahtar Kelimeler:

Duygusal zekâ,  
Sosyal beceriler,  
Çocuk depresyonu,  
Psikoloji,  
Okul yönetimi,

Geleceğimiz olan çocuklar okulda ve sosyal hayatta birçok sorunla karşılaşmaktadır. Bu sorunlar çocuklarda strese neden olmaktadır. Stres olduğunda ise sosyal becerilerde sorunlar yaşanmaktadır. Duygusal zekâ, çocukların çevreleriyle ve insanlarla nasıl iletişim kurduklarının en iyi göstergesidir. Duygusal zekanın alt boyutları, sosyal beceriler ve çocukluk depresyonu arasındaki etkileşimi incelemek için çoklu regresyonun kullanılması, sorunun altında yatan özellikler hakkında yeterli bilgi sağlar. Bu amaçla sosyal beceri düzeyini ölçmek için Matson Çocuklar İçin Sosyal Beceri Değerlendirme Envanteri (1983), çocuklarda depresyon düzeyini ölçmek için Küçükkaragöz anketi ve Kocabaş (2012) tarafından geliştirilen Çocuklar İçin Duygusal Zekâ Ölçeği gibi çalışmalar yapılmıştır. Öymen (1990) tarafından uyarlanan "Çocuklar için Beck Depresyon Ölçeği" de çocuklarda depresyon düzeyini belirlemek için kullanılmıştır. Analiz, duygusal zekanın alt boyutlarının- empati, duygu yönetimi, duyguları tanıma ve

*motivasyon- çocuklarda hem sosyal becerileri hem de depresyon düzeylerini etkilediğini göstermiştir. Ayrıca, bir çocuğun gelişimsel davranışı olumlu olarak değerlendirilir ve dolaylı ya da doğrudan pekiştirme ile güçlendirilirse, bu davranışın çocuğun kimliği haline geldiği gösterilmiştir.*

## INTRODUCTION

It is necessary to focus on education system development studies that will improve the level of social intelligence, as well as education programs based on abstract intelligence and mechanical intelligence to improve primary school students' social skills. Thus, the aim of education, which is to raise people who have completed their personal development stages on time and will benefit themselves, the society in which they live, and the development of humanity, will be achieved.

An education system and a social system that cannot offer a balanced development opportunity between abstract intelligence, mechanical intelligence, and social intelligence will constitute a part of the problems in other scientific fields, especially in the fields of educational sciences, psychology, and sociology.

Emotional intelligence has emerged as a concept that attempts to address human psychological and social aspects. The concept of emotional intelligence touches on important issues in understanding and recognizing one's self. It is necessary for people to be able to define their emotional state on their own in terms of self-management. A person who can correctly define and manage himself or herself will contribute to himself or her environment at a high level. A person must encounter different problem processes throughout their life and be able to produce new and different solutions to the problems they encounter. Each individual should have a goal. When setting goals, people should be able to set realistic goals that are beneficial to themselves, the environment, and to humanity. The emotional intelligence of people who cannot set correct and successful goals for themselves, the environment, and the future of humanity has not been sufficiently developed. A person should not forget that he is not alone and always interacts with other people. The social environment includes family, neighborhood, friendships, work environment, school environment, city, country, and all the people living in the world. In such a wide social context, people should be able to express themselves and correctly understand universal values. In interpersonal relationships, people need to be able to express themselves correctly to other people and reach the capacity to understand other people and different environments correctly by placing themselves in other people's shoes. Humans require many skills for survival. While some skills are innate to humans, others can be developed later. In terms of the Educational Sciences, planned studies should be conducted to improve people's skills.

Social skills should aim to bring the social characteristics of a person to a higher level by supporting them through educational processes. By identifying social deficiencies in students, practices aimed at gaining more advanced social skills should be emphasized through education. It will be meaningful to develop social skills that consider the individual differences of students.

Primary school children may experience difficulties in describing and expressing the problems they face. The main reason for the difficulty in defining and expressing problems is that they have not encountered a problem similar to the problem that children have until that day. Therefore, children find it difficult to define and express their problems. During this period, the support of families and teachers is important in the process of defining and expressing the problems children face. Correct diagnosis and expression are the most important processes that can be performed in a process leading to a solution. Depression in childhood may manifest itself with symptoms such as introversion, pain of unknown origin, internet and game addiction, substance abuse, aggression, and decreased academic success. Long-term observations of families and teachers are important to diagnose depression in children. Parents and teachers should approach children's repetitive and persistent expressions carefully.

## **Emotional Intelligence**

Although the concept of emotional intelligence is referred to as the abbreviation (EI) of the words emotional intelligence in English, the most commonly used area in the literature is Emotional Quotient (EQ), which is widely accepted as the equivalent of IQ in emotional intelligence (Akmal Rohaizad et al., 2021). Emotional intelligence is the spiritual aspect of a human being that must be explained. This is a way to reveal the characteristics of spirituality. Emotional intelligence is the awareness of what it offers to itself and its environment in a way that can be observed by other people (Seker et al., 2013).

In the definition of emotional intelligence, it is possible to discuss a level that is revealed in an emotional sense. When we consider this aspect, emotional intelligence has some features that make an individual different from other individuals and create a level difference between them. A person who sets goals for himself first dreams and takes care of his/her personal characteristics. Finally, he took steps to achieve his goal. People who act by knowing their own emotional characteristics and the emotional characteristics of those they encounter have high social skill levels. It is important for people who interact with the environment to be able to take action against the unfair and negative attitudes they see around them and to act together in the right manner. In this way, people with high social skills do not compromise on their own personality or what they know right, while they have characteristics that take the positive values they see in the environment and contribute positively to their own development and the development of their environment (Yalcin et al., 2014).

According to Goleman (2001), emotional intelligence means making good decisions by being aware of emotions, being able to overcome distressing events, and keeping impulses under control. In other words, it means being able to cope with a sad mood and to control impulses. In the simplest terms, emotional intelligence is the rational use of emotions. Emotional intelligence is related to an individual's understanding of themselves and others, in terms of establishing healthier relationships with other people and being in harmony with his environment. Therefore, it shapes an individual's relationship with the world, based on common sense. First, an individual who recognizes and understands his/her own emotions will be more competent in understanding the emotions of the people around him and develop empathy with them; thus, his/her interaction with his/her environment will develop in a positive way. In other words, emotional intelligence is closely related to happiness and compatibility with the world (Goleman, 2005). Primary school-aged children also have the opportunity to develop emotional intelligence. Parents, teachers, friends, and the environment affect the development of emotional intelligence in childhood. The period in which emotional intelligence develops the most through interaction with the external environment is childhood. People who effectively manage their emotions by combining their emotions with cognitive intelligence and other environmental factors, rather than being governed by their emotions, also have high social skill levels. People who have a common sense, know themselves and their environment, can be empathetic, have universal values, and have a sense of "we" have more social skills (Oranes, 2015).

## **Social Skill**

These are behaviors that allow communication through positive reactions by preventing negative feedback from the people they interact with, have a specific goal, and can be accepted and learned by society. These behaviors include cognitive and affective elements (Salavera and Usán 2021).

Since Thorndike (1920), researchers have continued to specify social skills within various intelligence domains. Goleman (2001) discussed emotional intelligence and Gardner (1993) discussed social skills within the concept of multiple intelligences.

It is an important process that enables individuals to distance themselves from the family environment at the first and systematic level and develop their social skills opportunities, which constitutes the main beginning of their own socialization processes. Children in the age of primary education begin the process of systematically developing their social skills as soon as they have formal education opportunities. The new and high-level social skills that a child gains at school make the child more successful in the family and social environment. Social skills gained at school during the primary education period should be activated to move away from the family environment and to define and make sense of the environment and the world (Vila et al., 2021).

Schools, classrooms, teachers, and students had a significant effect on children's acquisition of social skills in primary education. The social circle of children growing up in the family circle began to increase from the moment they started school. The social skills that primary school children acquire contribute to the development of their ability to cope with many educational, psychological, and social situations in the future. This process is extremely important for gaining children's social skills.

In the preschool period, the family plays a leading role in the child's personal development and processes of learning to control and react to their own feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in the family environment. In the developmental process of a child entering the primary education period, the acquisition of social skills in social environments and their expressions in social environments are acquired by children. Primary school-aged children learn to control themselves in every sense during this period (Wolter et al., 2015).

Social skills also encompass a child's behavior towards other children. Such behaviors, such as being able to build good relationships, respecting the rights and feelings of others, and considering group norms for appropriate social behavior, also help children obtain what they want (Beelmann and Lösel, 2021).

The development of empathy in the social sense, communication with friends, learning new games, obeying group rules, setting new goals created by the group, experiencing the feeling of winning or losing in the game process, getting rid of the personal sense of self and reaching the sense of "we" that includes others are the benefits of social skill processes for the child.

During the social development process, children are exposed to school rules. School rules have different characteristics from the first social development period, in which family is the main factor covering the preschool period. School-age socialization has more regular features. Elementary school children must comply with the rules or semi-rule structures that exist in schools. This will help children achieve academic success. Otherwise, children with adverse family conditions who have not developed personal rules will either have no academic success or a low level of academic success if they do not adopt the rules of the school environment or show low compliance. The academic success gained during the school process also led to social success. In this respect, education gained in the primary education period becomes much more valuable for primary school children to gain and develop their basic academic and social life skills and achieve higher success.

Parents and teachers were the most important contributors to children's upbringing. Parents and teachers should focus on their children's relationships with their friends. It should not be forgotten that there may be students who exhibit negative behaviors, and students who are known to exhibit positive behaviors may also occasionally exhibit negative behaviors towards each other. Therefore, children's physical, emotional, and cognitive development should be evaluated as a whole. Friend attitudes and behaviors that may harm a child's developmental integrity should be prevented. Students who show negative behavior should be informed that this is wrong, and new opportunities should be created to reveal the truth. Behavioral training should be provided to students who are exposed to incorrect friendship attitudes and behaviors, including how they should protect themselves. It is necessary to focus on studies that will improve communication and

cooperation between friends and children who have reached the primary school age. In this way, children with developed social skills will be on the way to be successful in their future lives (Wolter et al., 2015).

### **Depression in Children**

The word depression, which derives from the Latin root 'depressus,' has meanings such as "to make sluggish, dull, sad, exhausted, pressing down." The Turkish equivalent of depression is psychological depression or breakdown. According to Köknel (2005), depression is a symptom of many mental and physical disorders. As a psychological state, depression can occur as a part of life, sometimes for no apparent reason and sometimes due to ordinary obstacles. In sum, depression includes all social, mental, and physical complaints and symptoms that are rooted in increased emotional states due to grief. As a psychological disorder, depression can be expressed as a syndrome with certain duration, limits, and criteria. In every sense in which the word depression is used, the main finding is the emotional state caused by increased affect due to grief. An individual feels the aforementioned emotional state and associates it with their personal life. Thus, he was thrown into a new life.

Children who grow up in healthy and suitable environmental conditions can easily overcome problems that may arise in other developmental stages. People who are successful in old age also come from a healthy social environment during their past childhood. Individuals who do not have a suitable physical environment during childhood, have an unhealthy diet, have problems with accommodation, and whose families are unrelated experience great problems in the course of their development. When we consider factors such as unsuitable school conditions, incorrect teacher behaviors, failures in peer relations, and inadequacies of the education system in primary school, the disruptions experienced in these elements leave deep traces in the course of the child's development. Problems that exceed the child's social skill level can affect the child's emotional state and lead to depression. Children with high social skills can recover from depression more easily. Symptoms of depression affect the psychological state of children. This lowers children's cognitive and physical levels. This reduces the social success of human relationships. In such cases, the emotional resistance is reduced. Children who have developed social skills can easily overcome problems that may cause depression in the future by overcoming problems that may occur in childhood. Children who cannot cope with situations that affect their personal lives are caught in depression if they cannot overcome feelings such as sadness, distress, and demoralization. To prevent depression, health, nutrition, and physical and environmental conditions must be improved. Parents, teachers, and close friends around the child should be involved in ways that support the social skill level in social environmental conditions (Berneraz et al., 2019).

When family structures play a role in a child's depression and are emphasized, two types of family relationship situations emerge. In the first family structure, a child with depressive symptoms is viewed as an individual who engages in undesirable behaviors by everyone in the family. When we examine the second family structure, the child showing depressive symptoms is drawn into a pathological relationship with the parent, who exhibits problematic behaviors, thus preventing them from becoming independent from their parents (Strauß et al., 2021).

Primary school children require family attention. Family structure is an important aspect of a child's development. In some cases, children are predisposed to depression at birth. The family's failure to understand the child's mental state, resulting in pressure, violence, deprivation, and punishment, makes the child vulnerable to depression. In some cases, conditions that cause depression in children develop outside of the child. Factors such as inadequacy of the mother and father, separation of the mother and father, physical conditions, indifference arising from teachers, and peer pressure can be considered examples of sources of depression that exist outside the child. Support from family, teachers, and friends is important to prevent

child-induced depression. If there are family problems other than those of the child, support from friends, teachers, relatives, neighbors, and institutions working in the field of social services can be provided.

Childhood depression has been examined in different ways, such as in play- and school-age depression. The reason for this difference is that the causes, symptoms, and treatments of depression observed in these two periods were different. (Kaplan and Sadock, 1988). At play-age, the child's personal and social development passes within the family. During this period, it is important to work with the children, siblings, and parents. Problems in the family or those arising from the child are easier to overcome through family unity and solidarity. Along with family, teachers and friends join the children's environment at school. In this case, it is easier to overcome problems with the support of families, teachers, and students.

While the cause of depression experienced in the play-age period is based on maternal deprivation and indifferent parental attitudes, it is thought that the reasons for depression experienced in the school-age period are negative parental attitudes, failure in social relations, and feelings of helplessness (Ryder, 1995). The family is the foundation of society. The family is the foundation of a child's development. Children who grow up in values with a solid family structure are strong, moral, virtuous, and successful. Many factors, such as character development, moral value judgments, understanding of virtue, and achievement levels of children coming from an environment with weak family values, are adversely affected by this situation. Children with adverse family backgrounds are more susceptible to depression in adulthood and childhood.

When transitioning from play age to school age, the child may have difficulty coping with the problems he encounters for the first time and may not see the necessary help from his environment. A depressed school-age child is observed by his relatives and teachers as a child who has constant behavioral problems and is considered unsuccessful at school. During this period, the child attempted to explain his mental distress and physical complaints. Therefore, considering mental retardation, learning difficulties, anxiety, and conduct disorders in the differential diagnosis, attention should be paid to the diagnosis of depression after the symptoms are specific to each disorder (Şenol et al., 1996).

When a child reaches primary school age, they may encounter different problems. Having different problems also requires differentiation of problem-solving skills. At the point of producing solutions, especially in the first period of primary education, behaviors such as school phobia, adaptation to teachers and friends, reluctance to attend school, teachers, friends, and sometimes aggression can be observed. At primary school age, children may show symptoms of emotional state disorders and depression based on abdominal, heart, eye, ear, headache, and cramps in the body, which are not based on physiological reasons. Most of these problems can easily be overcome with the attention of parents and teachers. Most symptoms included minor social and emotional difficulties. Apart from long-term and large-scale social and emotional events, such problems can be easily prevented by reassuring behaviors based on love and respect. In addition, separation anxiety disorder, neglect and abuse of the child, adjustment disorders, divorce of parents, loss of a close family member, infections caused by organic causes, neurological and endocrine disorders, and psychiatric symptoms due to drugs should be considered (Özatalay, 1995). In light of this information, it is clear that separate criteria are not used to detect childhood depressive symptoms, even if the situations that may cause depression in children are based on different reasons. For this reason, the depressive symptoms seen in adults are also accepted as valid for children (APA, 1994). It would be appropriate for families, teachers, guidance counselors, and child psychiatrists to conduct cooperative studies on depression that may occur in childhood.

When child and adult depression are examined together, it is observed that the depressive phase experienced in childhood is single or few in number, and the depressive phase experienced in childhood may increase in parallel with age (Özatalay 1995). Considering this information, it should not be overlooked that the diagnosis of depression in a child with depressive symptoms can be misleading in the short term (Kashani

and Sherman, 1988). The symptoms of depression can occur at any age. This situation arises in the presence of problems that exceed social-cognitive levels. The social cognitive level in childhood is lower than in adulthood. Children should be supported in solving problems they encounter. Therefore, the children should not be left alone. In particular, parents and teachers should continue to pay attention during childhood. Children who grow up in a healthy and supportive family and educational environment can easily overcome childhood depression, as well as depressive states that may occur in adolescence, youth, adulthood, and later periods (Nique et al., 2014).

Depression, which is considered a clinical disorder, can also be defined as a reactive affective state that occurs at the end of the withdrawal process, particularly during childhood (Erdoğan, 2002). In this case, the diagnostic criteria specified in the DSM-IV and ICD 10 help diagnose depression in the clinical field, so that a child can understand that he or she has recovered from depression (APA, 1994).

Some affective disorders include psychological disorders, such as depression, mania, and bipolar disorder. Children become vulnerable to affective disturbances in situations that remain above the level of social skills that they can emotionally handle. Children's depression can be easily overcome through activities that increase their emotional intelligence, ability, and social skills. Primary school-aged children should be supported and educated with formal education opportunities to prevent them from overcoming mental disorders, especially affective disorders (Shapero et al., 2013).

The child experiencing depression is in a state of distress that he cannot describe in the process he is in. Children with depressive symptoms may show hypersensitivity, touch, and exaggerated reactions such as shouting or crying (Aysev and Taner, 2007). In addition to these basic symptoms of childhood depression, other important symptoms of childhood depression are also seen in functionality. Disruptions in functionality, reduced school success, deterioration in relationships with family and peers, tendency toward alcohol use and drug abuse, difficulty concentrating for a long time, anhedonia, and psychomotor retardation are frequently encountered problems in this regard (Racine et al., 2021).

Symptoms that are seen continuously for at least two weeks in children who experience depressive states can manifest as disorders of thought, emotion, behavior, and physiology (Miller, 2002; Shapero et al., 2013).

## **RESEARCH**

### **The Target Population of the Research**

It consists of primary school students with different demographic characteristics in Konaklı Gazi primary school and secondary school and Konaklı Menderes primary school and secondary schools located in the Alanya district of Antalya province.

### **The Purpose and Method of Research**

This study aimed to examine how social skills, emotional intelligence, and depression levels are affected by primary school students living in the Republic of Turkey, which is on the way of modernization, depending on variables such as environment, age, and gender. In this study, we examined how social skills, emotional intelligence, and depression affect each other.

The Matson's Children's Social Skills Assessment Inventory was developed by Matson et al. (1983). The inventory, also called MESSY, is a 5-point Likert-type and 47-item scale (Cronbach's alpha was calculated as,789 in this study). The "Emotional Intelligence Scale for Children" developed by Küçükkaragöz and Kocabaş (2012) to determine the emotional intelligence levels of primary school students is in the form of a 4-point likert and consists of 18 items. (Cronbach's alpha was calculated as,843 in this study). The Beck Depression Scale for Children, adapted by Öymen (1990), was used to measure children's depression levels.

The scale consists of 27 items. The scale has five factors (Cronbach's alpha was calculated as,864 in this study). These factors are related to inappropriate skills, assertiveness, impulsiveness, self-confidence, jealousy, and introverted behaviors.

Frequency, variance and regression analyzes were used in the research by using the SPSS 26.0 program.

## FINDINGS

Of the 272 students in the research sample, 147 (54%) were female and 125 (46%) were male. Of the students, 13 (4.8%) were 8 years old, 80 (29.4%) were 9 years old, 41 (15.1%) were 10 years old, 17 (6.3%) were 12 years old, 68 (25.0%) were 13 years old, and 53 (19.5%) were 14 years old. 24 students (8.8%) did not have siblings. Ninety (33.1 %) children had one sibling, 89 (32.7%) had two siblings, 38 (14.0%) had three siblings, and 31 (11.4%) had four or more siblings.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to measure the emotional intelligence level of the children in our sample and the effects of our four factors (empathy, managing emotions, emotional awareness, s, and motivation) on students' social skill levels (Table 1).

**Table 1. Multiple Regression Analysis Findings on the Effect of Emotional Intelligence Dimensions on Social Skills**

Variables	N	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Beta	Significance level of t value
<b>Empathy</b>	272	2.18	0.73	-0.305	0.000
<b>Managing Emotions</b>	272	2.81	0.89	0.299	0.000
<b>Emotional Awareness</b>	272	1.76	0.60	-0.232	0.000
<b>Motivation</b>	272	1.96	0.73	-0.138	0.012
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>			<b>F</b>	<b>Significance level of F value</b>	
0.40			44.868	0.000	

According to the findings of the multiple regression analysis in the table above, the effect of the four emotional intelligence dimensions, which are our independent variables, on the social skill levels of child students is quite high and very significant at the 95% statistical significance level ( $R^2 = 0.40$ ;  $F = 44.868$ ;  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). The  $R^2$  score means that emotional intelligence dimensions, which are our four independent variables, explain 40% of the change in social skills, which is our dependent variable, and it is a very high score. As can be seen from the table, the variable that most affects the social skill levels of child students is empathy ( $Beta_1 = -0.305$ ; significance level of t-value = 0.000). Empathy is followed by managing emotions variable and has the second highest beta value ( $Beta_2 = 0.299$ ; Significance level of t value = 0.000). The third most influential variable was emotional awareness ( $Beta_1 = -0.232$ ; significance level of t = 0.000). Motivation variable ranks fourth ( $Beta_1 = -0.138$ ; significance level of t value = 0.012) According to the analysis findings, the two variables with the highest explanatory power on students' social skill levels are the factors of empathy and managing emotions.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to measure the emotional intelligence level of the children in our sample and the effect of our four factors, namely empathy, managing emotions, emotional awareness and motivation, on students' depression (see Table 2).



**Table 2. Multiple Regression Analysis Findings on the Effect of Emotional Intelligence Dimensions on Child Depression**

Variables	N	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Beta	Significance level of t value
Emotional Awareness	272	1.76	0.60	-0.215	0.000
Managing Emotions	272	2.81	0.89	0.101	0.093
Empathy	272	2.18	0.73	0.014	0.828
Motivation	272	1.96	0.73	-0.011	0.866
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>F</b>		<b>Significance level of F value</b>	
0.046		13.058		0.000	

According to the findings of the multiple regression analysis in the table above, the effect of four emotional intelligence dimensions, which are our independent variables, on the depression levels of children is significant according to the 95% statistical significance level ( $R^2= 0.046$ ;  $F= 13.058$ ;  $p= 0.000<0.05$ ). The  $R^2$  score indicated that only the emotional awareness variable ( $Beta_1= -0.215$ ; significance level of t value= $0.000$ ) among the four independent variables, emotional intelligence, explained the change in our dependent variable, child depression, by approximately 5%. As it can be understood from the table, it is seen that the variables of managing emotions ( $Beta_2= 0.101$ ; significance level of t value= $0.093$ ), empathy ( $Beta_3= 0.014$ ; significance level of t value= $0.828$ ), and motivation ( $Beta_4= -0.011$ ; significance level of t value= $0.866$ ) from three emotional intelligence dimensions, which are our other independent variables, are not effective in explaining the change in child depression.

## DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The distribution of the child students constituting the sample of the research as male and female, and the distribution according to the classes they study, are equal to each other. In general, the mothers of the children in the sample were working, and it was observed that the families included in the middle-income group were children. The education level of parents is generally primary or high school.

Studies examining the link between emotional intelligence and gender have revealed that girls have higher emotional intelligence (EQ) scores than boys. These studies have shown that women are more successful than men are, especially in terms of empathy, perception, and adaptation. (Mumcuoğlu, 2002; Chernobrovkin et al, 2021). Goleman (2001) revealed differences in the use of using emotional intelligence between women and men. According to Goleman (2001), women use their emotional intelligence more effectively while empathizing with the emotions of others and communicating with their environment, whereas men use their emotional intelligence more effectively to manage their emotions and motivate themselves. Kierstead (1997) used the concept of emotional intelligence as a hypernym. According to Kierstead, the concept of emotional intelligence encompasses a broad set of individual skills and judgments. Emotional intelligence includes recognizing emotions, how they affect cognitive intelligence, and how EQ and IQ affect each other (Kierstead, 1999). According to Cherniss and Golemann (2001) and Cooper and Saway (1997), success and happiness in one's life are based on emotional intelligence rather than mental intelligence. According to them, while the role of mental intelligence in success and happiness was 20%, that of emotional intelligence was 80%. Within the scope of emotional intelligence dimensions, social skills, and child depression variables, which we have compared according to gender and age and which are demographic information of the child students in the sample, it has been observed that only social skill level can be used to differentiate between male and female students. It has found out that female students have had higher social skills. These results are consistent with those of Salavera and Usán (2021).

Another important finding of this study was the effect of emotional intelligence and social skills on depression in children. Although the findings of the multiple regression analysis are statistically significant, they reveal that the social skills variable does not have a high impact on explaining depression in children and that other variables that may have the power to affect depression in children should be added to the new models.

When people who have raised themselves well in all respects and achieved certain successes in life are analyzed, the source of this success is that they come from a good family. Individuals coming from a good family background have the opportunity to develop themselves. Family is the first place where innate traits interact with personality development. Family is also a place where personal traits persist for the longest, even for a lifetime. It is a place where all people who experience different success and failure stories in their external environments renew themselves more easily, find strength, and have the opportunity to recharge their batteries. Raising individuals with high social skills begins and continues within the family (Martin-Requejow and Santiago-Ramajo 2021; Seker and Bayram, 2021).

The children were considered good observers. They reflect on the behaviors they see in their surroundings, without evaluating them. If the behavior revealed by the child in the course of development is evaluated positively and supported by indirect or direct reinforcement, it becomes the personality of the child. If a behavior is evaluated negatively, it is not repeated by the child and disappears over time. Most importantly, parents should provide examples of their interactions with their children. Parents who manage to become positive role models for their children affect their children's personalities through positive behaviors. Children who grow up seeing negative parental behaviors also reflect negative examples of their environment. Children are good at analyzing verbal communication, temporary behaviors, and permanent behaviors. In this regard, it is necessary for parents to demonstrate positive behaviors so that the child can learn positive behaviors in the family (Perry et al., 2021; Mpanya et al., 2022).

When parents are asked what they think about their children, they often describe their children's mistakes critically. When the attitudes and behaviors of families criticizing their children and seeing their mistakes are observed, they also have similar shortcomings and mistakes. The underlying factors in the success or failure of children are the attitudes and behaviors of parents, which are described as successful or unsuccessful. When children who grow up in safe, peaceful, successful, and democratic family environments are analyzed, their social skills are developed. It can be easily observed that they were successful in terms of academic, social, and cultural aspects. Children who grow up in adverse and indifferent family environments tend to experience more emotional change. These children had low academic achievement, were quite inadequate in terms of talent and skills, and were impatient. Parents who encourage their children to interact with teachers, friends, and the environment at primary school age, and encourage their children to be in a positive environment, raise individuals with high social skills.

Knowing the effects of emotional intelligence sub-dimensions on children's social skills and depression levels is also important for school management. Emotional awareness in children will make it easier to adapt to the school environment by improving their emotion regulation skills, as it helps most of them realize their feelings and those of their friends at school. A child compatible with the environment will not pose a problem in terms of classroom or school management. Children who have the ability to manage emotions are also individuals who send positive signals to their environment through empathic behaviors. Motivating these positive signals according to educational goals will bring success to the school. School administrators should construct motivational elements that activate and develop children's emotional intelligence while constructing success mechanisms. Combining these arrangements with teachers and parents ensures that success is inclusive and sustainable.

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