

Research Article

The Effect of Anti-Addiction Training on Attitudes Towards Substance Users and Sense of Compassion

Bağımlılıkla Mücadele Eğitiminin Madde Kullananlara Karşı Tutum ve Merhamet Duygusuna Etkisi

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of addiction prevention education on the attitudes and compassion of individuals with substance use disorders. The research method employed a pre-test and post-test control group quasi-experimental design. Participants were students aged 20-21 studying at the Faculty of Sports Sciences in a province of Turkey during the 2023-2024 academic year. A total of 53 participants took part, with 28 students (7 female, 21 male) in the experimental group and 25 students (5 female, 20 male) in the control group. A 12-week addiction prevention education program was implemented for the experimental group, while no intervention was made for the control group. The inclusion of pre-tests and post-tests, along with the requirement for training, has resulted in limitations on the number of participants in the study. Data were collected using the Compassion and Attitude Scale for Individuals Using Addictive Substances. The Cronbach's Alpha value indicating the reliability of the compassion scale was found to be 0.85, and the Cronbach's Alpha value indicating the reliability of the attitude scale was found to be 0.94. According to the findings of the study, the addiction prevention education resulted in a statistically significant improvement in attitudes toward substance-using individuals in the experimental group compared to the control group ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, participants in the experimental group showed significantly higher compassion scores after the training compared to the control group ($p < 0.05$). In conclusion, these findings show that targeted education programs can facilitate the reintegration of individuals with substance use disorders into society by increasing social sensitivity and compassion. Furthermore, based on these results, societies can increase social awareness by promoting addiction prevention education and adopting a more informed approach to substance use and individuals who use substances.

Keywords: Struggle Against Addiction, Substance Addiction, Compassion Training, Social Impact

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı bağımlılıkla mücadele eğitiminin madde kullanım bozukluğu olan bireylere yönelik tutum ve merhamet üzerindeki etkisini araştırmaktır. Araştırmada yöntem olarak; ön test ve son test kontrol gruplu yarı deneysel bir desen kullanılmıştır. Katılımcılar, 2023-2024 akademik yılında Türkiye'nin bir ilindeki Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi'nde okuyan 20-21 yaş aralığındaki öğrencilerdir. Deney grubunda 28 öğrenci (7 kadın, 21 erkek), kontrol grubunda ise 25 öğrenci (5 kadın, 20 erkek) olmak üzere toplam 53 katılımcı yer almıştır. Deney grubuna 12 haftalık bir bağımlılıkla mücadele eğitim programı uygulanırken, kontrol grubuna herhangi bir müdahale yapılmamıştır. Çalışmanın ön test, son test içermesi, eğitim gerektirmesi gibi sebepler araştırmaya katılanların sayısında sınırlamaya gidilmesine sebep olmuştur. Veriler Bağımlılık Yapıcı Madde Kullanan Bireylere Yönelik Merhamet ve Tutum Ölçeği kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Şefkat ölçeğinin güvenilirliğini gösteren Cronbach's Alpha değeri 0,85, tutum ölçeğinin güvenilirliğini gösteren Cronbach's Alpha değeri ise 0,94 olarak bulunmuştur. Araştırmanın bulgularına göre; bağımlılıkla mücadele

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eğitimi, kontrol grubuna kıyasla deney grubunda madde kullanan bireylere yönelik tutumlarda istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir iyileşme ile sonuçlanmıştır ($p<0.05$). Ayrıca, deney grubundaki katılımcılar eğitim sonrasında kontrol grubuna kıyasla önemli ölçüde daha yüksek merhamet puanları göstermiştir ($p<0.05$). Sonuç olarak bu bulgular; hedefe yönelik eğitim programlarının toplumsal duyarlılığı ve şefkati artırarak madde kullanım bozukluğu olan bireylerin topluma yeniden entegrasyonunu kolaylaştırabileceğini göstermektedir. Yine buradan çıkan sonuçla toplumlar bağımlılıkla mücadele eğitimlerini yaygınlaştırarak toplumsal farkındalığı artırabilir, madde kullanımına ve madde kullanan bireylere daha bilinçli yaklaşım sağlayabilirler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bağımlılıkla mücadele, madde bağımlılığı, merhamet eğitimi, toplumsal etki

1. Introduction

Addiction is a condition of pathological attachment to one or more objects, persons or substances with uncontrollable physical, emotional and social consequences (Balcioglu & Abanoz, 2009). Today, addiction is a global problem that causes all societies to pay individual, economic, social and cultural costs. In the study conducted by the American Psychiatric Association on substance abuse and addiction disorders, it is emphasized that addictive disorders show various behavioral, cognitive and psycho-social symptoms and cause various problems at the individual and social levels (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013).

When the studies on smartphone and internet addiction, especially addictive substance use, were examined, it was seen that attitudes toward substance-addicted individuals were generally carried out with healthcare professionals (Lindberg et al., 2006; Wakeman et al., 2016). In addition, it has been found that addicts experience individual and social problems. For example, it has been found that alcohol and substance use increases acts of aggression and violence; amphetamine, cocaine and hallucinogens cause aggressive behaviors by weakening the control mechanism of the individual due to their chemical effects. The addicts individual may turn to some criminal behaviors such as extortion, violence, theft, murder and prostitution obtain the substance they are using (Monforte & Spitz, 1975; Goldstein, 1985). Especially adolescents with low social acceptance levels tend to be influenced by their peers with high social status who are internet addicts (Zhou & Fang, 2015) that as internet addiction increases, students' academic achievement decreases, internet addiction increases depressive tendencies such as dislike of distress, procrastination, suppression/denial and inability to tolerate distress (Aslan, 2020) negatively affecting psychological well-being (Kim et al., 2015; Göktaş & Öztürk 2022). Smartphone addicts do less physical activity and their sleep quality decreases (Haripriya et al, 2019; Yang et al., 2022) are prone to depressive behaviors (Niu, 2023), and students who engage in insufficient physical activity experience high levels of fear of being without a phone (nomophobia) (Torlak et al., 2022), excessive use of smartphones poses a risk of mental fatigue, loneliness triggers smartphone addiction (Mert & Özdemir, 2018) has been identified through studies such as this one.

When addicted individuals are under the influence of the substance they are addicted to, they often exhibit behaviors that society does not accept, does not approve, or comply with the law. For this reason, they are stigmatized as useless, unreliable, dangerous, immoral and irresponsible (Pescosolido, et al., 1999; Meltzer, et al., 2013; Peretti-Watel et al., 2014). Unfortunately, addicts who are isolated by such exclusion and stigma refuse to access the treatment they need (Luoma et al., 2007; Probst et al., 2015; Crapanzano et al., 2019). They find the consolation that will make them feel good by taking refuge in the substance they are addicted to.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (UNODC, 2023) World Drug Report, the global trend of drug use continues to rise. Considering the 2021 data, it is understood that 1 out of every 17 people aged 15-64 in the world has used drugs in the last 12 months. According to the estimated status of drug use, while there were around 240 million users in 2011, this number increased to 296 million in 2021 (this number corresponds to 5.8% of the global population aged 15-64). Taken together with population growth, this represents a 23% increase, partly due to population growth.

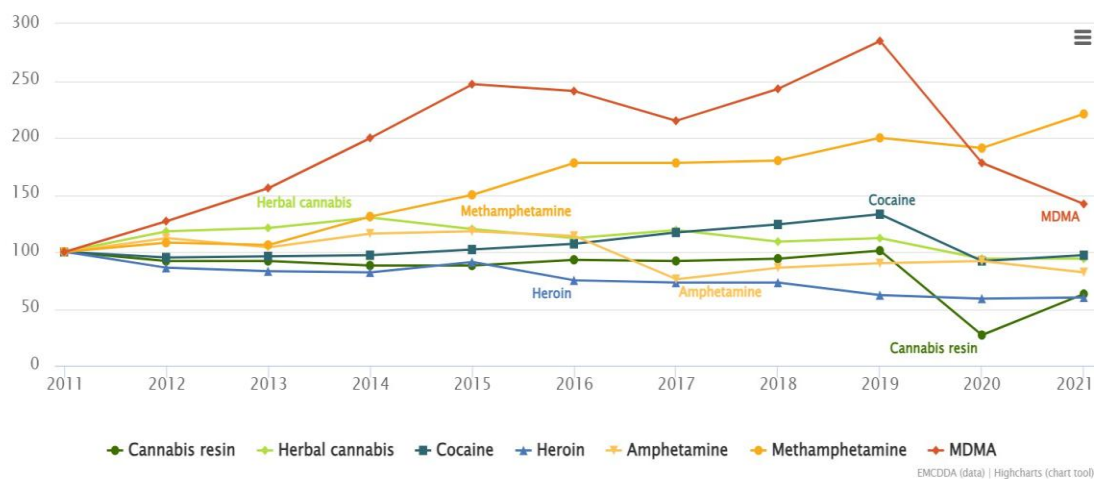
The world's drug-related problems can be seen on a global scale, but their impact is not uniform. In poorer countries, the fight against drugs continues under more unfavorable conditions. In underdeveloped and underserved communities, the poor, vulnerable and marginalized pay a higher price. In such societies, drug trafficking exacerbates violence and insecurity, and access to and availability of controlled drugs further complicates the situation (UNODC, 2023). Considering the reasons such as drug-related crimes, traumas experienced by individuals and families and deterioration of social peace and security, this situation reveals the necessity of the struggle of all societies in the world.

The UN International Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) shared the "2022 World Drug Report" with the public at a meeting organized by the UN Office in Vienna, to which members of the press were invited. In the report, it was stated that the rate of drug use in the world increased by 26 percent between 2010 and 2020, which means that 5.6 percent of the world's population between the ages of 15 and 64 is using drugs. According to the report, there has been a significant increase in the number of people suffering from drug-related disorders and those waiting for treatment services. The number of people suffering from disorders due to drug use has increased to 38.6 million in the last 10 years. In the report, it was also stated that around 284 million individuals worldwide were using drugs in 2020, and it was pointed out that addicts faced serious obstacles in finding treatment opportunities (Kıyağan, 2022).

Graph 1 below shows the rates of access to drugs in data collected by the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA, 2022). The graph shows the changes in the amount of drugs seized in the period up to 2021, taking 2011 as 100. Looking at 2015 and 2019, the graph shows a general increase in drug seizures, but fluctuations in the graph as a whole. Considering the damages caused by drug use to millions of individuals, families and society, it is understood that it is a significant threat, as can be seen from the situation analyzed in the graph.

Graph 1: Drug seizures in Europe (EMCDDA, 2023).

Figure. Drug seizures in the European Union — number of drug seizures, indexed trends (2011 = 100)



The fight against addiction is a serious and complex problem that cannot be solved by the will and efforts of addicted individuals alone. Therefore, there is a need for conscious and sensitive social support for the people in the close environment of addicted individuals, families, institutions, organizations and associations fighting against addiction. Especially the sense of compassion, which can be seen as the driving force of the common responsibility of living in a society, gains importance in this sense. Because compassion is the subject of values such as love, respect, cooperation, tolerance, empathy, not being hurtful, selfish, cruel, justice and compassion (Gilbert et al., 2012; Roxas, et al., 2014; Avşaroğlu & Koyuncu, 2018; Gül, 2019; Çevik, 2022). Compassionate people exhibit behaviors such as respect for those who do not live like them, patience, understanding and cooperation (Avşaroğlu & Koyuncu, 2018; Çevik, 2022). In this context, it is thought that compassion is important in the fight against addiction.

As discussed above, addiction and the fight against addiction is an important problem that concerns the people of all countries as well as future generations and requires the organized, strong and decisive support of states. With this study conducted with university students, which can be a small step in the fight against addiction, participating students were allowed to have a preventive and developmental experience against substance addiction in the process of combating addiction. In addition, it is thought that the education provided improved the participants' feelings of compassion towards substance addicts. On the other hand, it is foreseen that this research will create a database for new projects and studies to be carried out at the level of institutions, organizations, non-governmental organizations or individuals related to addiction and the fight against addiction.

2. Methodology

This research is a quasi-experimental study with a pretest-posttest, control group, in which the subjects are determined under selective conditions. According to Balci (2013), quasi-experimental research is research that looks like experimental but is not experimental. In quasi-experimental research, groups are not randomly distributed. According to Gürbüz and Şahin (2016), quasi-experimental research, as in this article, is appropriate in conditions where the individuals to be included in the experiment cannot be randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups. The placement of the participants in groups that cannot be formed randomly is attempted to be realized by distributing the individuals to the experimental and control groups as equally as possible, taking into account salient characteristics such as gender and age. In this study, this equal distribution was achieved by taking into account gender, age and student group characteristics.

2.1. Working Group

The study was conducted in the spring semester of the 2023-2024 academic year with students between the ages of 20-21 studying at a sports science's faculty in Turkey. Students participated from two different classes in the study. One group of students was determined in these classes as the experimental group, and one group as the control group. It was taken into consideration that the students had not received any systematic education on addiction in their previous educational life and had not been addicted to substances. Thus, a total of 53 students (7 females, 21 males), 28 students in the experimental group and 25 students (5 females, 20 males) in the control group constituted the study group. In addition, in order to facilitate the realization of the study, the research was conducted at the university where one of the researchers was working. In this respect, sampling selection was determined as convenience sampling method.

2.2. Limitations

The study has a quasi-experimental design with pre-test, post-test, experimental, and control groups. The inclusion of a 12-week training program for the experimental group required limitations in terms of participant numbers and time. Additionally, the fact that the students participating in the study had not received training on addiction, the voluntary nature of participation, and time constraints contributed to the limited number of participants, which remained at 53 students. Therefore, the main limitation of this study is that it was conducted with a small group and did not include long-term follow-up. However, such issues, which concern the whole world, should be supported by consistent, principled, disciplined, and collaborative efforts coordinated by governments and supported by all institutions and organizations, educational institutions, and civil society organizations. The generalizability of the results presented in the article can be tested by conducting further research on the subject. Additionally, the fact that participants are university students can also be considered a limitation. When similar studies are conducted among groups with lower educational levels or different economic statuses within society, more generalizable results can be obtained. Another limitation of this study is that, since it aimed to raise students' awareness about addictions other than substance addiction, it also included general education on addiction (tobacco, phone, internet, etc.). However, since the focus of the research was substance addiction, more emphasis was placed on substance addiction during the delivery of the education. In new studies, education programs could be organized at substance addiction centers to more accurately measure attitudes toward substance addicts.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

To collect data in the study, the personal information form prepared by the researchers, the "Compassion" scale developed by Pommier (2011) and adapted into Turkish by Akdeniz and Deniz (2016), and the "Attitude Scale Towards Individuals Using Addictive Substances" developed by Kaylı et al. (2020) were used.

2.4. Compassion Scale

Akdeniz and Deniz (2016) conducted validity and reliability studies by adapting the Compassion Scale (CS) developed by Pommier (2011) into Turkish. The four study groups formed for the research included 854 university students (490 female / 364 male). The internal consistency reliability coefficient was .85 for the whole scale. The scale consists of 24 five-point Likert-type items and six dimensions ("kindness, indifference, common humanity, separation, mindfulness, disengagement"). A higher total score on the scale means a higher sense of compassion. In this study, to determine the compassion levels of the students, the researchers who developed the scale were contacted and it was deemed appropriate to evaluate the scale items over the total score.

2.5. Attitude Scale Towards Individuals Using Addictive Substances

The scale study developed by Kaylı et al. (2020) was conducted with data obtained from 396 people (222 women, 174 men) over the age of eighteen. The scale consists of 27 items in five- point Likert type. The scale is a single-factor scale that is evaluated on a total score. The higher the scores obtained from the scale, the higher the negative attitude towards addictive substance users. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale is .923 and it can be said to have strong reliability. In the test-retest phase of the study, 66 undergraduate students took part. Pearsons's correlation coefficient was found as $r=85$.

2.6. Data Collection Process

The research was initiated with the planning of the research topic whose theoretical foundations were examined. Ethics committee permission for the research was obtained by submitting the necessary documents and applying to Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University Human Research Ethics Committee in Social Sciences in Bolu, Turkey (Protocol NO. 2023/417). In the first week of the study, the groups of 28 students in the experimental group and 25 students in the control group were determined, the measurement tools to be used in the study were applied to the students in the experimental and control groups as pretests, and the quasi-experimental study was started after it was statistically observed that there was no significant difference between the groups ($p>0.05$). The researchers actively managed every stage of the study. Care was taken to ensure that the students in the experimental group participated in the training. The 12-week addiction and combating addiction education program, which was applied to the experimental group two hours a week, was organized within the definition of an elective course. Within the scope of the training, two expert educators with expertise in addiction and two expert psychologists with expertise in addiction were consulted in the preparation of the addiction program and in teaching the training. Additionally, a police officer assigned to the narcotics department was consulted and assisted in teaching the training. Methods and techniques used during the training included lecturing, case studies (internet sources, YouTube, news sources), discussion techniques, question and answer, exchange of views, brainstorming and interview techniques. In addition, two police officers working in the narcotics branch in the province where the university is located participated in the research as resource persons to give a two-hour training on addictive substances and the prevention and fight against these substances. In the control group, no training was provided on addiction or combating addiction. In the 14th week, the measurement tools given as pre-tests were reapplied to the experimental and control groups. The subjects included in the training program on addiction and combating addiction applied to the experimental group are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Addiction and the topics covered in the training program for combating addiction

	Education Subject
1	Giving pre-tests to Experimental and Control groups
2	What is addiction? Addiction in the world and our country
3	Technology addiction, causes, consequences, possible solutions
4	Causes, consequences and possible solutions for tobacco addiction
5	Student assignments on tobacco addiction (interviews, internet documents, written documents)
6	Alcohol addiction, causes, consequences, possible solutions
7	Student assignments on alcohol addiction (interviews, internet documents, written documents)
8	Drug addiction, causes, consequences, possible solutions (Presentation by police officers)
9	Student assignments on drug addiction (interviews, internet documents, written documents)
10	The importance of individual sensitivity in the fight against addiction
11	The importance of social solidarity in the fight against addiction
12	Student assignments (interviews with addicted individuals, their relatives, news from the internet, confessions of addicts and students' comments)
13	Student assignments (interviews with addicted individuals, their relatives, news from the internet, confessions of addicts and students' comments)
14	Application of post-tests to experimental and control groups

2.7. Data Analysis

Shapiro Wilks test, one of the normality tests, was used in the study. According to Büyüköztürk (2007), when Skewness and Kurtosis values are between +1 and -1, it can be said that the data are normally distributed and parametric tests can be used. Based on this information, the dependent and independent groups t-test was used for comparisons within and between groups, and the relationship between the participants' attitudes towards substance addicts and their feelings of compassion was measured by the Pearson correlation test.

3. Findings

In the research conducted on the scales, it would be appropriate to first evaluate the internal consistency of the scale items. Therefore, in this analysis, it would be appropriate to examine the Cronbach's Alpha values shown in Table 1 and Table 2 using the IBM SPSS 25 version program.

Table 2: Reliability value of the attitude scale

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,947	,946	27

As shown in Table 2, the Cronbach's Alpha value of .947 indicates that the reliability of the items in the attitude scale toward substance users is highly adequate.

Table 3: Reliability value of the compassion scale

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,853	,866	24

As shown in Table 3, the Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.853 indicates that the reliability of the items on the compassion scale for substance users is good.

The internal consistency of the scale items included in the studies is measured using Cronbach's Alpha value. Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.70 and above are expected for the scales. Values of 0.80 and above indicate good reliability, while values of 0.90 and above indicate excellent reliability (Gürbüz, S., Şahin, F., 2016). Considering the Cronbach's Alpha reliability values (0.85; 0.94) in the table above for both scales, they are suitable for use in the study.

Table 4: Comparison of the pre-test attitude scores of the participants in the experimental and control groups toward substance addicts

Dependent Variables	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Std.	df	t	p
Attitude Towards Substance Addicts	Experiment	28	66,82	19,06	51	1,739	,088
	Control	25	74,84	13,72			

According to Table 4, there is no significant difference between the attitude scores of the participants in the experimental and control groups towards substance addicts before the anti-addiction training ($p>0.05$).

Table 5: Comparison of the pre-test scores of the participants in the experimental and control groups on feelings of compassion

Dependent Variables	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Std.	df	t	p
Sense of Compassion	Experiment	28	97,18	7,002	51	1,092	,280
	Control	25	94,44	11,01			

According to Table 5, there is no significant difference between the pre-test scores of the participants in the experimental and control groups' feelings of compassion ($p>0.05$).

Table 6: Post-test comparison of the attitude scores of the participants in the experimental and control groups toward substance addicts

Dependent Variables	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Std.	df	t	p
Attitude Towards Substance Addicts	Experiment	28	69,93	15,55	51	2,99	,004*
	Control	25	82,96	16,18			

As seen in Table 6, following the study, a statistically significant difference was found between the experimental and control groups in participants' attitude scores toward substance addicts ($p = .004$). The experimental group's mean score ($\bar{X} = 69.93$) was significantly lower than the control group's mean score ($\bar{X} = 82.96$). Since a high score on the scale indicates a negative attitude, this finding was interpreted as meaning that the attitudes of the students in the experimental group toward substance abusers were significantly more positive than those of the control group. In this case, it can be said that the educational program implemented was effective in developing positive attitudes in the experimental group.

Table 7: Comparison of the post-test scores of the participants in the experimental and control groups on the sense of compassion

Dependent Variables	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Std.	df	t	p
Sense of Compassion	Experiment	28	99,14	6,40	51	3,29	,002*
	Control	25	91,80	9,66			

According to Table 7, the feelings of compassion of the participants in the experimental group differed significantly compared to the control group ($p<0.05$). While $\bar{X} = 99.14$ for the participants in the experimental group, $\bar{X} = 91.80$ for the participants in the control group. In other words, students in the experimental group had increased feelings of compassion towards individuals who use addictive substances.

Table 8: Post-test comparison of participants' attitudes towards substance addicts according to their gender

Dependent Variables	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Std.	df	t	p
Attitude Towards Substance Addicts	Woman	12	78,17	20,22	51	,480	,633
	Male	41	75,46	16,19			

As seen in Table 8, whether the participants were male or female did not create a significant difference in their attitudes towards substance addicts after the experiment ($p>0.05$). Women's $\bar{X} = 78.17$, men's $\bar{X} = 75.46$.

Table 9: Post-test comparison of compassion scores according to participants' gender

Dependent Variables	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	Std.	df	t	p
Sense of Compassion	Woman	12	94,17	11,10	51	,671	,506
	Male	41	96,12	8,17			

As seen in Table 9, whether the participants were male or female did not cause a significant difference in their feelings of compassion after the experiment ($p>0.05$). Women's $\bar{X} = 94.17$, men's $\bar{X} = 96.12$.

Table 10: The relationship between the participants in the experimental and control groups' attitudes toward substance addicts and sense of compassion

Attitude towards addicts		Sense of Compassion	
Pearson Correlation		1	,053
Attitudes towards Substance Addicts	Sig. (2-tailed)		,704
	N	53	53
Sense of Compassion	Pearson Correlation	,053	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,704	

According to Table 10, no statistically significant relationship was found between participants' attitudes toward substance addicts and their feelings of compassion ($r = 0.053$; $p = 0.704$).

4. Results and Discussion

In this study, the effect of the education given on addiction on attitudes and compassion towards addictive substance users was investigated, and significant results were obtained in the experimental group compared to the control group. However, in the literature review, no studies related to the research topic were found, and discussions and interpretations were made based on similar studies or research results that were thought to have an indirect effect. Actually, this situation can also be considered positive as it supports the originality of the article in terms of quality.

The rapid increase in the number of substance addictions, especially among young people, across the world has led countries to include the fight against addiction in their long-term government programs. The fight against addiction is the reintegration of individuals whose addiction has caused physical, mental, and social harm to themselves and their environment. It is appropriate to implement the fight against addiction within the framework of preventive and protective activities. In this sense, modular activities with continuity gain importance.

The increase in the number of substance addiction, especially among young people and adults in active business life, has led countries around the world to include the struggle against addiction in their long-term government programs. The struggle against addiction is the reintegration of individuals whose addiction has caused physical, psychological and social harm to themselves and their environment. It is appropriate to implement the struggle against addiction within the framework of preventive and protective activities. In this sense, modular studies with continuity gain importance (Sandhya et al., 2024).

A study supporting the results of the research was conducted by Altuner et al. (2021). In the study, the effect of group therapy and assertiveness training on substance use rejection skills in adolescents was examined. In the study, a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest was used without a control group. 87 high school adolescents participated in the study. The results showed that the ability to refuse substance use increased significantly after group therapy and assertiveness training. This study, which utilized group therapy and assertiveness training, demonstrates that such training is recommended in adolescent research to enhance the ability to refuse substance addiction. On the other hand, in a study conducted in Nepal and registered under the Clinical Trials Regulation, a school-based education program was developed to prevent substance addiction at an early age (Rahmati (2022; Sandhya et al., 2024) applied an 11-session psychosocial empowerment program for 70 days to youth aged 14-16 in Iran and found that the negative attitudes of the experimental group towards substance use increased significantly compared to the youth in the control group.

In another study conducted to apply organizational and psychological models in preventing and overcoming the addictive tendency of young people, the effectiveness of individual and group interactive forms of the modular content system was proved. The study emphasized that preventive pedagogical activity should be long-term, complex and complementary (Gulfia & Svetlana, 2016). In another study, adolescents receiving treatment at the Volatile Substance Treatment Research and Education Center were given three sessions of individual training on addiction, the effects of volatile substances and coping with substance cravings, and as a result of the research, the level of knowledge about substance addiction and treatment motivation of the experimental group consisting of 31 people was found to be statistically significantly different from the control group (Coşkun & Özlem, 2008). These studies prove the importance of education in preventing all kinds of

addiction. Again, in a study conducted by Yılmaz (2019), participants were given trainings on internet and tobacco addiction during a 12-week training period. In this study, it was revealed how effective Turkey's anti-addiction training is at the level of knowledge in preventing internet and tobacco addiction. The study group of the research consisted of 731 students studying in the 3rd and 4th grades in two public primary schools within the Ministry of National Education, and the research data were obtained with pre-tests and post-tests prepared to determine the effectiveness of Turkish Anti-Addiction Education Program (TBM) education in the field. As a result of the analysis, it was observed that the Tobacco Addiction and Technology Addiction training modules were effective, and there was an increase in the post-test total scores of the students one month after the training. Another experimental study measuring the effectiveness of education on technology, tobacco and healthy living was conducted with 550 middle school students. According to the post-test data of the experimental group, which was trained in 3 modules/8 hours at each grade level, it was determined that the training had a preventive effect on these addictions (Akdenizli, 2019).

The results of another study conducted to determine the attitudes of non-addictive substance users towards substance users prove the importance of compassion in the fight against addiction. The findings of the study indicate that individuals living in society see substance users as dangerous, problematic, and unreliable, and that they exhibit insensitive, exclusionary, and negative attitudes towards them (Demirel, 2022). However, such an attitude is not only hurtful in human terms but also worrisome in terms of social solidarity, peace and welfare in the long run. On the other hand, the results of the study proving that the compassion-focused therapy approach has a healing effect on individuals who have been traumatized in various ways (Dalgali, 2019) show how effective the sense of compassion is in healing each other.

Efforts to struggle against addiction are also underway in Turkey. A prevention program developed by the Green Crescent in 2014 to inform society, especially children and youth, and raise their awareness against tobacco, alcohol, drug and technology addiction under the leadership of the Turkish Anti-Addiction Education Program (TBM) is being implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education, public, private and non-governmental organizations. The program, which has been prepared by developing different contents suitable for the developmental characteristics and tendencies of each age group under the consultation of the Green Crescent Science Board, has been accepted as an accredited training program by the High Council for Combating Addiction (UNHCR) (Green Crescent, 2024).

According to this study, addiction struggle training was found to make no significant difference in participants' attitudes toward substance addiction or in their feelings of compassion based on gender. However, research and literature indicate that women are more compassionate than men in various studies (Erdoğan, 2018; Pommier, 2011; Tahincioğlu, 2018). This situation can be explained by the fact that addiction and addiction struggle education leads participants to have a similar level of sensitivity toward substance addiction, regardless of gender.

This research has demonstrated that preventive education activities in the fight against addiction have the potential to enhance social acceptance and cohesion by fostering positive attitudes in individuals. The positive effects of addiction and addiction education programs on attitudes toward addicts and feelings of compassion, as revealed by the research, are consistent with the studies discussed above. This is significant in terms of the mutual reinforcement of research on this topic. Attitudes toward addiction and compassion are not significantly related to each other. Although both variables fostered positive attitudes among participants after the training, they are not related to each other. The reason for this situation is that the "Attitude Scale" and "Compassion Scale" used in the study, although closely related to each other, can actually be associated with measuring different dimensions of human experience, such as cognitive evaluation, behavior, and emotional response. For instance, a person may feel sorrow and compassion upon seeing the situation of dependent individuals, but may adopt an attitude of distancing themselves from them to protect themselves. Consequently, addiction and addiction prevention education can be effective in helping communities struggle against the harmful effects of substance addiction and other types of addiction, provided that it is carried out using scientifically validated content, methods, and techniques. However, this situation encompasses scientific studies, training, and applications that can be carried out under the leadership of governments. Furthermore, all institutions and organizations, educational institutions, and civil society organizations have important responsibilities in this regard.

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Araştırma Makalesi

The Effect of Anti-Addiction Training on Attitudes Towards Substance Users and Sense of Compassion

Bağımlılıkla Mücadele Eğitiminin Madde Kullananlara Karşı Tutum ve Merhamet Duygusuna Etkisi

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Bağımlı bireyler, bağımlı oldukları maddenin etkisi altındayken çoğu zaman toplumun kabul etmediği, onaylamadığı, yasalara da uymayan davranışlar sergilerler. Bu sebeple çevrelerinde, işe yaramaz, güvenilirmez, tehlikeli, ahlaksız, sorumsuz gibi damgalanmalara maruz kalırlar (Pescosolid, et al., 1999; Peretti-Watel et al., 2014; Kariper ve Metin, 2020). Ne yazık ki bu tür dışlanma ve damgalanmalarla yalnızlaştırılan bağımlılar, kendileri için gerekli olan tedaviye ulaşmayı reddetmekte, (Luoma et al., 2007; Probst et al., 2015; Crapanzano et al., 2019) kendilerini iyi hissettirecek teselliye yine bağımlı oldukları maddeye sığınmakta bulmaktadırlar.

Günümüzde bağımlılık, tüm toplumların, bireysel, ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel bedeller ödemelerine sebep olan küresel bir sorundur. Amerikan Psikiyatri Birliği'nin madde bağımlılığı ve bağımlılık bozuklukları ile ilgili yaptığı çalışmada bağımlılık bozukluklarının davranışsal, bilişsel ve psiko-sosyal çeşitli belirtiler gösterdiği, bireysel ve toplumsal düzeyde çeşitli sorunlara sebep olduğu vurgulanmaktadır (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013). Bu durum bağımlılıkla ilgili sorunun uluslararası boyutu olan tüm toplumları tehdit eden küresel bir sorun olduğunu göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla madde bağımlılığı ve diğer bağımlılık türleriyle uluslararası boyutta mücadele gerekliliği bulunmaktadır.

Bağımlılıkla mücadele tek başına bağımlı bireylerin istek ve çabasıyla çözülemeyecek kadar ciddi ve kompleks bir problemdir. Dolayısıyla bağımlı bireylerin yakın çevresindeki kişiler, aileler, bağımlılıkla mücadele kurum, kuruluş ve dernekler için bilinçlendirilmiş ve duyarlı toplumsal desteğe de ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Özellikle bir toplumda yaşamının ortak sorumluluğunun itici gücü olarak görülebilecek merhamet duygusu bu anlamda önem kazanmaktadır. Zira merhamet, sevgi, saygı, yardımlaşma, hoşgörü, empati, kırıncı, bencil, acımasız olmama, adalet ve şefkat gibi değerlerin konusudur (Gilbert et al., 2012; Roxas, et al., 2014; Avşaroğlu ve Koyuncu, 2018; Gül, 2019; Çevik, 2022). Merhametli insanlar kendisi gibi yaşamayana saygı duyma, sabır, anlayış ve yardımlaşma gibi davranışlar sergilerler (Avşaroğlu ve Koyuncu, 2018; Çevik, 2022). Bu bağlamda bağımlılıkla mücadelede merhamet duygusunun önemli olduğu düşünülmektedir. Dolayısıyla tüm toplumların sorunları olan bağımlılıkla mücadelede, bağımlı bireylerin yakın çevresi ve genel olarak içinde yaşadıkları toplumun kendilerine nasıl davrandıkları önemli olmaktadır. Buradaki çalışmada da toplumsal bir sorun olan bağımlılıkla mücadeleye ve bilimsel çalışmalara katkı sağlayabilmek için, bağımlılıkla mücadele eğitiminin bağımlılara merhametli yaklaşıma katkısı değerlendirilmektedir.

Araştırma ön test son test kontrol gruplu yarı deneysel özelliktedir. Araştırma 2023-2024 eğitim-öğretim yılında Türkiye'de bir ilde spor bilimleri fakültesinde öğrenim gören 20-21 yaş aralığındaki öğrencilerle yürütülmüştür. Çalışmanın deney grubunda, 7 Kadın, 21 Erkek olmak üzere toplam 28 öğrenci, kontrol grubunda 5 Kadın, 20 erkek olmak üzere 25 öğrenci, toplamda 53 öğrenci bulunmuştur. Araştırma sürecinde deney grubuna 12 haftalık bağımlılık ve bağımlılıkla mücadele eğitimi verilmiş, kontrol grubuna ise bağımlılıkla ilgili herhangi bir eğitim verilmemiştir. Araştırmada veri toplamak amacıyla araştırmacılar

tarafından kişisel bilgi formu hazırlandı. Pommier (2011) tarafından geliştirilen Türkçeye uyarlaması Akdeniz ve Deniz (2016) tarafından yapılan “Merhamet” ölçeği ve Kaylı vd., (2020) tarafından geliştirilen “Bağımlılık Yapıcı Madde Kullanan Bireylere Karşı Tutum Ölçeği” kullanılmıştır. Araştırma, kuramsal temelleri incelenen araştırma konusunun planlanmasıyla başlatılmıştır. Araştırmanın etik kurul izni Türkiye’de Bolu şehrinde bulunan Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimlerde İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kuruluna gerekli belgeler sunulup baş vuru yapılarak alınmıştır (Protokol NO. 2023/417).

Bu araştırmanın sonucunda, bağımlılıkla mücadele eğitiminin deney grubundaki öğrencilerin madde kullanan bireylere karşı tutumlarında kontrol grubuna göre anlamlı düzeyde farklılık oluşturduğu ($p<0,05$), aynı zamanda verilen 12 haftalık eğitim sonunda deney grubundaki katılımcıların merhamet duygularında kontrol grubuna göre anlamlı fark oluşturduğu tespit edilmiştir ($p<0,05$). Katılımcıların cinsiyetlerine göre ise madde bağımlısı bireylere karşı tutumlarında ve merhamet duygularında anlamlı farklılığın oluşmadığı görülmüştür ($p>0,05$). Diğer yandan katılımcıların madde bağımlılarına karşı tutumları ile merhamet duyguları arasında pozitif düşük düzeyde ilişki olduğu bulgusuna ulaşılmıştır.

Makaledeki anahtar konular dikkate alındığında, bağımlılık, bağımlılara karşı tutumlar, bağımlılıkla mücadele, madde bağımlılığını engellemek için yapılan eğitim çalışmaları, merhamet gibi konularda yayınlar bulunmaktadır. Burada yapılan çalışmada, bağımlılık eğitimi, bağımlılara karşı tutumlar, merhamet duygusu üzerinde durulması, araştırmada kullanılan yöntem ve ölçekler, örneklem ve bunların oluşturduğu bütünsel ilişki makalenin özgünlüğünü sağlamaktadır.

Araştırma bulgularında da görüldüğü gibi, bağımlılıkla mücadele eğitimleri bağımlılara karşı tutumlar ve merhamet duygularında olumlu yönde katkı sağlamaktır. Buradan anlaşılabileceği gibi bağımlılıkla mücadelede önleyici eğitim çalışmaları, bireylerde yaratacağı olumlu tutumlar sayesinde, ülkeler açısından hem toplumsal kabul ve kaynaşmayı artıracak hem de gelecekte olması muhtemel yıkıcı ve hazine sorunları önleyebilecektir. Bu araştırmanın en büyük sınırlılığı küçük bir çalışma grubuyla yapılmış olması ve süreklilik gösterememesidir. Oysa tüm dünya insanlarını kaygılandıran böylesi sorunlar, özel ve kamuya ait kurum ve kuruluşların desteğiyle, sürekliliği olan, ilkel, tutarlı, disiplinli ve iş birlikli çalışmalarla desteklenebilir. Çalışmada ön test son test tekniğinin kullanılması, eğitim gerektirmesi gibi sebepler araştırmanın sınırlarının belirlenmesinde etkili olmuştur. Araştırmanın genellenebilirliğiyle ilgili bu sorun, başka araştırmacıların da farklı örneklem grupları üzerinde, aynı ölçekleri uygulamasıyla aşılabılır. Bağımlılıkla mücadele eğitimlerinden daha fazla fayda sağlayabilmek için eğitim içerik ve teknikleriyle ilgili yenilikler üzerinde durulabilir.