



Social skill development of individuals with special needs: the effect of creative drama

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Abstract

Social skills that are acquired are an important criterion for the individual to establish healthy relationships and be accepted in society. In this sense, this study aimed to examine the effects of creative drama activities on the social skill acquisition of individuals with special needs. The study was carried out with 2 special education teachers and 8 students, 4 females and 4 males, with moderate intellectual disability, in Karaman Special Education Practice School in Karaman. This is a qualitative study with a case study design. In the study, criterion sampling, which is one of the purposive sampling methods, was used. All data were collected through observations, interviews, researcher notes, pre- and post-tests, and the creative drama technique. The data were analysed with inductive data analysis, content analysis, and descriptive analysis methods. As a result, both significant and non-significant results were obtained within the scope of the themes determined as a result of the applied creative drama activities. In the scope of the study, though it was determined that the students with moderate intellectual disabilities had a low level of social skills before starting the creative drama activities, it was determined that the creative drama technique contributed positively to the development of the social skills of the students with moderate intellectual disabilities.

Keywords

Creative drama
Social skills
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Introduction

Disabled individuals' participation in daily living is limited due to their characteristics. Having limited physical and mental activity causes the disabled individual to be evaluated with a different perspective by society (Karaç Öcal et al., 2021). Individuals with special needs display differences from what is expected from their peers regarding developmental characteristics and educational competencies (Avşaroğlu & Güleş, 2019). The main purpose of the education of individuals with special needs is to get them to gain independent life skills and help them increase their quality of life. Independent life skills encompass social skills based on basic skills for success, adaptation skills, and daily living skills (Cavkaytar, 2000).

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Social skills are behaviours that maximize reinforcement and increase social acceptance in social contexts. A lack of learning outcomes that the individual does not have knowledge about or obstacles such as motivation and anxiety limit the demonstration of the skill. According to the purposes of social skills teaching, it is important to determine the type of current social skills deficiency (Radley & Dart, 2022). In other words, social skills are defined as behaviours that are socially acceptable and the ability to interact appropriately with others (Gresham, 2016). Actions aimed at improving competence in social skills can contribute to the development of social networks. Interpersonal relationships that are desired and understood as meaningful relationships, affect all areas of people's lives and are a key factor in social participation (Diaz-Garolera et al., 2022).

Learning and development is a dynamic and interactive process for individuals. Schools are not only for young people's success experiences, but also a product development capacity, opportunities, and supportive school conditions available to develop their capacity for growth and social and emotional competences. Schools are learning ecosystems made up of system leaders, staff, and youth, a set of interrelated, relational, and structural processes. The relational processes between these actors form learning conditions that involve subjective experiences and objective safety, commitment and belonging, academic challenge and participation, inclusion, equality, and social and emotional support measures (Berg et al., 2022).

Social skill is the general name of the attitudes, behaviours, and thoughts that affect individuals to behave in accordance with the social environment they are in, to have a place in society, and to realize their interpersonal communication in a positive way. Social skill acquisition starts from the early years of life and continues throughout life. The learning of social skills, which is very important for the strength of the social structure, should not be random. Social skills should be taught in a planned and programmed way within the education system, and individuals should be given opportunities to transform these skills into practice (Samancı, 2017). Long-term goals should be addressed in the activities to be carried out for individuals who need special education. These goals aim to improve some aspects of people with disabilities. These are positive self-concept, social competence, development in motor skills, physical and motor fitness, leisure time skills, tension relief, game skills, and creative expressions (Koparan, 2003). One of the methods that can be used in presenting these opportunities is the planning of creative drama for individuals with special needs within the education system.

Creative drama is not based on a written text, and it is performed mostly in group works and sometimes individually in its natural course (Briones et al., 2022). Creative drama offers students a "pretended" environment and helps them feel safe. Thus, students can express themselves without feeling any psychological pressure on them (Hong & Hong, 2022; Kasilingam & Ajitha, 2022). In creative drama, instead of evaluating students by comparing them with others, the teacher makes personal evaluations by analysing the students' dramatic movements, teamwork and timing in the animations (Önalın Akfırat, 2004). Başbuğ and Adıgüzel (2019) state that creative drama is one of the methods that renders students active in a learning environment and helps to achieve permanent learning. Creative drama method is an instrument that makes universal, ethical, moral, and abstract concepts meaningful (San, 1990). In other words, creative drama is closely associated with the life practice and personal development of an individual. It helps individuals gain life skills such as solving problems and making plans by enabling them to acquire thinking, listening, speaking, and communication skills (Adıgüzel, 2013). Within the framework of these acquisitions, creative drama allows individuals to travel between the real world and the fictitious world through animations, thus aiming to raise individuals who can establish and develop communication with the environment, express themselves well, and think imaginatively (Adıgüzel, 2020). Because, creative drama is a process by which we extract a model of life and allows us to better understand life, in which participants learn the problems and values of people who are different from themselves, in which they take on roles that they are sensitive to and at the same time learn to work in a group, in which they have the opportunity to understand what others are doing in the same situations by observing and that brings together many artistic skills as well (Önalın Akfırat, 2006).

Some studies conducted in Turkey (Arbay & Akfırat, 2012; Kaya & Eratay, 2009) have demonstrated the effectiveness of the creative drama method in the social skills development of individuals with special needs. Önalın Akfırat (2004) found that the social skills training program prepared by the creative drama method is effective for hearing impaired people aged 10-12 in learning social skills. Arslan (2019) determined that positive changes occurred in the social skills of these individuals after the creative drama program they applied to individuals with mental disabilities, and that they could meet their needs more easily without help. Sevgi-İçyüz (2019) found that the creative drama method was effective in the development of social skills and the acquisition of new skills by students with autism. Boran (2010) emphasized that in children with mild mental disability, creative drama had an improving effect on the development of basic social skills, coping with aggressive behaviours, cognitive skills, and relationship initiation skills. Baysan (2014) concluded that the creative drama method contributed to the development of students' communication skills, their appropriate response according to their emotional state, and the development of their social skills. Bilgiç and Alimterim (2024) stated that, in the process of integration applications of students with special needs, they participated in classes more effectively, their learning was more permanent, a positive contribution was made to their language development, and they acquired social skills and language skills with the creative drama method.

In international studies, the contributions of creative drama to social skills development have been evaluated. Wright (2008) found that children's empathy skills improved in the studies he conducted on creative drama. Roy (2007) determined that the lives of children with special needs changed, and they felt happy with creative drama practices. George (2000) found that through his creative drama studies with children with special needs, these individuals' low academic achievement and self-confidence increased, and they felt more valuable. Mentzer and Boswell (1995) demonstrated that creative drama-based teaching practices in children with mental and behavioural disorders made important contributions to children's social development.

It is thought that creative drama activities that will be applied to reflect these differences in educational environments and for social skills education will play a role in contributing to the development of individuals with special needs. For this reason, activities to be carried out in order to provide opportunities for individuals with special needs to acquire social skills and to activate the educational environment are important. Children with intellectual disabilities are classified in two ways, with psychological and educational classification approaches according to the degree of their severity (Ersoy & Avcı, 2000; Işıkhan, 2005; Yanardağ, 2001, cited in Avşaroğlu & Okutan, 2018). In both classifications, it is necessary to prepare them for life by providing education and development services according to their disability. Moderate intellectual disability refers to the individual who needs special education and support education services intensively in the acquisition of basic academic, daily life, and work skills due to limitations in cognitive functions and conceptual, social, and practical adaptability skills (Resmi Gazete, 2006, cited in Sevimli, 2022). In other words, it is a retardation that occurs due to delayed speech and language development, social, emotional, and behavioural problems, and the acquisition of basic literacy and counting skills (Oyal, 2022). Although the children with intellectual disabilities are the most common group in the group of children with disabilities, there is misinformation about children with intellectual disabilities. There are misconceptions that children in this group cannot overcome their obstacles. Approximately 85% of children with intellectual disabilities can be educated, and when necessary, opportunities are provided, they will have the chance to overcome this disability (İlhan, 2009). It is thought that the results of this study will play a role in contributing to the social skill development of individuals with special needs. With this approach, answers were sought for the following questions to determine the effect of creative drama on the development of individuals with intellectual disabilities in acquiring social skills and using these skills:

1. What are the social skills of students with moderate intellectual disabilities before they start creative drama activities?
2. What are the social skills of students with moderate intellectual disabilities after their participation in creative drama activities?
3. What are the opinions of the researcher after the observation, the notes of the researcher, and the creative drama lessons to be held with students with moderate intellectual disabilities?

Method

The research process followed within the scope of the qualitative approach in line with the determined research purpose is given in Figure 1.



Figure 1. The Research Process

Research Design

This study was planned around accepting the events that exist in society, developing an appropriate perspective thereagainst, designing the current study, collecting data, analysing the data, and interpreting the data. In this context, this is a qualitative study. The number of participants in qualitative research depends on what the researcher wants to learn, the researcher's purpose, what is reliable and useful, and what can be done with the time and resources available.

Since it is aimed at determining the effect of creative drama activities on providing social skills to individuals with intellectual disabilities and on using these skills, the research was designed as a case study. In this design, many situations, current events, groups, and social and political events are examined in depth (Creswell, 2013, Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, Patton, 2014). Case study in qualitative research is related with studying an event intensively (Glesne, 2013). In education, answers are sought for “why” and “how” questions. There are different types of case study. A holistic single-case design was adopted in this study. The holistic single-case design is used in the study of extreme, contradictory, or idiosyncratic situations that do not meet general standards. The following were indicative in choosing the holistic single-case design in the research: 1) The process of developing social skills in students with moderate intellectual disabilities through creative drama was accepted as the situation examined in the research. 2) It is intended to confirm or refute this situation.

Also, criterion sampling which is one of the purposive sampling methods was used in this study. Purposive sampling enables the in-depth study of situations that are thought to have rich information. The researcher tries to understand natural and social events or phenomena in the context of selected situations, and to discover and explain the relationships between them. In research where criterion sampling is used, observation units can be formed from people, events, or situations with certain qualifications. In this case, units that meet the criteria (basic qualifications) determined for the sample are included. In this study, it was considered that the participants were moderately intellectually disabled and that they are receiving a 3rd grade education.

Ethical Approval

This study was approved by the decision numbered 01-2022/08 of the Scientific Research Publication Ethics Committee of Karamanoglu Mehmetbey University. The necessary permission has been obtained from the Karaman Provincial Directorate of National Education in order for the study to be carried out (Date and number: 11.03.2022 - E-99371540-605.01-45541391). In addition, the necessary written permissions were obtained from the participants and their parents for the study with the "enlightening consent form" and the "parent consent form".

Study Group

In line with the purpose of the study, it was necessary to create two different study groups. At first, two special education teachers who are responsible for the student group where creative drama activities will be applied were determined. In determining this situation, it is an important criterion that they can convey the most accurate information about the students in the study group. Obtaining information about the behaviour of the students was considered a priority stage in the study. Because before the students in the scope of the study acquire the necessary and new social skills, it was adopted that having knowledge of their current behaviours would provide a more accurate and realistic approach in terms of study.

At another stage, the study was limited to students diagnosed with a moderate intellectual disability. In this context, the study group in which the creative drama activities will be implemented consists of 8 students with moderate intellectual disabilities, 4 male and 4 female, between the ages of 15-19, who are studying at Karaman Special Education Practice School. Age criteria and mental disability levels were determined to be important criteria for the applicability of the research in the determination of the research group. In addition, the fact that all of the students in the research group included in the study were in the same class and were educated by common special education teachers was accepted as a necessary criterion for the healthy conduct of the activities.

During the study to be carried out with the participants, the study was carried out with special education teachers. Due to the moderate intellectual disability of the participants, a clear and understandable explanation about the nature of the research was excluded from the scope. Students with moderate intellectual disabilities, who are in the 3rd level and who can participate in the creative drama activities to be applied, were included in the study. The fact that these individuals can be trained according to their disabilities and are able to give feedback on their targeted social skill acquisitions has created the thought that this will affect the work positively. Apart from that, students with autism at 1st Level (primary school), 2nd Level (secondary school) and in all three levels were excluded from the scope of the research, considering their age criteria and disabilities. In order to keep the names of the students with moderate intellectual disabilities and special education teachers participating in the research confidential, separate code names were given to them. The "K" code corresponding to the participant expression was used for students, and the "T" code was used for special education teachers.

Table 1. Personal Information of the Participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Disability Type
K1	Male	15	Moderate Intellectual Disability
K2	Female	14	Moderate Intellectual Disability
K3	Female	19	Moderate Intellectual Disability
K4	Female	17	Moderate Intellectual Disability
K5	Male	17	Moderate Intellectual Disability
K6	Female	18	Moderate Intellectual Disability
K7	Male	14	Moderate Intellectual Disability
K8	Male	17	Moderate Intellectual Disability
Participant	Gender	Professional Experience	Graduation
O1	Female	9	Hearing-impaired Teacher
O2	Female	3	Psychological Counselling and Guidance

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that 4 of the 8 participants in the research are female and 4 are male; their ages range from 14 to 19 years; and all of them have moderate intellectual disabilities. It was determined that all of the participant teachers are female and have professional experience between 3 and 9 years, and their field of graduation is different.

Researchers and Their Roles

1st Researcher: The researcher has a creative drama teaching certificate. The researcher teaches creative drama in both undergraduate and graduate education at the institution he/she works for. The researcher determined creative drama activities suitable for the study group and carried out the activities with the group under his/her leadership.

2nd Researcher: contributed to the preparation of the interview questions before the data collection phase. Also, the researcher took part in the creation of the research data as a participant observer during the interviews with special education teachers and the implementation of the eight-week creative drama activities.

Research Environment

The practice house, music workshop, and school's garden in the Karaman Special Education Practice School, where the research was carried out, were used in the implementation of creative drama activities. The practice house has a home environment that is necessary for students to be prepared for their normal lives outside the practice school and to adapt to their social lives more easily. The existing equipment enabled the researcher in the implementation of creative drama activities.

Collection of Data

The data of the research were collected in the Karaman Special Education Practice School in Karaman Province in the second semester of the 2021-2022 Education and Training year. Social skills are classified differently by many researchers. Since the level of intellectual disability, age, adaptability of creative drama, and activities of the study group were taken into consideration in this study, Caldarella and Merrell's (1997) study, in which they determined the dimensions of social skills and classified them in detail, was taken into account for the acquisition of social skills based on the creative drama method.

The study consists of five stages in collecting data. In the first stage, the researchers participated in a total of two lesson hours (80 minutes) to meet and socialize with the study group before creative drama activities.

The second stage is the interview method with the special education teachers of the class belonging to the determined study group. In this method, a semi-structured interview technique was used in order to gather information about the current situation of the students in the study group before the implementation of the creative drama activity. Interviews with two different special education teachers of the participant students were carried out on different days, outside of class hours, and in a suitable environment determined by the school administration at their own workplaces. The interviews took an average of 30 minutes for each student and the interviews were recorded with a voice recorder.

The third stage is to fill out the social skill level determination form that is prepared by the researchers and evaluated by the special education teachers in order to determine the social skill levels of the participant students. Caldarella and Merrell (1997) determined five dimensions in child and adolescent social skills as a result of their meta-analysis (Önalan Akfırat, 2006). The social skill level determination form used in the study was prepared based on these five dimensions and the skills they cover. The related form consists of five sub-dimensions, which are "peer-related skills", "self-control skills", "academic skills", "adaptation skills" and "assertiveness skills", and there are 31 items in total within the sub-dimensions. In order to determine the level of each expression that presents the behaviour pattern, the numbering is prepared in a decimal Likert format from low to high (from 1 to 10).

The fourth stage is the realization of the activities in which the course environment is used, and the creative drama technique is applied by the researcher. In the preparation of the activities, the improvement of social skill deficiencies was taken as a basis. In addition, the duration of the event has been planned taking into account the creative drama stages (warm-up-preparatory studies, animation, evaluation-discussion) and the social skills areas that are intended to be acquired. At this stage, it is essential to ensure that special education teachers are sometimes in the position of participant and sometimes observer of the event, according to the social skill aimed to be acquired. Creative drama activities were carried out twice a week for one lesson (40 minutes). Creative drama activities were planned as two days in a week and one class hour for eight weeks. In the planning of the creative drama activities, the disability status of the participant students, their current social skill levels, and the targeted social skill levels were taken into account. In addition, the second researcher, who is a participant observer, kept field notes by observing within the scope of each activity.

While developing creative drama activities, activities that were thought to support social skills development were planned. Certain issues were taken into account in determining the skills needed by individuals with special needs. These can be summarized as determining the order of teaching social skills and planning creative drama activities (the name of the activity, the purpose of the activity in getting individuals to acquire social skills, the environment in which the activity would be carried out, the duration of the activity, the repetition status of the activity, and the materials required for the activity). During the activity, the guidance (giving instructions, approval, reinforcement) of the researcher who assumed the role of the activity leader was included. Certain concepts were addressed as a basis for revealing creative drama-based social skills development. These subheadings were (a) peer-related skills, (b) self-control skills, (c) academic skills, (d) compliance skills, and (e) assertiveness skills.

Creative drama activities aiming to support and enforce social skills development were designed and carried out separately for each skill. In the implementation of the activities, the study groups' level of mental disability, age, and compatibility with the applicability of creative drama activities were taken into consideration and the creative drama stages were carried out in this direction. In other words, creative drama activities were planned to make all participants active. Mentally handicapped participants were frequently supported during creative drama work and the reward method (applause, appreciation) was used for encouragement purposes. As the study was carried out with a group that might have difficulty in focusing, the materials used in the activities were selected in a way that would not distract them. In addition, while performing creative drama activities, stages such as warm-up-preparation studies, animation, and evaluation-discussion (Adıgüzel, 2006) were taken into account. Activities involving group work were preferred for peer-related skills. Creative activities in which the individual could reveal his/her awareness were included for the self-control skill. For academic skills, an individual working environment was created. Activities containing instructions that the individual could fulfil were preferred for their compliance skills. For assertiveness skills, both individual and group activities were planned in accordance with the content. Improvisation, role playing, role cards were among the method used. All creative drama activities were applied in the practice house, music workshop, and school garden as required by the type of activity.

Field notes were collected based on the observation technique. The participant observer was at the back in order not to negatively affect the creative drama application process and kept research notes based on the attitudes and behaviours of students with moderate intellectual disabilities. The field notes also include the observation period, history, environment, and characteristics of the participants. It is thought that the observer researchers taking notes during the implementation process and recording the notes in detail contribute positively to the interpretation of the research findings (Merriam, 2009).

In order to determine the social skill developments of the participant students after the creative drama activities, the social skill level determination form, which was evaluated by the special education teachers, was filled in as a post-test in the last stage.

Data Analysis

Data were synthesized by inductive reasoning. Inductive data analysis is an analysis method done by bringing together the data collected through observations, interviews, artifacts, and research journals (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The analysis of the data started with the analysis of the unstructured interviews with the special education teachers in order to gain general information about the participant students, and the data obtained in this way were analysed with the content analysis technique. The basic process in content analysis is to gather similar data within the framework of certain concepts and themes and to interpret by organizing them in a way that the reader can understand. Data obtained in content analysis is analysed in four stages namely, coding the data, finding the themes, organizing the codes and themes, defining, and interpreting the findings. The analysis of the research data in line with the data obtained was continued by using the descriptive analysis technique. In descriptive analysis, the data obtained are summarized and interpreted according to predetermined themes. Direct quotations are included in order to reflect the views of the individuals interviewed or observed dramatically (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In the semi-structured interview technique, the researcher has a list called the interview form that contains questions related to the subject (Türnüklü, 2000). Five different themes were determined for classifying the social skill dimensions of the participant students in detail. The analysis was completed with the qualitative data, which included participant observer notes reflecting the researchers' observations.

Validity and Reliability

In this study, where the qualitative research approach is adopted, it would be a more correct approach to use the concepts of trustworthiness, transferability, consistency, and confirmability instead of the concepts of validity and reliability (Mills, 2003). The criteria determined by Guba and Lincoln (1982) about trustworthiness, who drew attention to the concept of trustworthiness were taken into consideration. About trustworthiness, data diversity was provided by using different data collection techniques in the research. In-depth observation, reducing researcher biases, long-term interaction, and expert review were also used in this study. The researchers need to give readers enough details to decide whether similarities in application and content are transferable. Therefore, in the methodology section of the study, information on the participants, explanations about the place, time, and content of the research were provided. The first researcher kept the observation notes after the activity, and the second researcher kept them during the activities. After each activity, the notes of the two researchers were compared, and the consistency was determined. In order to increase the consistency of the research, the findings obtained in the study were presented directly to the reader without generalization. Besides, all the data obtained during the research process were evaluated by different researchers, in addition to the researchers, and a general consensus was achieved. The consistency of the codes used independently by the researchers was determined by marking them "consensus" or "disagreement.". A consensus of 87% was achieved accordingly. Reliability calculations obtained above 70% are considered reliable for research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In order to ensure the confirmability of the research, how and at what stages the data were collected and how the data were recorded are explained in detail.

Findings

In this chapter, as a result of the data about the participants and the findings obtained from the interviews with the special education teachers, the findings related to the social skill levels of the participants with moderate intellectual disabilities before and after the creative drama activities are included.

Table 2. Findings on Special Education Teachers' Comments on Students' Behaviours at School

Interaction Type	Behaviour Patterns	Comment of T1	Comment of T2
Individually	Silent	K1, K4	K1, K4
	Persistent	K3, K1, K2, K5	K1, K2, K5
	Individuality comes first	K1, K6, K2, K7, K4	K3, K1, K6, K2, K7, K4
	Jealous	K6, K3	K3
	Abstain	K3, K4	K3, K4
	Lack of self confidence	K3	K3
	Having an anger problem	K2, K3, K5, K7	K3, K5, K7
	Not accepting failure	K6	K6
	Overconfident	K6	K6
	Easily distracted	K2, K7	K2, K7
	Calm	K2, K4	K2, K4
	Inability to balance behaviour	K6, K2	K6,
	Inability to innovate	K7	K7, K3
	Humane	K8, K6	K8, K5
	Low openness to criticism	K1	K1
	Inability to express oneself	K3, K5, K4	K3, K5, K4
In terms of the group	Closed to communication	K1, K3, K4, K8	K1, K3, K4, K8
	Failure to follow directions	K1, K6, K2, K4	K1, K6, K2, K4
	Following directions	K5	K5
	Being prone to group activities	K5, K8	K5, K8
	Reluctance to group activities	K3, K4, K7	K7, K3, K4,
	Being overly social	K6, K5	K6, K5
	Having communication skills	K6, K8	K6, K8
	Leadership	K8, K6	K6
	Having a desire to contact people	K6, K2	K6, K2
	Tendency to people who make them feel good in communication	K6, K2, K5	K6, K2, K5
	Not appreciating others	K3, K2, K7	K7

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that there are different types of behaviour within the scope of two different types of interaction. It was determined that there are sixteen different types of behaviour in terms of individual behaviour and eleven different types of behaviour in terms of group behaviour. When T1 and T2's comments on students' individual behaviours at school are examined, it was determined that the most common behaviours are; "individuality", "persistency", "having an anger problem", "closedness to communication" and "not following the directions" and the least possessed behaviours are "lack of self-confidence", "not accepting failure", "overconfidence", "not being open to innovations", "low level of openness to criticism" and "following instructions". When the comments of T1 and T2 on the in-group behaviours of the students at school are examined, it is seen that the most common behaviours are "being closed to communication", "inability to follow directions", "reluctance to group activities", "tendency to people who make them feel good in communication" and "not appreciating others". The least visible in-group behaviour was determined to be "following directions". Another finding is that the participant student who has the most different behaviour patterns is "K6", and the participant student who has the least different behaviour patterns is "K8".

Table 3. Findings Regarding the Pre-Test and Post-Test of Participating Students According to the Theme of “Peer Related Skills

		Participants																															
		K1		K2		K3		K4		K5		K6		K7		K8																	
		T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2																
Peer Related Skills	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test					
	Low (1)														High (10)																		
	Appreciating friends	1	2	1	2	1	5	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	3	6	9	8	9	1	1	1	5	3	4	6	7		
	Inviting friends to play	1	2	1	2	3	4	3	5	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	4	3	4	7	9	8	9	1	2	1	6	3	4	5	6		
	Speaking with friends	2	3	1	3	2	4	3	4	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	3	5	4	5	8	8	10	10	3	5	2	6	4	5	9	9
	Participating in discussions	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	3	1	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	5	2	3	2	8	8	9	1	1	1	5	4	5	2	3	
	Defending friends' rights	1	3	1	1	1	3	2	3	1	3	2	3	1	1	1	1	4	2	3	6	8	7	8	1	2	1	5	4	4	2	2	
	Taking the Leadership	1	1	1	2	1	4	3	4	1	3	3	3	1	2	1	2	2	3	2	3	7	9	9	10	2	3	2	5	3	7	7	9
Making friends	1	3	2	3	1	4	3	4	2	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	3	4	3	4	7	8	10	10	2	4	2	5	3	5	6	8	
Having a sense of humour	1	4	3	3	2	3	3	4	2	2	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	5	4	5	8	9	8	9	2	4	3	5	3	5	7	9	

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that a total of eight codes were created under the theme of "peer-related skills" and the participants' pre-test and post-test results were evaluated by two special education teachers ("T1" and "T2") within the scope of the study, according to the determined codes. Accordingly, as a result of the statements of two special education teachers, a difference was found in the codes of appreciating friends, inviting friends to play, taking leadership, making friends and having a sense of humour between the pre-test and post-test of the participating students. On the other hand, no difference was found between the pre-test and post-test findings in terms of creative drama activity in participants with the codes "K3", K4, and "K6" according to the code of "talking to friends", and in the participant with the code "K4" according to the code of "participating in discussions," in the "K4" and "K8" coded participants, according to the code of "defending the rights of your friends".

Table 4. "Findings Regarding the Pre-Test and Post-Test of Participating Students According to the Self-Control Skills" Theme

		Participants																															
		K1				K2				K3				K4				K5				K6				K7				K8			
		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2	
		Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test
		Low (1)																High (10)															
Self-Control Skills	Anger control	2	3	2	3	2	4	3	4	1	2	1	2	2	3	4	5	2	3	2	3	3	6	5	6	1	2	1	4	2	3	3	4
	Being calm in problematic situations	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	1	2	4	5	4	5	1	3	2	3	5	5	4	5	1	2	1	3	2	3	4	4
	Following rules	1	5	3	4	1	4	3	4	5	5	5	7	5	5	4	5	5	5	3	3	4	7	4	5	1	2	1	4	4	5	8	8
	Compromise where appropriate	1	4	3	4	1	3	3	4	1	2	3	3	1	4	4	5	1	4	3	5	5	6	4	5	2	3	1	4	4	5	5	5
	Accepting the criticism of others	2	4	2	2	1	3	3	3	1	2	3	3	1	3	1	2	2	3	3	4	3	5	4	6	2	3	1	4	4	5	4	6
	Getting good criticism	1	3	3	4	2	3	2	5	2	2	3	4	3	3	1	2	1	3	3	4	4	4	5	6	2	3	2	5	4	5	5	6

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that a total of six codes were created under the theme of "self-control" and the participants' pre-test and post-test results were evaluated by two special education teachers ("T1" and "T2") within the scope of the study, according to the determined codes. As a result of the comments of two special education teachers, a difference was found between the pre-test and post-test in the codes of anger control, being calm in problem situations, following the rules, compromising where appropriate, accepting the criticism of others, and getting good criticism. On the other hand, according to the code of following the rules, no difference was found between the pre-test and post-test findings in terms of creative drama activity in the participant coded as "K5".

Table 5. "Findings Regarding the Pre-Test and Post-Test of Participating Students According to the "Academic Skills" Theme

		Participants																															
		K1				K2				K3				K4				K5				K6				K7				K8			
		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2	
		Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test
		Low (1)																High (10)															
Academic skills	Working independently	1	2	2	4	2	3	3	4	3	5	3	4	1	3	1	2	1	4	2	4	3	7	7	8	3	6	2	4	3	5	9	9
	Accomplishing tasks independently	1	2	2	3	3	4	3	4	2	4	3	4	1	3	1	4	1	4	3	3	3	6	7	8	4	5	2	4	3	6	8	9
	Listening and following directions	3	5	3	3	4	5	3	4	6	6	4	6	6	7	4	5	4	5	4	5	6	6	6	7	4	5	4	5	4	8	9	10
	Proper use of free time	1	1	2	4	1	2	2	5	2	4	3	4	1	3	1	2	2	5	2	6	5	5	5	6	3	3	1	2	3	5	4	5
	Seeking help when needed	2	4	3	4	1	2	3	3	3	7	4	5	1	3	1	3	1	4	4	5	2	5	4	5	4	8	3	4	3	6	5	6

When Table 5 is examined, it is seen that a total of five codes were created under the theme of "academic skills" and the pre-test and post-test results of the participants were evaluated by two special education teachers ("T1" and "T2") within the scope of the study, according to the determined codes. As a result of the comments of two special education teachers, when all codes determined as working independently, accomplishing tasks independently, listening and performing directions, proper use of free time, and seeking for help when necessary were taken into consideration, it was determined that there was a difference between the pre-test and post-test in terms of creative drama activity in all participants.

Table 6. Findings Regarding the Pre-Test and Post-Test of Participating Students According to the “Adaptation Skills” Theme

		Participants																															
		K1				K2				K3				K4				K5				K6				K7				K8			
		T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2						
		Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test						
		Low (1)												High (10)																			
Adaptation Skills	Following directions	3	5	3	5	3	4	4	5	5	7	5	6	7	7	3	3	5	5	3	4	5	6	8	8	3	5	4	4	7	7	9	9
	Following rules	2	4	3	5	2	3	3	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	1	2	3	5	3	4	6	7	7	8	3	4	3	4	5	6	8	9
	Sharing belongings	1	4	3	4	1	3	3	4	4	5	4	5	2	3	1	2	2	4	3	5	5	8	6	7	2	3	2	4	2	3	2	5
	Doing homework	2	3	3	5	1	3	2	4	7	7	4	6	2	3	3	3	5	5	4	6	7	9	9	9	2	5	4	4	4	6	7	8
	Fulfilling responsibilities	2	3	3	5	2	3	3	5	5	6	3	5	1	3	3	4	2	4	3	6	6	7	8	9	2	3	3	4	4	7	8	9

When Table 6 is examined, it is seen that a total of five codes were created under the theme of "adapting skills," and the participants' pre-test and post-test results were evaluated by two special education teachers ("T1" and "T2") within the scope of the study, according to the determined codes. As a result of the comments of two special education teachers, a difference was found between the pre-test and post-test among the participating students in the codes of following directions, following the rules, sharing belongings, doing homework, and fulfilling responsibilities. On the other hand, there was no difference between the pre-test and post-test in terms of creative drama activity among the participants coded as "K4" and "K8" according to the code of "following directions".

Table 7. Findings Regarding the Pre-Test and Post-Test of Participating Students According to the “Assertiveness Skills” Theme

		Participants																															
		K1				K2				K3				K4				K5				K6				K7				K8			
		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2		T1		T2	
		Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test
		Low (1)																High (10)															
Assertiveness Skills	Attempt to talk to others	1	2	1	3	1	3	3	4	1	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	4	3	5	9	10	10	10	4	6	5	5	4	7	8	9
	Inviting friends to play	1	2	1	3	1	4	3	4	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	4	3	5	6	7	8	9	2	2	1	4	3	4	5	6
	Saying nice things about self	1	2	1	4	2	4	2	4	2	4	2	3	1	2	1	2	4	7	4	5	6	8	7	8	4	6	1	4	4	8	5	6
	Asking about the rules they don't know	1	2	2	2	1	3	3	3	1	4	3	4	1	2	1	2	1	6	3	4	3	8	9	9	4	5	2	3	3	6	6	7
	Introducing oneself	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	3	2	3	3	4	1	3	1	2	2	6	3	4	7	9	8	9	4	5	2	4	4	5	4	5
	Expressing emotions	1	2	2	3	1	3	3	4	1	4	4	5	1	4	1	2	1	5	3	5	3	7	6	8	3	5	1	3	3	7	7	8
	Participating in group works	2	5	2	6	2	4	3	6	2	4	4	5	3	5	2	5	2	6	3	6	4	8	8	9	3	4	2	4	4	8	9	10

When Table 7 is examined, it is seen that a total of seven codes were created under the theme of "assertiveness skills," and the pre-test and post-test results of the participants were evaluated by two special education teachers ("T1" and "T2") within the scope of the study, according to the determined codes. As a result of the comments of two special education teachers, there was a difference between the pre-test and post-test among the participating students in the codes of attempting to talk to others, inviting friends to the game, saying nice things about oneself, asking about rules they don't know, introducing oneself, expressing feelings, and participating in group work. On the other hand, no difference was found between the pre-test and post-test in terms of creative drama activity in the participant coded as "K4" according to the code of "attempt to talk to others" and "invite friends to the game".

Table 8. Findings Regarding the Researcher's Field Notes

Participant characteristics	Environment	Observation period
K1 Stay silent during events, adapts to group work, follow the guidelines	Implementing house	Period of a lesson (40 min.)
K2 Has trouble following the instructions, has lack of self-confidence		
K3 Language development features are insufficient, has communication problem		
K4 Language development features are insufficient, has communication problem, has focusing problem	Music workshop	
K5 Follow the rules, excited, impatient, hasty, quite active during events, quite keen on music events	School playground	
K6 High peer-related skills		
K7 Willing to be at the forefront, not keen on group work, has behaviours to attention-seeking		
K8 Has behavioural and cognitive limitations, language development features are insufficient, has focusing problem		

When Table 8 is examined, according to researcher's field notes, participant characteristics of a total of 8 participants (K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, K7, K8) are seen. It has been determined that these behaviours belonging to the participants are both positive and negative behaviours. In addition, information about the environment in which the observation was made and the observation period are other findings that have been identified.

Discussion

In this study, it was aimed to examine the impact of creative drama activities on the social skills acquisition of individuals with special needs. In this context, creative drama studies were designed as pre-stage, while-stage, and post-stage. In the pre-stage, (a) acquaintance-blending, (b) interview with special education teachers, and (c) determination of students' social skill levels were carried out. In the while-stage, (d) the planned creative drama activities were implemented. In the post-stage, (e) it was evaluated whether there was social skills development after creative drama activities. Each of these stages was designed, applied, and interpreted separately by the researcher within the framework of the findings obtained.

When the findings of the study are examined, findings about the personal information of the participants, the special education teachers' comments on the behaviour of the students at school, and the pre- and post-tests of the participant students on different themes are determined.

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that both participating teachers and individuals with moderate intellectual disabilities constitute the study group. It can be stated that one of the participant teachers is a hearing-impaired teacher and the other is a PCG (psychological counselling and guidance) and that the participant students consist of individuals with moderate intellectual disability. It was stated earlier in the method part of the study that certain priorities were determined as criteria in the formation of the study group. Starting from this point, the fact that the participant teachers were experts in their fields was important for the reliable execution of the process, which included the application part of the study. According to Akyıldız (2017), special education teachers have the potential to be effective in eliminating the problems and negative perceptions that may be encountered in ensuring the integration of those who have disabilities in society. Furthermore, these teachers can also play an important role in the implementation of policies addressed at the macro level regarding the social integration of individuals with disabilities. The other study group, consisting of individuals with moderate intellectual disabilities, consists of equal numbers of men and women. Although it is not a specifically determined criterion, this equality is due to the fact that there is only one class that meets the determined criteria in the environment where the study was carried out. In his study, Yılmaz (2018) determined that special education teachers believed that creative drama was effective and practical in developing the basic skills of students with mental disabilities.

In Table 2, the findings obtained from the thoughts of special education teachers about the behaviours of students with special needs at school were categorized according to interaction types in terms of individual and group, and twenty-seven different behaviour styles were identified under these two categories.

Two special education teachers (T1, T2) within the scope of the study stated that before the creative drama activities, the most individual behaviours exhibited by the participant students in the school were "persistency, anger problems, individuality, closedness to communication, and not following directions." On the other hand, the most common in-group behaviours were found to be "closedness to communication", "inability to follow directions", "reluctance towards group activities", "tendency to people who make them feel good in communication," and "not appreciating others". Within the scope of the findings, the answer to the research question regarding the level of social skills of students with moderate mental disabilities before starting creative drama activities was found as low level in these participant individuals. It is thought that the reasons for these negative the behaviours that are seen more frequently are low mental capacity, social rejection, limited communication skills, an inability to improve oneself in society, having experienced failures, and inability to express emotions and thoughts correctly. According to McIntyre et al. (2006), individuals with intellectual disabilities have more teacher-reported problem behaviours as well as weaker communication and social skills. According to Özen et al. (2002), disabled individuals exhibit many problem behaviours such as not being able to fulfil the desired instructions in daily life. Research on people with intellectual disabilities reveals that individuals with disabilities exhibit less prosocial behaviours, a lack of initiation in peer interactions, a low rate of reward when they are with their peers, and less cooperative behaviours (Gresham & Elliot, 1993).

As a result of the findings of the study, five themes were obtained as "Peer-Related Skills Theme", "Self-Control Skills Theme", "Academic Skills Theme", "Adaptation Skills Theme," and "Assertiveness Skills Theme". In line with these themes, it was determined that the social skills of students with moderate mental disabilities after their participation in creative drama activities increased from low to above the moderate level, and it was revealed as a result of the findings obtained from these five themes that creative drama contributed positively to the development of social skills. Eldeniz Çetin (2005), in his study on mentally disabled students, concluded that creative drama was effective on the social skills curriculum.

In Table 3, a total of eight codes were created within the framework of the findings related to the pre-test and post-test of the participant students in the theme of peer-related skills. A difference was determined between the pre-test and post-test among the participating students in the codes of appreciating their friends, inviting their friends to the game, leadership, making friends, and having a sense of humour. Regarding each code in terms of before and after creative drama activities, it can be said that there is a positive development in peer-related skills in participant students. Creative drama aims to enable easy expression of emotions, imagination development, and cooperation. Starting from this, creative drama activities were planned and implemented to solve the problems that were determined before the activity about the moderately intellectually disabled individuals forming the study group as "persistency, having anger problems, individuality, closedness to communication, not following directions, and reluctance towards group activities". It was prioritized that the implemented activities mainly included the state of being in contact with another person. There are different studies in the literature that support our findings. According to the results of the study, Eldeniz Çetin (2005) stated that drama was effective in developing basic skills, basic speaking skills, initiating a relationship, maintaining a relationship, group work skills, emotional skills, self-control skills, giving instructions skills and cognitive skills. Kaya (2011) concluded that the creative drama method is effective for individuals with intellectual disabilities in controlling themselves and coping with aggressive behaviours. Avcıoğlu (2012) found that drama has a positive effect on peer relations. Taylor (2011) found that creative drama improves self-worth, confidence, communication, and speaking skills. Liu (2020) mentioned that for children with special needs achieving active and positive development can be

easier through creative drama. Papaioannou and Kondoyianni (2022) found that the use of drama in educating students with special educational needs improves teamwork and social skills as well as language skills.

In Table 4, according to the findings of the pre- and post-tests of the participant students, a total of six codes were obtained under the theme of self-control skills. As a result of the comments of two special education teachers, a difference was found between the pre-test and post-test in the codes of "anger control, being calm in problem situations, following rules, compromising where appropriate, accepting the criticism of others, and getting good criticism". It is thought that this difference comes from creative drama activities that support problem solving, improve participation skills, and promote self-control. Different studies on creative drama activities also support our study finding. In the study conducted by Çorbacı Serin (2012), it was concluded that as the social skill levels of intellectually disabled adolescents increase, their behavioural problems decrease. Ilgaz (2014) stated that drama studies enable learning of the concepts of emotion at the highest level.

In Table 5, a total of five codes were obtained according to the findings related to the pre-test and post-test of the participating students on the theme of academic skills. When all the codes determined as "working independently", "achieving tasks independently", "listening to and performing the directions", "proper use of free time" and "asking for help when necessary" were evaluated, it was determined that there is a difference between the pre-test and post-tests of all participant students in line with the creative drama activity. Creative drama is an effective method in teaching many social skills. In view of this reality, information about the social skill levels of the participating students was collected before the implementation of the creative drama activities, and the necessity of supporting the academic skills of the students came to the forefront. In other words, when designing drama activities, this situation was taken into consideration, and the activities offered the students with moderate mental disabilities the opportunity to work independently as well as in groups. Thus, the participant students took an active role in the learning process within the scope of the creative drama activities, and they were particularly able to effectively work independently. Within this scope, it was concluded that creative drama activities are an effective method in improving the academic skills of individuals. Sucuoğlu and Özokçu (2005) also emphasize that when students with disabilities learn the necessary social skills their academic skills increase accordingly. In their study, Yücesan and Şendurur (2018) demonstrated that creative drama improved the academic self-esteem of individuals.

A total of five codes were obtained in Table 6, according to the findings of the pre-test and post-test of the participant students in the theme of adaptation skills. As a result of the comments of two special education teachers, a difference was found in the codes of following directions, following the rules, sharing belongings, doing homework, and fulfilling responsibilities between the pre-test and post-test among the participating students. In many studies about mentally disabled individuals, it has been mentioned that these individuals have maladaptive behaviours within the framework of their mental competence levels. For this reason, it is more difficult for them to comply with the rules and instructions and to take responsibility for themselves compared to their normal peers. However, this study shows that creative drama activities are helpful for individuals with moderate intellectual disabilities to fulfil their daily personal homework and responsibilities. During the implementation phase of the activities within the scope of the study, it was determined that some participant students were more willing to acquire the skills within the scope of adapting skills, while others exhibited a more uninterested or careless attitude. The important point here is that the individual differences of these individuals should also be taken into account during the planning and implementation of creative drama activities. Different and repetitive activities, including creative drama, were carried out with intellectually disabled students who were unwilling or uninterested in following the rules, sharing belongings, doing homework, and fulfilling responsibilities, and positive results were obtained. It was determined that creative drama activities had positive effects on attitude and behaviour acquisitions (Demir Acar & Bayat, 2019). Malley and Silverstein (2014) found that the use of creative drama method

in the education of children with special needs had positive effects on academic and social development as well as peer acceptance.

In Table 7, it is seen that a total of seven codes were created according to the findings of the pre- and post-tests of the participant students on the theme of assertiveness skills, and the pre- and post-test results of the participants were evaluated according to the determined codes. There was a difference between the pre-test and post-test in the codes of attempting to talk to others, inviting friends to the game, saying nice things for oneself, asking unfamiliar rules, introducing oneself, expressing feelings, and participating in group work. Studies have shown that individuals with intellectual disabilities have more deficiencies in self-confidence, self-expression, and communication when compared to their normal peers in terms of the acquisition of social skills. The point reached is that individuals with mental disabilities have less developed social skills. In other words, the ability of these individuals to maintain their daily lives and establish a healthier relationship with others is directly proportional to the level of social skills they have. Therefore, individuals with different levels of intellectual disability should receive education, and different approaches should be included in the content of this education. According to the results obtained in the study, it is thought that creative drama activities applied to moderately mentally disabled participants contribute positively to their self-confidence, self-expression, and communication. Creative drama, which creates an active and experiential psychotherapy environment, has been found to have a positive effect on individuals with special needs (Feniger-Schaal & Orkibi, 2020). In the study conducted by Önemli et al. (2015), they found that creative drama education was effective in the speaking and relationship-building skills of children with special needs. Taylor (2011) found that such children's self-worth, self-confidence, communication, problem-solving, and speaking skills improved with the creative drama program. These findings are in line with our study findings.

In addition to these results, according to the researcher's field notes presented in Table 8, when the characteristics of individuals with mental disabilities are taken into consideration, headings such as developmental characteristics, learning characteristics, motor-physical development, language development, and social development also gain importance. Although all of the participating students in the study were in the category of moderate mental disability, they may differ on some issues. It can be claimed that the reason for this was that although the participants were diagnosed with mental disability, they had fundamentally different developmental characteristics. Çelebi Şeker and Aytis (2023) stated that characteristics or abilities may differ or be superior to each other in individuals with mental disabilities. The researcher's notes obtained as a result of the observations made during the activities also confirm this finding.

As a result of the findings, the social skill behaviours that were found to differ between the pretest and post-test were revealed, alongside in behaviours that do not show differences. In the behaviours of "talking to friends, participating in discussions, defending the rights of friends" included under the peer-related skills theme, no difference was found between the pre-test and post-test in some participating students. The lack of speech skills that exists in some participants, and the fact that communication skills are already good in some participants can be said to be the reason for this. Önalın Akfırat (2006) emphasized that it is necessary to investigate whether the child has knowledge about behaviour and whether he has used this behaviour before in order to determine social skill deficiency. The size of the mentioned speech skill deficiency constitutes an obstacle to the acquisition of expected social skill behaviour within the scope and process of the planned creative drama activity. In the "following the rules" behaviour, which is included under the theme of self-control skills, the expected social skill behaviour could not be acquired as a result of the participant student having problems focusing and following directives. Therefore, a difference was not able to determine between the pretest and the post-test in this student. As the reason why no difference can be detected in the behaviour of "following the instructions" included under the theme of compliance skills; it is believed that the current situation of the participating students in this type of behaviour is already at a good level. Finally, it can be stated that the lack of speech skills that must be possessed is effective for the behaviour of "inviting friends to the game and making attempts to talk to others", which is included under the theme assertiveness skills. To put it briefly, it can be said that the absence of differences in some skills in the

findings related to the pre-test and post-test results is due to the fact that the participating students have different levels of mental disability.

Conclusion

As a result, the basis of the study was to reveal the existing deficiencies in terms of social skills in individuals with moderate intellectual disabilities and to develop social skills in this direction. In the scope of the study, it was determined that the social skill levels of the students with moderate intellectual disability before starting the creative drama activities were low. In spite of that, it was determined that the creative drama technique contributed positively to the development of social skills in students with moderate intellectual disability.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study.

- It is recommended that creative drama be included in the curriculum in order to increase the social skill levels of individuals with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities and to ensure their integration with society.
- Interdisciplinary collaborations, especially in educational institutions such as universities, are recommended to ensure the social development of mentally disabled students in accordance with special needs and taking into account their individual differences.
- After the creative drama activities, it is recommended that more comprehensive studies be carried out so that individuals can generalize the skills they have learned to different environments and make them permanent and to ensure the acquisition of especially social skills and competencies by these individuals.
- The number of research in which monitoring and generalization studies are carried out in the acquisition in the skills provided should be increased. It should be ensured that the development areas of mentally disabled individuals are supported by including the creative drama method.
- It should also be ensured that special education teachers are competent in the field of creative drama as well.
- Necessary social, academic, and political arrangements should be made to include creative drama in the education of mentally disabled individuals.
- This study was conducted with individuals with intellectual disabilities and within the scope of social skill acquisition. Creative drama applications, which are thought to support the development of other individuals with special needs, are also recommended to be used in different areas.
- With the provision of social skill development, it can be mentioned in the possibility that these individuals will be able to provide employment and exist in society in the future. Based on this, it is thought that there is a need for new areas of study that will make a positive difference in the lives of these individuals.
- It is proposed to use the method applied in the study in the teaching of behaviour and concepts of individuals with special needs.

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