

Investigation of the 21st Century Skills of High School Students Under State Protection and Care

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The aim of this study is to research the 21st century skills of high school students who are under state protection and care. To collect data, "Demographic Information Form" and "Multi-Dimensional 21st Century Skills Scale" were used. In the study utilizing the survey model. The population of this study is comprised of the high school students staying in 23 different CHSs located in 12 different cities in the Marmara and Central Anatolian Regions. The data were collected from 455 students. In the analysis of the quantitative data, from among the non-parametric tests, Mann Whitney U-test, Kruskal Wallis H-test and Spearman Rho correlation analysis were used with SPSS 23.0 program package. As a result of the study, the scores taken by the students from the whole scale and its subscales were found to be high. The students' 21st century skills were found to be varying significantly in favour of the female students, the students who are never or rarely absent from school, the students participating in- and out-of-school social activities, the students who take advantage of information-communication technologies to reinforce their formal learning at school and the students who regularly meet a relative from his/her family. This study enabled us to see the deficiencies in 21st century skills of children in need of protection and showed us that children should be supported in the development of these skills.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid progress of science and technology causes the knowledge and skills of future generations to change. In order for individuals in the society to be employed and to be successful in their education life in this age, they must have 21st century skills, which are expressed as higher order knowledge and skills besides basic skills (Eryılmaz & Uluyol, 2015). 21st century skills associated with developments in industrial production, economy, social and technological fields do not differ much from the skills of the previous age (Dede, 2009). With the advancement of science and technology and the changing needs of today, these skills have become more important (Silva, 2009). 21st century skills, consisting of knowledge and skills, can be defined as understanding knowledge and transforming it into performance (Dede, 2010). Educators, politicians and business leaders argue that students must have 21st century skills to be qualified employees and citizens (Ananiadou & Claro, 2009).

While 21st century skills are explained by many people and organizations, basic competencies are discussed under different headings such as *employability skills*, *survival skills*, *deep learning skills* (Ekici, Abide, Canpolat & Öztürk, 2017, p.126; Silva, 2009). In our country, skills have been identified by the Ministry of National Education under the heading of "Turkish Competences Framework". Within the context of the current study, knowledge and technology literacy, critical thinking and problem solving, entrepreneurship and innovation, social responsibility and leadership and career consciousness skills are addressed as the 21st century skills.

It is important for students to live in a suitable family, environment and community for them to have the desired skills (Bıyıklı, 1995). Ekşi (1990) states that the existence of the family is important for students to be successful in problem solving. However, many children in the world become orphans or lonely due to the loss of their parents as a result of natural or human-induced crises or due to their parents' failure to fulfil their responsibilities. It is estimated that around 2.7 million children aged 0-17 are under institutional care around the world (Petrowski, Cappa & Grossba, 2017). In our country, 1,214 children are under protection and care in institutions affiliated to MFLSS (AÇSHB, 2020). From among these children, those of high school age (13-18 years old) stay in the Children's Homes Site (CHS).

Adolescence is the period of fast physical and emotional development when individuals try to gain their identity and independence (Derman, 2007). It is also a critical period for cognitive development including the development of problem solving, probability calculation and reasoning skills (Steinberg, 2013). Although it is viewed to be a period when the adolescent gets distanced from the family, the importance of the family cannot be ignored in this period (Noller & Callan, 1991). Many needs of adolescents who are under institutional care cannot be met by their families. These children have difficulties in gaining experiences necessary for their development and cannot receive enough love and attention in institutional care (Cebe, 2005). Therefore, individuals experience developmental retardation, behavioural problems and adaptation problems. Lack of

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