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Examining the 4th Grade Students' Ability to Say "No" in the Framework of Life Studies Curriculum with Many-Facet Rasch Model

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Abstract: This study aims to reveal whether or not the ability to say "no", which is tried to be taught to students in the 2005 life studies curriculum, has been gained by children with regards to various situations. The survey model was utilized in the study. The study was conducted with 4th grade students who took the class of life studies in primary school 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades and therefore are expected to have gained the ability to say "no". In order to collect data, The Ability to Say "No"-Specific Cases Inventory (NSCI) developed by the researchers was employed. In order to be able to evaluate the responses given to the cases in the NSCI, the "NSCI Rubric" was developed. The data obtained from NSCI were analyzed according to the many-facet Rasch analysis using the FACETS packet program. The findings suggest that students may be able to demonstrate the basic ability to say "no" expected of them in response to specific cases; however they will not focus too much on the behavior of making an explanation about the reason why they have said "no", or, on performing alternative behaviors after saying "no".

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1. INTRODUCTION

Regardless of circumstances, people behave reactively in the face of threats against themselves and their values (Aytaç, 2005). One of these reactions is the demonstration of the ability to say "no", the most effective way of expressing the boundaries of personal space clearly and seriously (Bolton, 1979). The significance of the ability to say "no" underlies the circumstances when having trouble saying "no" can be improper and unsafe while examining children as well as adults. Some cases in which it is crucial to say "no" are when a child receives substance use offers, is faced with the risk of being sexually abused, needs to manage time, feels moral problems, and/or is confronted with inappropriate requests from online environments. These cases overall include the circumstances when the child should exhibit the ability to say "no."

Substance refers to any chemical that can cause addiction when used abusively, resulting in deterioration of the mood, mental processes and various functions of the brain (Ceyhun, Oğuztürk and Ceyhun, 2001). When the studies carried out on substance use (Boztaş and Arısoy, 2010; Özyurt and Dinç, 2006; Ünsal and Sezgin, 2009; Korkmaz Ekren, Başarık, and Özhan,

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2011; Ögel and Aksoy, 2007) are reviewed, it appears that the age of finishing 4-year primary school process and the first year after finishing elementary school (10-12 years age) is the time posing the most risk in terms of starting substance use for the first time. Furthermore, it is easily inferred how important it is in this period to gain preventive strategies in terms of substance use, considering that primary school period is when the positive perceptions of the students about the individuals using substances, like cigarettes, are lower than the middle-school students (Yazıcı & Şahin, 2006). Therefore, while the children are still enrolled in elementary school, they need to be equipped with some abilities that will prevent them from starting substance use. That being said, one of the abilities children need to gain in order to protect themselves about substance use is the ability to say "no" to both their peers and adults (Tokur Kesgin, 2012). Gaining this ability, especially in primary school or in the early years of adolescence can make it easier entirely to reject offers to use substance in the coming years (Belgrave, Reed, Plybon, & Corneille, 2004).

Sexual abuse is defined as violent sexual acts committed by an adult, a teenager, or a peer to a child (Rind, Tromovitch & Bauserman, 1998). One of the studies conducted within the context of sexual abuse children suffer at the international level indicates that 7.9% of males and 19.7% of females were exposed to sexual abuse before the age of 18 (Pereda, Guilera, Forns, & Gómez-Benito, 2009). A meta-analysis study carried out at the international level also demonstrates that at least 164 out of every 1000 girls and at least 66 out of every 1000 boys suffered from sexual abuse (Stoltenborgh, Ijzendoorn, Euser & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2011). These studies reveal that the sexual abuse children are exposed to is a serious problem that should not be ignored anywhere in the world; also, it should be addressed gravely and needs to be studied in our country, as well (Aktepe, Işık, Kocaman & Eroğlu, 2013; Bilginer, Hesapçıoğlu & Kandil, 2013; Taner, Çetin, Işık & İşeri, 2015). The problem of sexual abuse in Turkey requires some strategies to be adopted in order to prevent sexual abuse and to protect children against sexual abuse, just as in other countries. One of these strategies is the demonstration of the ability to say "no" against sexual abuse (Özkan, 2011). With regards to the sexual abuse children are exposed to, it can be argued whether or not sexual abuse can be perceived by the child and whether or not a child can say "no" even if he/she perceives it. Within the scope of this discussion, Polat (2001) asserts that even younger children can easily understand intuitively what behaviors can be covered by sexual abuse. Sanderson (2010) argues that children are not completely passive victims of sexual abuse and they can protect themselves if they are informed of the threats of sexual abuse, are allowed to resist them, and are given the necessary information to resist acts of sexual abuse.

Time management refers to effective use of time when performing actions for specific purposes (Claessens, Eerde, Rutte & Roe, 2007). Behaviors related to time management should start to be gained along with the understanding that time is a fluid and perpetual structure. According to Passig (2004), the most appropriate stage in this respect is the late childhood stage when the individual begins to establish connections between events, develops a sense of continuity in time, and discovers the recurring patterns of time and the sequence of certain events. Therefore, it can be said that the process of teaching time-management related behaviors should start during the primary school years. In this respect, it can be argued first that there is a need to remove the obstacles in front of the ability to exhibit time-management related behaviors. One of the main obstacles in front of exhibiting time management behaviors is the lack of ability to say "no" (Mackenzie & Nickerson, 2009). Time management does not actually refer to managing time; it refers to managing priorities (Manktelow & Anand, 2008). Accordingly, individuals who do not believe that they have the right to set priorities as one of the basic assertiveness rights and who prioritize requests for the needs of others rather than their needs because they cannot say "no" to others cannot succeed in time management.

The ability to say "no" should also be exhibited in the cases with moral problems. Such cases may involve non-ethical proposals (Szpalski, Gunzburg and De Kleuver, 2003) as well as some social-moral problems (Leming, 1997). Therefore, to say "no" in the face of such situations is the ability to act in line with moral aspects by leaving aside an instinctive reaction (Calabrese, 1989; Gündoğan, 2009). The presence of the moral aspects in the ability to say "no" suggests that this ability is related to the moral character (Yılmaz & Ersoy, 2016). Considering the importance of character development in childhood (O'Sullivan, 2004), it can be put forward that the ability to say "no" in the face of moral problems must be learned in primary school years.

The recent development in the information and communication technologies has led to the transfer of face-to-face communication and interaction patterns in the home, at school, at the market, at the bazaar or on the streets, to virtual or online environments. Such environments now satisfy individuals' needs such as chat, entertainment, education, and shopping. Taking these needs into online environments means that some of the negative daily situations are also being taken to online environments. In particular, children can experience adverse circumstances such as sharing their personal information, sending pornographic pictures or making financial commitments (Livingstone, Bober and Helsper, 2005; Stahl and Fritz, 2002), receiving face-to-face meeting requests from strangers (Liau, Khoo, and Ang, 2005), and exposure to violence (Dehue, Bolman and Völlink, 2008) in online environments. As such, children, as individuals, need to take on responsibilities against risky content and requests inevitably encountered in online environments (Salifu, 2008) and gain some abilities as part of these responsibilities. One of these abilities is the ability to say "no" to inappropriate and unreliable requests and content (Bal & Kahraman, 2015).

The ability to say "no," which is important in terms of the above-mentioned situations, has been examined under the 2005 life studies curriculum (Ministry of National Education [MNE], 2009) within the scope of the skills of "providing security and protection." In this context, it is aimed to teach students to say "no" without feeling guilty, to say "no" and to explain why they say "no", and to suggest an alternative option after refusing and explaining the reason. It is also aimed that students will be able to say "no" effectively in the context of self-confidence, one of the personal qualities tried to be gained by students. Therefore, the 2005 life studies curriculum has covered a comprehensive, open and direct approach in terms of the ability to say "no." However, instead of focusing on the ability to say "no," the "self-protection ability", regarded as a superior ability in terms of conceptual hierarchies, was addressed in the life studies curricula published in 2015 and 2017 (MNE, 2015; 2017). In these curricula, the ability to say "no" is limited only to indirect gains in that refusals should be made within the framework of courtesy rules. From this standpoint, the relevant curricula have shown a limited, indirect and implicit approach. This change may indicate that the relevant ability is not considered too much in the life studies curriculum. Yet, scientific reasoning is required in order for such a thought to be justified. In fact, there is no research in the literature on whether or not the ability has been gained by students, so there is no scientific ground for this change. Therefore, the present study aims to reveal whether or not the ability to say "no" has been gained by children in terms of various situations in so as to allow discussing the change about this ability on scientific grounds.

2. METHOD

Research Model

The survey model was utilized in this study. The survey model is a research model in which the opinions of a large group of people about a particular issue or topic are sought (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

Study Group

This study was conducted with 4th grade students who took the course of life studies in primary school 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades and therefore are expected to have gained the ability to say "no". Within this scope, the application was carried out with a total of 275 students in the 4th grades of six primary schools determined to be able to reach 200-300 students by paying attention to represent the districts of Diyarbakır province (Bağlar, Sur, Yenişehir, Kayapınar) at least once. However, some of the data collection tools obtained from 275 students was excluded from the evaluation due to illegible or improper filling. Therefore, 266 data collection tools were examined within the scope of the research. Considering the Many-Facet Rasch Model, since this number is over 200, it can be said that the accuracy of the estimates obtained through the relevant data collection tool is sufficiently high (DeMars, 2010).

Data Collection Tool

In order to collect data in the scope of the present research, The Ability to Say "No"-Specific Cases Inventory (NSCI) developed by the researchers was utilized. NSCI consists of five open-ended questions regarding sample cases to measure students' ability to say "no" about substance use, sexual abuse, time management, moral problems, and online environments that students may encounter in real life. Through the NSCI rubric, students' answers to these questions are examined in terms of their performances to say "no", to make an explanation, and perform alternative behaviors. However, a total success score is not calculated for student success by evaluating their performances to say "no", to make an explanation, and perform alternative behaviors together. The reason behind this is that saying "no" is considered as an assertiveness right in this study and it is not accepted as an obligation to make an explanation or perform alternative behaviors after saying "no". The students' ability to say "no" in the face of all the cases included in the NSCI is regarded as a fundamental performance and students are expected to exhibit this performance. However, making an explanation about the reasons for saying "no" or performing alternative behaviors after saying "no" is not considered a necessary behavior for the students; such behaviors can only be examined in terms of determining the potential saying "no" attitudes of students, interpreted contextually, or assessed within the framework of assertiveness rights.

The Davis (1992) technique was employed to ensure the content validity of the cases prepared in line with the purposes of the research and the literature. According to the expert opinions obtained in this technical framework, all the validity indices of the five cases in NSCI vary between 88% and 100% and are above 80%. These indices can be interpreted as an indication that all cases will remain in the inventory. Although validity indices are quantitative evidence for the validity of the relevant case studies, experts' opinions of "quite relevant" and "somewhat relevant" on the cases have also been taken into consideration in the data collection tool.

In order to be able to evaluate the responses given to the cases in the NSCI, the "NSCI Rubric" was developed. In this direction, initially, the NSCI Rubric was designed as a general rubric to evaluate all the five cases specified in the NSCI in the framework of common criteria. Second, an analytical structure was established in the scope of sub-dimensions to measure three sub-performances determined within the scope of ability to say "no" in the 2005 life studies curriculum (MNE, 2009). These three sub-performances can be described as saying "no" without the feeling of guilt; saying "no" and explaining the reason of saying "no", and proposing another option after refusing and explaining the reason. In the framework of these sub-performances, the performance dimensions regulated in the NSCI Rubric include saying "no," making an explanation and performing alternative behaviors.

For the purpose of providing validity and reliability in this study (Kutlu, Doğan & Karakaya, 2010), opinions were obtained from eight experts first, and then from two classroom teachers regarding NSCI Rubric; thus, preliminary application of NSCI was conducted. In this context, taking into consideration the data obtained from the classroom teachers and experts, both the cases in the NSCI and the criteria in the NSCI Rubric have been made clearer and more comprehensible. Opinions from classroom teachers made it possible to think that the relevant rubric measures the ability to say "no" in the face of selected cases. The experts commented that the criteria contained in the NSCI Rubric were not overlapping, the descriptive explanations for the criteria were sufficient, the descriptive explanations of rating descriptions accurately reflected the ratings, and the rating numbers reflected the success differences. Taking into account the expert opinions, the students were asked "What do you tell him/her?" and "Why do you say this?" following the case studies. Later, pre-application was carried out with 49 students in two 4th grade classrooms in a primary school. Based on the pre-application, the cases in NSCI were made clearer and more comprehensible, and small contextual changes were made to these cases. In this respect, the performance dimension called "proposing another option" was called "performing alternative behavior." The descriptive definition of "proposing negative options" under this performance dimension was changed to "proposing negative options or performing negative alternative behaviors." The descriptive definition of "proposing positive options" was organized as "proposing positive options or performing positive alternative behaviors." Finally, a table of explanations was added just below the rubric, with explanations of the criteria and descriptive definitions, to ensure convenience for those who will rate answers to the NSCI using the NSCI Rubric. In this table of explanations, there are some literature and pre-application-based definitions and potential answers identified in literature and pre-application.

After the pre-application, the final scale was applied to the students in the actual application and the students' reactions to the related case studies were investigated. Students' reactions to the NSCI were evaluated by three raters using the NSCI Rubric. The measurement reports for the rater facet obtained by many-facet Rasch analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *The Measurement Reports for the Rater Facet in the Many-Facet Rasch Analysis*

Rater	Logit	Standard Error	Infit MnSq	Outfit MnSq
3	,06	,02	,97	,97
2	-,02	,02	1,01	1,02
1	-,05	,02	1,01	1,04
Mean	,00	,02	1,00	1,01
S.D. (Population)	,04	,00	,02	,03
S.D. (Sample)	,06	,00	,02	,03
Model, Sample: RMSE: ,02; Standard Deviation.: ,05; Separation: 2,66; Reliability: ,88				
Model, Fixed (all same) chi-square: 16,1; d.f.: 2; p=,00				
Exact agreements between raters: 85,5%				
Expected agreement between raters: 35,7%				
Kappa statistics related to inter rater reliability: ,77				

According to the measurement reports for the rater facet in the many-facet Rasch analysis shown in Table 1, the separation ratio is 2.66; and the reliability index is 0.88. Determined in terms of "model, sample," this reliability coefficient reflects the difference between the severity and leniency levels of the raters. The value of 0.88 indicates that the raters differ from each other in terms of severity and leniency. The p (0.00) value obtained for the "model, fixed (all same) chi-square" is interpreted that the variation in these ratings is significant. The essential statistics that should be examined regarding how well the raters make consistent, in other words reliable, ratings are the exact agreement among raters statistic and kappa statistic. The exact agreement between raters statistic indicates how three different raters make a consistent evaluation related

to the responses given to the cases included in the NSCI. This value should be at least 75%; but it is expected to approach 90%. Therefore, it can be said that the reliability level (85.5%) among the raters in this study is high. The fact that the Kappa statistic (0.77) is between 0.61 and 0.81 enables us to make a comment that there is an agreement among the raters (Graham, Milanowski & Miller, 2012). At the same time, the fact that infit and outfit statistics are around 1.0 means that the raters performed their ratings as independent as possible and that they didn't experience too much disagreement (Linacre, 2014). These results indicate that the measurements for evaluating the data collected with NSCI were performed reliably by using NSCI Rubric.

One of the basic facets examined by the many-facet Rasch analysis in this research is the "examinee" facet. The data for this facet signifies that the logit value of the examinee with the highest performance in terms of the ability to say "no" in the face of specific cases is 1.95; the logit value of the examinee with the lowest performance in this case is -4.02. These values imply that the ability of students to say "no" in the face of specific cases has been evaluated over a wide range. Since the logit values for all of the 266 examinees covered in this study cannot be given, only the mean logit values, standard errors, infit and outfit statistics of all individuals are given in Table 2.

Table 2. *The Measurement Reports for the Examinee Facet in the Many-Facet Rasch Analysis*

	Logit	Standard Error	Infit MnSq	Outfit MnSq
Mean	,49	,19	1,05	1,01
S.D. (Population)	,74	,03	,72	,80
S.D. (Sample)	,74	,03	,72	,80
Model, Sample: RMSE: ,19; Standard Deviation.: ,71; Separation: 3,81; Reliability: ,94				
Model, Fixed (all same) chi-square: 2956,0; d.f.: 265; p=,00				

According to the measurement reports for the examinee facet in the many-facet Rasch analysis given in Table 2, infit and outfit statistics are 1.05 and 1.01, respectively. The fact that these values are close to 1 suggests that there is very little distortion in the measurement system. The fact that the average outfit statistic is close to 1 proposes that the data obtained fit the model (Brentari and Golia, 2008). The separation ratio of 3.81 and the reliability index of 0.94 indicate that the measurements related to the NSCI made with the NSCI Rubric can distinguish examinees in terms of their ability to say "no" in the face of specific cases. Moreover, "the model, fixed (all same) chi-square" statistic of 2956.0 and the p value of 0.00 can be interpreted as a significant difference in the students' performance to say "no" in the face of specific cases (İlhan, 2015).

The ultimate facet that can be examined in the many-facet Rasch analysis is the item facet. The measurement reports obtained with the multi-facet Rasch analysis for the item facet is given in Table 3.

A measurement report should have a separation ratio of at least 2 (Linacre, 2012) and a reliability index of at least 0.70 (Walker, Engelhard, and Thompson, 2012). Table 3 reveals that the separation ratio for the items in NSCI is 19.19 and the reliability index is 1.0. These statistics signify that the items in the NSCI differ from each other in terms of the level of difficulty (İlhan, 2015). This is considered to be a significant difference due to p value (<0.05). Unfit and outfit statistics between 0.5 and 1.5 indicate that the model-data fit is gained (Brinthaupt and Kang, 2014).

Table 3. *The Measurement Reports for the Item Facet in the Many-Facet Rasch Analysis*

Madde	Logit	Standard Error	Infit MnSq	Outfit MnSq
3	1,31	,05	,51	,55
15	,75	,04	,72	,72
14	,67	,04	,84	,87
12	,63	,04	,78	,84
2	,59	,04	1,09	1,20
6	,49	,04	,88	,97
9	,44	,04	1,04	1,27
5	,39	,04	,90	,98
1	,26	,04	,83	,98
8	-,22	,04	1,22	1,29
1	-,56	,04	1,44	1,26
4	-,73	,04	,92	,88
13	-1,24	,05	1,33	1,03
7	-1,32	,06	1,47	1,38
10	-1,46	,06	1,35	,95
Mean	,00	,04	1,02	1,01
S.D. (Population)	,83	,01	,28	,22
S.D. (Sample)	,86	,01	,29	,23

Model, Sample: RMSE: ,04; Standard Deviation: ,86; Separation: 19,19; Reliability: 1,0 Model, Fixed (all same) chi-square: 4214,7; d.f.: 14; p=,00

Within the many-facet Rasch analysis, category statistics are given after the measurement reports for each facet. These statistics provide evidence whether the 4-point rating scale (0-3) in the NSCI Rubric works well. The category statistics obtained for this study are shown in Table 4.

Tablo 4. *Category Statistics for NSCI Rubric in the Many-Facet Rasch Analysis*

Scale category	f	%	Cumulative %	Average Measure	Expected Measure	Outfit MnSq
0	1604	13	13	-,58	-,68	1,4
1	4845	40	54	-,03	,05	,5
2	912	8	61	,97	,65	1,2
3	4609	39	100	1,33	1,34	1,2

As it can be inferred from Table 4, there are more than 10 observations in each scale category (0-3), as needed. In addition, as the category level of the rating scale increases (from 0 to 3), the average measures (from -58 to 1.33) also increase. Outfit statistics are distributed between 0.5 and 1.5. These three findings can be regarded as evidence that the rating scale in the NSCI Rubric works well (Linacre, 2014).

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the NSCI were analyzed according to the many-facet Rasch analysis using the FACETS packet program. Rasch is a logistic model with one parameter based on item-response theory, indicating the relationship between the ability or property measured by a measuring tool and the response given to an item (DeMars, 2010). Since this model is based on item-response theory, it gives more weight to distinctive and reliable items, taking into account item difficulty or item discrimination during scoring. Thus, more reliable results are obtained compared to the raw scores (Baker, 2016). In this study, examinee, item, and rater facets were processed in the analysis performed according to the many-facet Rasch analysis. In order to carry out the analysis, the model-data fit hypothesis was tested first. For this purpose, the measurement reports for the item facet in the many-facet Rasch analysis (see Table 3) were

examined. By reason of the fact that the infit and outfit statistics given in this report range from 0.5 to 1.5, it is considered that the model-data fit assumption required for the analysis is provided (Brinthaupt & Kang, 2014). Since ensuring model-data fit connotes that the assumptions of unidimensionality and local independence required for the many-facet Rasch analysis are also met, the findings from the analysis are presented.

3. FINDINGS

Within the scope of this study, five different cases (substance use, sexual abuse, time management, moral problems, and online environment requests) were presented to primary school 4th graders to find about their abilities to say "no" to specific cases. The responses of the students related to the reactions they will exhibit in the event of these five cases were rated by three independent raters using NSCI Rubric. These ratings were analyzed according to the many-facet Rasch analysis. The variable map created by the many-facet Rasch analysis is given in Table 5.

The first column of Table 5 contains the logit scale and the last column contains the rating scale. The other columns include item, examinee, and rater facets. In the examinee column, the level of students' performance and the degree of difficulty of the item increase from bottom to top. In order to make better comments on this issue, the logit scale needs to be examined. Examinees with more positive values on the Logit scale refer to the examinees with higher performance levels, while items corresponding to positive values refer to more difficult items (Bond & Fox, 2001). Therefore, negative values in this respect indicate individuals more unsuccessful in relation to related performance in terms of examinee facet, while these values indicate performance tasks realized more easily in terms of item facet. When the many-facet Rasch model obtained in this study is examined, it is understood that most of the examinees included in the study correspond to positive values in terms of logit scale. This indicates that the majority of the 4th graders participating in this study had a high ability to say "no" in the face of specific cases. The students with the highest ability to say "no" in the face of specific cases are the students 40 and 151, while the students with the lowest performance in this respect are the students 102 and 11. When the item facet of the Rasch model is examined, it is seen that the highest performance of the students is seen for the item 10 (being able to say "no" in the face of moral problems), followed by the 7th (being able to say "no" in terms of time management), 13th (being able to say "no" in terms of online environments), 4th (being able to say "no" in terms of sexual abuse), 1st (being able to say "no" in terms of substance use), and 8th item (making an explanation in terms of time management), respectively. The other items are the ones that students have difficulty to perform well because they are positive in terms of logit values. Among these items, the students have the poorest performance for item 3 (performing alternative behaviors in terms of substance use), followed by 15th (performing alternative behaviors in terms of online environments), 14th (making an explanation in terms of online environments), 12th and 2nd (performing alternative behaviors in terms of moral problems and making an explanation in terms of substance use), 6th and 9th (performing alternative behaviors in terms of sexual abuse and time management), 5th (making an explanation in terms of sexual abuse), and 11th item (making an explanation in terms of moral problems), respectively. These findings suggest that the students may be able to demonstrate the basic ability to say "no" expected of them in specific cases; but they will not focus too much on making an explanation about the reasons why they have said "no" and performing alternative behaviors after saying "no."

Table 5. *The Variable Map of the Ability to Say "No" to Specific Cases*

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+---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------+
|Measr|+BİREY                                                                                                     |-MADDE  |+BİREY     |-PUANLAYICI|Scale|
|-----+-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------+--------+-----------+-----------+-----|
|   2 +                                                                                                           +        +           +           + (3) |
|     | 40  151                                                                                                   |        | .         |           |     |
|     |                                                                                                           |        |           |           |     |
|     |                                                                                                           |        |           |           |     |
|     | 28  29                                                                                                    |        | .         |           |     |
|     | 20  32  136 253                                                                                           |        | *.        |           |     |
|     | 71  150 165 166 237 255                                                                                   |        | **        |           |     |
|     | 88  105 145                                                                                               |        | *         |           |     |
|     | 35  73  75  76                                                                                            |        | *.        |           | --- |
|     | 77  127 128 169                                                                                           | 3      | *.        |           |     |
|     | 23  27  56  129 134 144 168 199 250                                                                       |        | ***       |           |     |
|     | 22  37  55  74  94  99  193 226 256 266                                                                   |        | ***.      |           |     |
|     | 49  80  100 101 104 162 188 194 197 198 245 257                                                           |        | ****      |           |     |
|   1 + 66  84  85  131 147 164 173 190 259                                                                       +        + ***       +           +     |
|     | 24  41  53  135 171 181 212 244                                                                           |        | **.       |           |     |
|     | 33  42  58  59  64  79  89  92  95  98  112 139 161 176 177 179 219 220 232 246 247 261                   |        | *******.  |           |     |
|     | 17  18  38  44  48  69  82  180 206                                                                       | 15     | ***       |           |  2  |
|     | 9   14  45  51  72  86  103 123 125 126 137 138 167 183 200 213 249 258                                   | 14     | ******    |           |     |
|     | 3   4   25  26  47  81  96  122 146 172 178 191 209                                                       | 12  2  | ****.     |           |     |
|     | 1   21  34  36  43  106 109 121 149 182 186 192 201                                                       |        | ****.     |           |     |
|     | 2   7   30  50  52  54  60  62  78  87  107 153 158 160 174 184 187 189 210 230 239 251 262 265           | 6   9  | ********  |           |     |
|     | 46  63  67  93  152 248 252 263                                                                           | 5      | **.       |           |     |
|     | 10  57  68  70  83  140 207 222 238                                                                       |        | ***       |           | --- |
|     | 12  133 163 240                                                                                           | 11     | *.        |           |     |
|     | 108 124 132 154 175 204 217 218 224 233                                                                   |        | ***.      |           |     |
|     | 90  91  110 117 130 170 205 211 225 264                                                                   |        | ***.      | 3         |     |
*   0 * 5   115 118 120 156 185 215 228 229 241 260                                                               *        * ***.      * 2         *     *
|     | 116 208 214                                                                                               |        | *         | 1         |     |
|     | 61  141 159 195                                                                                           |        | *.        |           |     |
|     | 16                                                                                                        | 8      | .         |           |     |
|     | 111 143 223 227 242                                                                                       |        | *.        |           |  1  |
|     | 114 142 235 243                                                                                           |        | *.        |           |     |
|     | 113 221                                                                                                   |        | .         |           |     |
|     | 39  97  203                                                                                               | 1      | *         |           |     |
|     | 31  148 202 234                                                                                           |        | *.        |           |     |
|     | 6   65  157                                                                                               |        | *         |           |     |
|     | 13                                                                                                        | 4      | .         |           |     |
|     | 155                                                                                                       |        | .         |           |     |
|     |                                                                                                           |        |           |           |     |
|  -1 + 15  236                                                                                                   +        + .         +           +     |
|     |                                                                                                           |        |           |           |     |
|     |                                                                                                           |        |           |           |     |
|     | 8   119 196                                                                                               | 13     | *         |           |     |
|     |                                                                                                           | 7      |           |           |     |
|     | 231                                                                                                       |        | .         |           |     |
|     |                                                                                                           | 10     |           |           |     |
|     | 216                                                                                                       |        | .         |           | --- |
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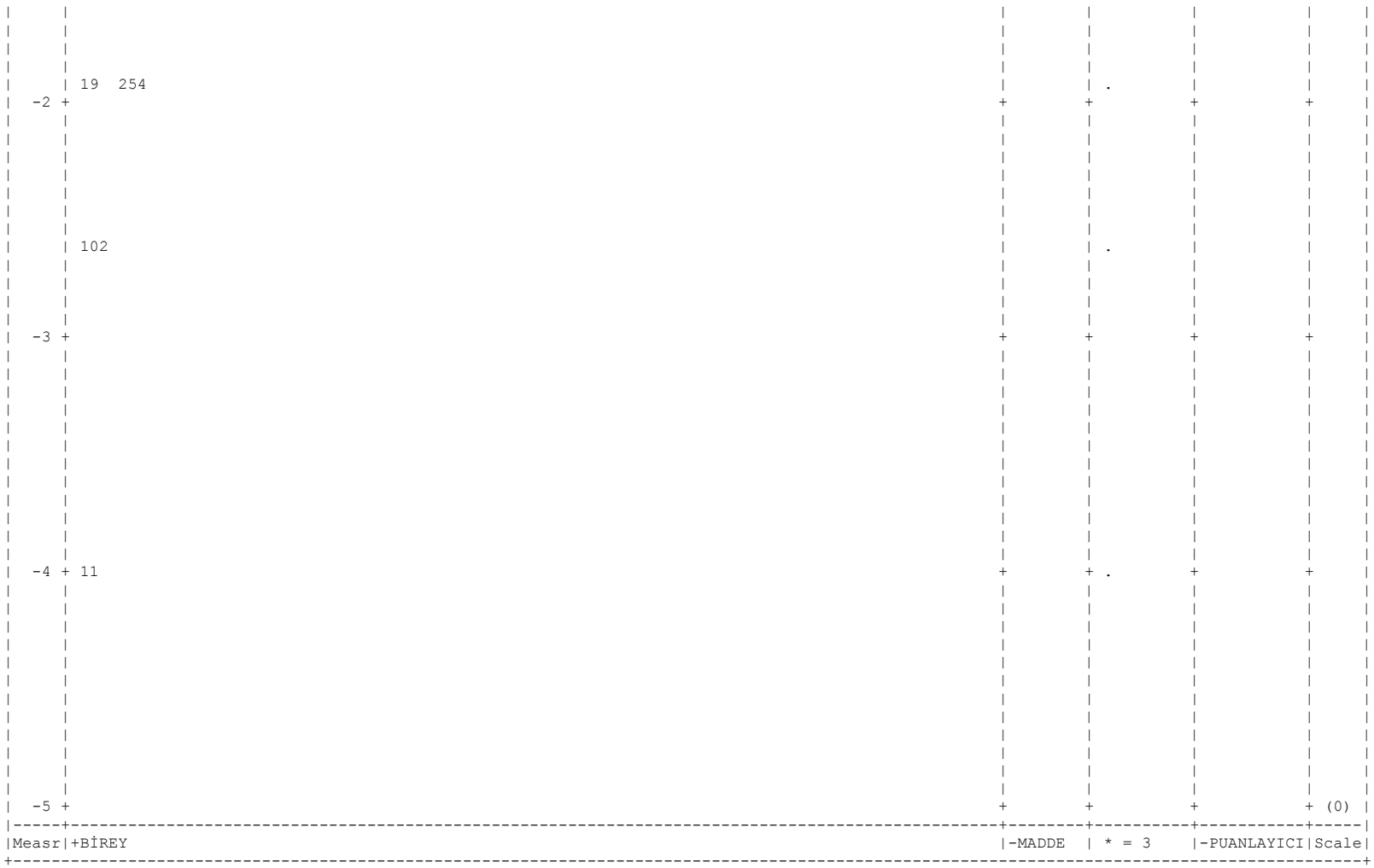
Table 5. Continue



4. DISCUSSION, RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The written responses of the 4th graders to the specific cases examined by NSCI imply that they may be highly capable of saying "no" in various cases. When this performance of the students is examined in terms of the behaviors planned to be taught as part of the ability to say "no" in the 2005 life studies curriculum (MNE, 2009), there is no serious problem in terms of the behavior of saying "no". Given the students' responses to the specific cases included in the study, it can be inferred that they can easily say "no" in the face of inappropriate situations.

The study results indicate that the students' ability to say "no" is high in the face of events containing moral problems, time management, and online environments, respectively. However, when it comes to sexual abuse or substance use, they show relatively low performance. The fact that the students exhibited the highest performance for the ability to say "no" in the face of a case with a moral problem in the context of violence is consistent with the fact that Astor (1994) found that all children condemned the violence. The fact that students can say "no" in the face of a moral problem means that they have an instinct to conduct the behaviors regarded to be right according to their moral common sense. This is interpreted as the possibility that they may have developed a moral character at a certain level (Lickona, 1996). Considering the fact that moral character development is largely shaped during childhood, when children are most expected to feel guilty and develop perspectives and self-control as a meta-moral characteristic (Berkowitz, 2002), this result becomes more of an issue. In this study, students responded that they could say "no" in the context of violence and aggression; thus it is concluded that they have moral information and feeling that they should exhibit self-control in a meta-moral sense by blocking their aggressive feelings. The extent to which moral information and feelings direct real-life moral behaviors cannot be interpreted clearly within the limitations of this study; but it is expected to be so.

The results also suggest that a majority of primary school 4th grade students participating in this study can say "no" in the face of the case related to time management as well as the case with a moral problem, indicating that the students have great self-management skills (Güçlü, 2001) and time control perceptions (Macan, Shahani, Dipboye & Philips, 1990). Considering the positive relationship between time management and academic achievement (Forsyth, 2009), this result reflects a desirable situation. Glenn (2003) states that one of the skills that must be possessed in terms of time management is the ability to "set priorities". The results of this study demonstrate that students can set priorities in terms of actions such as "doing their homework" or "satisfying others by fulfilling their non-urgent requests" when considering the content of the time management-related case presented to the students. Therefore, it is inferred that the students participating in this research will not feel bombarded and overloaded (Lovely and Smith, 2004) if they can convert their thoughts about the ability to say "no" to real-life behaviors. According to a study conducted by Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, and Ólafsson (2011), 14% of children who made online contact with people they did not know, shared their photo/video with these people and 15% of them shared their personal information with these people. Notwithstanding the fact that the majority of the children are not involved in such activities, these ratios still demand urgent intervention.

Likewise, this research has made it clear that the majority of the students can say "no" in the face of the risky situations they may encounter including sharing images and personal information with strangers in online environments. Considering that the vast majority of primary school students use the internet to help them with their homework both in Turkey (Yolcu, 2007) and in other countries across the world (La Ferle, Edwards, and Lee, 2000), this result can be interpreted as the awareness about the proper use of the internet. Since this study does not include an external control element such as parents or secure internet software in the case measuring being able to say "no" in the online environments, it is also thought that the

students have an internal control of sharing personal information and using video chat. When the possibility of the lack of external controls (Berson, Berson and Ralston, 1999) is taken into consideration, this internal control can express a more effective and more important quality when it comes to protecting oneself from the risks of the internet. Although all these conclusions and interpretations support the finding that the tendency of insecure use of the internet has diminished over time, as suggested by the longitudinal studies of Valcke, De Wever, Van Keer and Schellens (2011), they do not imply that all individuals use the internet in a safe manner. Still, there are individual differences in the use of insecure internet. As a matter of fact, this study has revealed that there are students who are inclined to share their personal information with strangers, or talk with them to get help for their homework.

The studies carried out by Leclerc, Wortley, and Smallbone's (2011) indicate that children apply the saying "no" strategy mostly, after the strategy of stating that they do not want it in the face of sexual abuse. The results of this study also indicate that a remarkable majority of participants may say "no" to sexual abuse. This strategy is important in that it creates a fear (Elliott, Browne, and Kilcoyne, 1995) in the individual who intends to exploit; thus, it may lead to a backwards step. However, in this study, it is understood that the results for the cases including sexual abuse reflect a relatively low level of "saying no" compared to the cases including moral problems, time management, and online environments. The underlying reason for this is mainly thought to be the fact that some of the students may not have perceived the "peeking" phenomenon discussed in the relevant case as a sexual abuse, or that they do not anticipate that there is such a possibility within the scenario of the case. However, given that one of the reasons for children's exposure to sexual abuse is deception (Ceylan et al., 2009) and that they cannot perceive the scenario of helping, showing interest, and love (Polat, 2001), it is necessary to point out that some students in this study are at least exposed to the risk of sexual abuse at the level of peeking.

According to Bektaş (2009), the use of substances by individuals can be reduced through the acquisition of social skills such as the ability to say "no." This study shows that primary school 4th grade students have the foreknowledge and awareness that they can use their ability to say "no" to reject the substance use. Therefore, it is estimated that the rate of substance use among children can be reduced if the foreknowledge and awareness are converted to behavior by the students. Although the context of the sample case including substance use in this study was designed to make students curious, it is understood that students will not be affected by this emotion that may be effective in substance use (Kamışlı, Karatay, Terzioğlu, and Kublay, 2008). All these results can be regarded positive results in terms of saying "no" to substance use. However, despite these positive results, it is noteworthy that the rate of saying "no" to the substance use is lower than the rate of saying "no" to all the other cases. It is thought that this situation is caused by the fact that the related case is given in "play" scenario. Therefore, in terms of substance use, it is possible to deduce that playmates and gaming environments may be decisive for at least some children.

According to the results obtained from the research, the students are at a desired level in terms of being able to say "no". However, although they make explanations related to why they have said "no" in the cases regarding time management, they do not reflect such a tendency toward other specific cases. At the same time, the explanations made by the students suggest that they will not perform an alternative behavior after saying "no" regardless of the specific case concerned. These results can be perceived completely negative only when the goals of the 2005 (MNE, 2009) life studies curriculum related to the ability to say "no" are to be considered. This is because, according to these results, most of the students state that they will not make an explanation about the reasons for saying "no" and they will not perform alternative behaviors even if they say "no" in the face of specific cases. However, it should be noted that there is no

obligation in this regard when considering the context of the cases presented to them and assertiveness rights (Kemp, 2006). In this context, there is a need to discuss the reactions that students have stated in response to each case.

The case related to the substance use in this study can be accepted as a case in which saying "no," making an explanation about the reasons for saying "no" and performing an alternative behavior are necessary. Therefore, the students participating in this study were expected to make an explanation in order to inform their friends of the reasons for saying "no" in response to the offer of playing game presented in the form of smelling a substance they are not familiar with. Besides, suggesting alternatives such as playing another game to rescue themselves and their friends from the risky situation they are in, or performing positive alternative behaviors such as leaving the scene against the risk of not being able to persuade their friends, can also be considered as logical approaches.

Considering in the context of real life, the case related to the sexual abuse is approached as a case in which saying "no" and performing an alternative behavior are necessary and making an explanation is preferable. In this case, in which students have already said "no" to protect the private parts of their body, making an explanation to the other side depends entirely on how qualified the student can make this explanation. An explanation of the students that "they can only bath in their own home" may not harm them or be regarded as a necessity. However, the students must perform alternative behaviors such as getting away from the scene and sharing this with their family because their clothes are contaminated and private parts of their body can be peeped out.

In the current study, the case measuring the ability to say "no" in the case regarding time management can be considered as a case in which saying "no" and making an explanation about the reasons for saying "no" are necessary; but performing an alternative behavior is not a necessity in this matter. In this context, in terms of time management, the fact that participants made an explanation about the reasons for saying "no" to their neighbors can be interpreted as a demonstration of kindness and can be accepted as a right behavior. However, considering the assertiveness rights, it is considered that the students do not have the obligation to perform alternative behaviors by postponing the demand of the neighbors because they do not have time.

Likewise, in the case of substance use, the case with a moral problem can be evaluated as a case in which students have to say "no," make an explanation about the reasons for saying "no" and perform alternative behaviors. However, it is seen that students do not prefer to make an explanation about the reasons for saying "no" to violence against an old person to their friends, even if they have said "no" in response to this case. Furthermore, there are no signs indicating that students may perform an alternative behavior in this regard. Yet, it is predicted that it may prevent other friends, as well as themselves, from the same misconduct to make an explanation about why it is wrong to resort to violence against an elderly person or perform alternative behaviors to solve the conflict between the old man and other children.

Students may face a variety of risks in online settings. Therefore, the students are expected to say "no" or behave in a way that could mean "no" in the face of proposals and requests from strangers. In this context, students' efforts to make an explanation about the reasons for saying "no" to a stranger can cause the other party to try to persuade them. However, in such a context, students may be expected to employ exit strategies such as warning, blocking, or reporting the individuals disturbing them in the online environment as alternative behaviors as Tynes (2007) suggests.

In a general sense, the fact that 4th grade students in elementary school gave written answers that they could say "no" to all the cases reflect the desired situation. However, the fact that students have not made any explanations and performed an alternative behavior in the face of the cases related to moral problems and substance use and that they have not performed an

alternative behavior in the face of the cases related to online environments and sexual abuse can be considered as a problem.

The present study shows that 4th grade students in primary school showed a certain level of cognitive and affective readiness to say "no" in specific cases. Nevertheless, a definite comment on the extent to which this level of readiness can lead to the behavior of saying "no" in real life cannot be made depending on the data obtained within the limits of this research. However, it may well be said that both parents and teachers need to evaluate and process this level of readiness of the children with regards to saying "no." In this regard, it is suggested that they should create opportunities that will allow the children to say "no" in the safe environment of the home or school.

The results obtained from the research indicate that the students can say "no" in order to protect themselves; but it is thought that they can perform relatively poorly in this respect when it comes to the cases including substance use or sexual abuse. Therefore, individuals and commissions who will carry out program development studies within the life studies curriculum need to extend the scope of the specific cases of saying "no" to handle high-risk events such as substance use and sexual abuse. Moreover, it is expected that these individuals and commissions should enrich the content of the life studies curriculum with information on how the demands, offers, and behaviors of sexual abuse and substance use can be manipulated.

Notwithstanding the fact that many of the students' performance of saying "no" in specific cases seem satisfactory, their performances in making an explanation and performing an alternative behavior remain below a certain level for many specific cases irrespective of the context. In order to solve this problem, the program development working groups coming together to develop life studies curriculum should determine first, in which specific cases the behaviors of explaining the reasons for saying "no" and suggesting an alternative option after rejecting and explaining the reason can be true, in which cases they can be wrong, and in which cases such behaviors can depend on preferences. Later, students should be motivated to exhibit these behaviors in situations where it is acceptable to exhibit them. As a solution strategy for the situations in which saying "no" is necessary, students should be expected not only to suggest another option but also perform a positive alternative behavior when no other option is possible. In addition, students should be taught what qualifications the explanations they will make should have in the face of a situation in which they have said "no" and which options they will suggest and which behaviors they will perform can solve the problems arising out of the situations in which they have said "no".

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