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ARAŞTIRMA

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Professional Help-Seeking Attitudes of Counselors-In-Training*Psikolojik Danışma ve Rehberlik Öğrencilerinin Profesyonel Yardım Arama Tutumları***Kübra Civan** , **Özlem Haskan Avcı** **Authors Information****Kübra Civan**Teaching assistant, Ohio University,
Athens, USA, kc581719@ohio.edu**Özlem Haskan Avcı**Assistant Professor, Hacettepe
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haskan@hacettepe.edu.tr**ABSTRACT**

This research is a descriptive study examining university students' attitudes studying at the Psychological Counseling and Guidance (PCG) undergraduate program in Turkey. Research participants are 416 subjects (333 females, 83 males) from various universities. The Attitude Scale for Getting Psychological Help and Personal Information Form collected data. Multivariate analysis of variance, Scheffe Test for multiple comparisons, and t-test analysis for independent samples were used. As a result of the research, it was found that age, academic achievement level, class level, type and duration of psychological counseling assistance previously received, type of assistance received by participants' family members who had previously received psychological counseling help, and the environment that the participants and their families lived in had a significant impact. In addition, it was found that the participant's attitudes towards receiving help differ significantly according to the variables of gender, the state of having had psychological counseling practice, their willingness when choosing the department, the status of the department suitable for their personality, interests, and abilities, and satisfaction with the department.

Article Information**Keywords**Help-Seeking
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Psikolojik Danışma**Article History****Received:** 01/04/2021**Revision:** 13/08/2021**Accepted:** 06/12/2021**ÖZET**

Bu araştırma Psikolojik Danışma ve Rehberlik (PDR) lisans programında öğrenim gören üniversite öğrencilerinin yardım alma tutumlarının incelendiği betimsel bir araştırmadır. PDR lisans öğrencilerinin demografik özelliklerine göre yardım alma tutumu puan ortalamalarında manidar bir fark olup olmadığı bu araştırmanın problem durumunu oluşturmaktadır. Bu amaçla, üniversitelerin PDR lisans programlarında öğrenim gören 416 öğrenciden bilgi toplanmıştır. Kullanılan ölçme araçları, Psikolojik Yardım Almaya İlişkin Tutum Ölçeği (PYATÖ) ve Kişisel Bilgi Formudur. Araştırmada nicel verilerin çözümlenmesinde çok yönlü varyans analizi (ANOVA), çoklu karşılaştırmalar için scheffe testi ve bağımsız örneklemeler için t-testi analiz yöntemlerinden faydalanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda, katılımcıların yardım alma tutum puanı ortalamalarında, yaş, akademik başarı düzeyi, sınıf düzeyi, daha önce aldıkları psikolojik danışma yardımının türü ve süresi, daha önce ailelerinde psikolojik danışma yardımı almış bireylerin aldıkları yardımın türü, katılımcıların ve ailelerinin yaşadıkları yer değişkenlerine göre manidar bir fark olduğu bulunmuştur. Ayrıca yardım alma tutum puanı ortalamalarında, cinsiyet, daha önce psikolojik danışma yardımı almış olma durumu, bölümü seçerken kendi isteği ile gelme durumu, bölümü kendi kişilik, ilgi ve yeteneklerine uygun bulma durumu ve bölümden memnun olma durumu değişkenlerine göre manidar bir fark olduğu bulunmuştur.

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Ethical Statement: This research was completed in line with the Helsinki Declaration. In line with this, the study was permitted by the Ethics Commission of Hacettepe University.

INTRODUCTION

Psychological help-seeking behavior is a process that includes the characteristics of the recipient, the subject of the problem, the type of assistance, and the features of the person assisting (Türküm, 2001). The prevalence of mental health problems among university students and their help-seeking attitudes and behaviors have been the subject of many studies in recent years. Recent meta-analyses estimate a 34% prevalence for anxiety and 27% for depressive symptoms among college students worldwide (Quek, Tam, Tran, Zhang, Ho & Ho, 2019; Rotenstein, Ramos, Torre, Segal, Peluso, Guille, Sen, & Mata, 2016; Lei, Xiao, Liu, & Li, 2016). The prevalence of mental health problems among university students has increased exponentially over the past decade (Benton, Robertson, Tseng, Newton, & Benton, 2003; Duffy, Twenge, & Joiner, 2019). More than 90% of psychological counseling center administrators report a significant increase in university students with mental health problems in recent years (Gallagher, 2014; Cotter, Kaess, & Corcaran, 2015; Jackson, 2016). With most mental-health disorders emerging in late adolescence (Kessler, Berglund, Demler, Jin, Merikangas, & Walters, 2005), university students are an at-risk population potentially in need of mental health support. This population is characterized by critical, life-changing transitions (moving away from home, friends, and family) and new potential stressors (academic pressures and relational challenges).

Research indicates that many adolescents with mental health problems do not receive help (Cotter, Kaess, & Corcaran, 2015; Czyz Horwitz, Eisenberg, Kramer, & King, 2013; Eisenberg, Downs, Golberstein, & Zivin, 2009; Rothi & Leavey, 2006; Vogel, Wade, Wester, Larson, & Hackler, 2007; Yakunina, Rogers, Waehler, & Werth, 2010; Zwaanswijk, Verhaak, Bensing, & Verhulst, 2003). Much of the research reveals that students do not often prefer to employ psychological counseling services to solve the problems they come across. They may not receive professional help due to reasons such as getting support from family members and friends, long waiting lists at the university counseling center, economic concerns, fear of stigma, and not knowing where or how to obtain help (Boldero, & Fallon, 1995; Downs, & Eisenberg, 2012; Eisenberg, Golberstein, & Gollust, 2007; Oliver, Reed, Katz, & Haugh, 1999; Raviv, Sills, & Wilansky, 2000; Rickwood, Deane, Wilson, & Ciarrochi, 2005; Rudowicz, & Au, 2001). Mental health literacy refers to “knowledge and beliefs about mental disorders which aid their recognition, management or prevention” (Jorm et al., 1997, p 182). Poor mental-health literacy can be a barrier to mental-health help-seeking behavior.

According to Siebert and Siebert (2007), it is found that only experiencing depressive symptoms significantly increases the likelihood of help-seeking among helping professionals, while experiencing work-related problems such as burnout or having one’s practice impaired by personal issues does not increase the odds that practitioners seek help. In this research, Siebert and Siebert (2007) aim to understand whether the perspective of a professional identity influences help-seeking behaviors and consequently discover that having more years of practice experience does not affect these behaviors. Another study by Norman and Rosvall (1994) aims to understand Utah Therapists’ willingness to seek personal therapy by collecting self-report data. The participants are 421 therapists, and data is obtained from a mail survey. According to this research, the number of children, years in private practice, the number of client contact hours per week, gender, marital status, religion, profession, and practice site are significant in willingness to seek personal therapy.

Research demonstrates that mental-health practitioners have stigmatizing beliefs and stereotypes about mental illness (Horsfall, Cleary, & Hunt, 2010; Overton & Medina, 2008; Corrigan, 2004). One of the biggest problems facing those working in psychology is a biased, negative point of view about getting help, making it difficult for them to perform their profession. According to Hugo (2001), the general public has more optimistic expectations for individuals with mental illness than mental-health professionals do. Overton and Medina (2008) explained that “mental-health professionals’ attitudes toward someone with a mental illness can both perpetuate stigma and create new barriers to receiving treatment” (p. 86). This situation negatively affects the help-seeking behavior of the individual and reduces the effect of the support.

The Ministry of National Education is one of the largest employers in Turkey and covers many employment areas such as guidance research centers, courthouses, and preschools. The people employed within this ministry affect society’s perspective on mental health the most, and PCG undergraduate students are future employees. This line of reasoning leads us to select PCG undergraduate students as our sample. This research aims to discover the factors that prevent PCG undergraduate students from receiving psychological counseling help during the problems they encounter and subsequently uncover methods to eliminate these factors and increase the number of psychological help students receives.

In this study, while investigating the university students’ attitudes regarding seeking help, many different obstacles or supportive conditions are desired; therefore, a personal information form prepared by the researcher is used. In the literature review, although the demographic variables and the attitudes of getting help have been investigated many times, no other research has been found that combines the cultural, social, educational, and economic conditions of both the participant and their family; therefore, this research seeks to investigate whether the participants and the individuals in their immediate environment have had psychological help experiences and if so, the type and duration of this help. Another research question is the participants’ expectations in choosing a department that provides professional assistance and the level of satisfaction of being in this profession. As a part of the research that differs from other research in the literature, examining the attitudes of individuals in work giving psychological help to receive help constitutes the problematic situation of the study.

This study aims to examine the attitudes of counselors-in-training towards professional help-seeking. In this study, the researcher tests the following research questions:

(a) What are the attitudes of counselors-in-training towards psychological help-seeking and the effect of gender on these attitudes?; (b) Which of the following variables affect the attitudes of counselors-in-training towards psychological help-seeking behaviors: age, academic achievement level, number of siblings, economic income level, place of residence and geography of the participants and their families, intellectual satisfaction, personalities, interests, and abilities of counselors-in-training, professional counseling experiences, whether participants or their families received professional help before and these experiences’ durations and types, whether participants’ families took any courses related with the PCG program, and whether participants chose this major willingly?

METHOD

This research, which aims to address the students studying in the Psychological Counseling and Guidance (PCG) undergraduate program’s attitudes towards seeking professional help, is quantitative. The study

group consists of 416 students (333 women, 83 men) who studied in the PCG program in Dokuz Eylül and Hacettepe University during the academic year in which the research was conducted. The PCG program in Turkey has a more significant number of female students than male students, which accounts for the researchers not gathering more data from men for this research. The universe of the study's subjects is all PCG students in undergraduate programs in Turkey. The age of the participants ranges from 18 to 24 (Avg: 20.56).

Instruments

Demographic Questionnaire. The researcher developed this form. The form asks the participant's age, university, class level, psychological-counseling experience, family psychological-counseling experience, socioeconomic level, academic-achievement level, geographical location, and familial demographic information.

Attitude Scale for Getting Psychological Help-Short Form (ASGPH-SF). This form of the attitude scale for receiving psychological help was developed by Fischer and Farina (1995) and is abbreviated from the original 29-item scale (Attitudes Toward Seeking Psychological Professional Help Scale, Fischer & Turner, 1970). The short form consists of ten items. Fischer and Farina (1995) reported that the original and abbreviated scale relationship is 87%. The test-retest reliability of the scale with a one-month interval is 80%, and the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient is .84.

Adaptation of ASGPH-SF to Turkish. The scale is adapted to Turkish by Topkaya (2011). The scale consists of 10 items, but the analysis was conducted for the validity and reliability studies, item 4 was removed. The items of the scale are answered with a 4-point Likert type rating ranging from (4) strongly agree to (1) strongly disagree. Items 2, 8, 9, and 10 of the scale are reversed. The lowest score obtained from the scale is 9, and the highest score is 36. According to the Adapted scale by Topkaya (2011), the Cronbach Alpha coefficient calculated for the scale is .76. High scores from the scale reflect more positive attitudes towards seeking psychological help.

Procedures

Access and permission information. The data collection process is first administered to 416 participants, which includes students of Izmir Dokuz Eylül and Ankara Hacettepe University in the academic year of 2018-2019. The "Attitude Scale for Getting Psychological Assistance-Short Form (ASGPH-SF)" and "Demographic Questionnaire" are used by the researcher. Data are collected from counselors-in-training anonymously. Ethics committee permissions are obtained during the data collection process, and students' consents are also taken. Finally, the applied form's resulting data are transferred to the SPSS program.

Data Analysis

To test the assumptions made in the research, univariate normality controls are made, and the homogeneity assumption is tested. In this context, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk significance values are $p > .05$, the skewness and kurtosis values are between -1.5 and +1.5, and the usual distribution assumption of the analyzed histograms, QQ graphics, and PP graphics data set is provided. (Büyüköztürk, 2002; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In the analysis, the maximum value of Type I error

probability is accepted as .05 (i.e., $p < .05$). In terms of sensitivity to smaller error probabilities, $p < .01$ significance levels are also considered, and p values are specified as they are.

To determine whether PCG undergraduate program students' attitude scores are significantly different according to their demographic characteristics, an ANOVA is conducted through the SPSS 23.0 package program. The Scheffe test analysis method is used to determine the source of the differences. For the categorical variables consisting of two groups, an independent samples t-test is applied, and the mean scores of participants' attitudes towards help are compared.

Some limitations to this research do exist. The universe of the study is limited to students studying at İzmir Dokuz Eylül University and Hacettepe University's Psychological Counseling and Guidance undergraduate program. This confinement means that the research's findings cannot necessarily be generalized to all counselors in Turkey. Another limitation is that the results obtained from the study are restricted to the data obtained with the "Personal Information Form" prepared by the researcher and the "Attitude Scale for Getting Psychological Assistance-Short Form (PYAİTÖ-KF)." A variable outside the scope of the variables gathered by the questionnaires may affect the help-seeking behaviors of PCG Students.

RESULTS

To determine which demographic characteristic variables are affecting PCG undergraduate students' attitudes towards getting help, multi-dimensional analysis of variance (ANOVA) and independent samples t-test are used. The descriptive statistics of the PCG undergraduate students' attitudes towards help according to the demographic variables obtained as a result of data analysis are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Core Demographic Descriptive Statistics of PCG Undergraduate Program Students' Attitudes towards Getting Help According to Demographic Variables

Variables	n	\bar{x}	s
Gender			
Woman	333	27,420	3,035
Man	83	24,975	3,495
Age			
18-19	109	26,073	3,120
20-21	230	27,104	3,348
22 and Above	77	27,636	3,064
Prog. Year			
1 st	87	25,551	3,194
2 nd	152	26,809	3,197
3 rd	115	27,739	3,314
4 th	62	27,677	2,884
Grade Point Mean			
High	70	28,071	3,249
Medium	279	27,168	2,925
Low	67	24,761	3,750
Perceived Economic Income			
High	210	27,066	3,098
Enough	159	26,779	3,428
Poor	47	26,851	3,569
Number of Siblings			
Only child or one sibling	160	26,775	3,473

Two or three siblings	195	27,282	3,014
Above four	61	26,229	3,461
Living with family			
Yes	116	27,319	3,237
No	300	26,783	3,286
Living Condition			
Alone at house	71	25,915	3,540
Apartment with others	260	26,961	3,186
With family	85	27,694	3,139
Family Hometown			
Village	62	25,741	3,987
Town	146	26,561	2,917
City	208	27,548	3,160
Family Living Region			
Aegean	144	26,625	3,017
Central Anatolia	83	27,650	3,351
Marmara	65	27,415	3,249
Black Sea, East, and Southeast Anatolia	71	26,676	3,147
Mediterranean	53	26,396	3,859
Individuals with PCG Degree in the Family			
Yes	67	27,000	3,334
No	349	26,919	3,271
Selection of PCG Willingly			
Yes	359	27,080	3,196
No	57	26,000	3,640
Perception of suitability for the PCG			
Yes	372	27,209	3,167
No	44	24,590	3,294
Satisfaction from the PCG			
Yes	372	27,217	3,121
No	44	24,522	3,599
Internship Experience			
Yes	109	26,935	3,652
No	307	26,931	3,140
PCG Preference Order			
1-2 Preference	202	27,232	3,224
3-5 Preference	87	26,793	3,567
6 or more Preference	127	26,551	3,131

Note: n = 416

In Table 1, the grade point means are listed as high (3.50-4.00), medium (3.00-3.49), and low (below 3.00). Economic income level is based on the Turkish minimum wage with minimum wage represented as “enough” financial income. The PCG Preference Order refers to what order students preferred on their list of desired programs. Turkish students must take standardized college exams that determine their suitability for specific programs; the PCG program is one of the most competitive. Preferences that are higher indicate that a student prefers to go into the PCG program, whereas a lower choice demonstrates that a student chooses other programs over PCG.

Table 2. Help-Seeking Experience Descriptive Statistics of PCG Undergraduate Program Students' Attitudes towards Getting Help According to Demographic Variables

Variables	n	\bar{x}	s
Help Seeking Experience			
Yes	173	27,739	3,077
No	243	26,358	3,300
Help-Seeking Period			
1 Day-1 Month	77	27,142	3,227
More than 1 month-6 Month	98	28,132	2,986
None	241	26,377	3,280
Type of Professional Help			
One-time only (counseling)	84	27,642	2,884
More than 1, but unregular	28	27,440	2,996
Regular counseling or psychotherapy session	76	28,039	3,368
None	228	26,289	3,285
Help Seeking Experience in Family			
Yes	112	27,375	3,409
No	304	26,769	3,218
Help Seeking Period in Family			
1 Day-1 Month	42	26,881	3,093
More than 1 month-6 Month	71	27,338	3,883
None	303	26,844	3,149
Type of Professional Help in Family			
Medication only	44	28,090	2,947
Counseling	70	26,571	3,843
None	302	26,847	3,154

Note: n = 416

The results of the multi-variance analysis of variance (ANOVA) according to demographic variables related to the help-seeking attitudes of PCG students are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Multidimensional Variance Analysis (ANOVA) Results Regarding PCG Undergraduate Students' Help-Seeking Attitudes According to Demographic Variables

Variables	SS	Sd	F	η^2
Age	101,208	2	5,297*	,025
Class Level	282,482	3	9,263*	,063
GPA	360,369	2	18,860*	,085
Economic Income	12,868	2	,633	,003
Number of Siblings	32,540	2	1,703	,008
Living Condition	89,048	3	2,900*	,021
Family Hometown	142,724	2	7,157*	,034
Family Living Region	23,967	4	,601	,006
Help Seeking Period	211,051	2	10,344*	,048
Type of Prof. Help	172,151	3	5,755*	,041
Help Period in Family	2,957	2	,145	,001
Type of Help in Family	64,090	2	3,141*	,015
PCG Preference Order	6,131	2	,321	,002

When Table 3 is analyzed, it is seen that PCG undergraduate students' attitudes towards getting help differ significantly according to age, academic achievement level, the place where the family lives, the place where the participant lives, the class level of the participant, the type of help received, and the duration and type of help received by family members. However, it is seen that PCG undergraduate

students' attitudes towards getting help are not significantly different according to the number of siblings, economic status, order of preference PCG degree program, the region where the family lives, and the duration of assistance received by the family members.

In the research, whether PCG undergraduate students' attitudes towards help differ significantly according to age, the descriptive statistics obtained from the analyses are presented in Table 1. The multiple variance analysis (ANOVA) results are presented in Table 3. When the ANOVA results shown in Table 3 are analyzed, it is seen that the difference between the attitudes of getting help according to age groups is significant ($F = 5,297$; $p < .05$). The Scheffe test, one of the Post-Hoc tests, was used to determine the source of the difference. The results of the Scheffe test regarding the help-seeking attitudes of the PCG Undergraduate program students according to age are examined, and a significant difference is found between the ages of 18-19 and 22 and above. When the mean of the helpful attitude scores of the age groups, the attitudes of the individuals between 18-19 ($\bar{x} = 26.0734$) are significantly lower than those of the individuals aged 22 and over ($\bar{x} = 27,6364$); accordingly, it can be said that as the age increases, PCG undergraduate students' help-seeking attitudes increase.

For the class level, ANOVA results show that the difference between the attitudes of getting help by class level is significant ($F = 9,263$; $p < .05$). According to the Scheffe test, significant differences are found between the 1st and 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades. When the mean scores of the attitude levels of the class levels given in Table 1 are analyzed, it is stated that the scores of the individuals in the first class ($\bar{x} = 25,5517$) are the mean scores of the individuals in the 2nd class ($\bar{x} = 26,8092$). Their attitudes were significantly lower than the mean scores ($\bar{x} = 27.7391$) and the mean scores of individuals in the 4th grade ($\bar{x} = 27.6774$). Accordingly, it can be said that as the grade level increases, the scores of help-seeking attitudes increase.

For GPA, it is seen that the difference between their attitudes towards getting help according to their academic success is significant ($F = 18,860$; $p < .05$). ANOVA results show substantial differences between those with low academic achievement levels and individuals with medium and high achievement levels. According to the Scheffe test, the mean attitudes of individuals with low academic achievement ($\bar{x} = 24,7612$), and the mean attitudes of individuals with moderate academic achievement ($\bar{x} = 27,1685$) and it is observed that individuals with high academic achievement attitudes are significantly lower than their mean scores ($\bar{x} = 28,0714$). Accordingly, it can be said that as the academic achievement level increases, the attitude scores of getting help increase.

For the participants' living conditions, it is seen that the difference between the attitudes of the participants according to their place of residence is significant ($F = 2,900$; $p < .05$). According to the Scheffe test, significant differences were found between individuals living with their families and living at home alone. The individuals living alone at home with the family's help attitude score ($\bar{x} = 25.9155$) are significantly higher than the mean scores of the individuals living together with the family ($\bar{x} = 27,694$). Accordingly, it can be said that living with the family increases the scores of help-seeking attitudes.

For the participants' family hometown, it is seen that the difference between the attitudes of the participants towards their families according to their settlements is significant ($F = 7,157$; $p < .05$). The Scheffe test shows substantial differences between those whose families live in the province and those in the town and district. The individuals live in the family's area ($\bar{x} = 27,5481$), the mean scores of the

individuals residing in the city, and the family living in the county. It is seen that the attitudes of individuals to get help are significantly higher than the mean scores ($\bar{x} = 26.5616$). Accordingly, it can be said that as the size of the place of residence increases, the scores of attitudes of seeking help increase.

For the participants' help-seeking experience's duration, the ANOVA results show that the difference between the attitudes of the participants according to the participant's help-seeking experience's time is significant ($F = 10.344$; $p < .05$). The results of the Scheffe test regarding the students' attitudes according to the participant's help-seeking experience's duration indicate significant differences between the individuals who received assistance between 1 month and 6 months in the period of the aid they received before and those who did not receive psychological counseling help before. The attitudes of the individuals who received help between 1 month and 6 months ($\bar{x} = 28,1327$) and those who did not receive psychological counseling help before are significantly higher than their mean ($\bar{x} = 26.3776$). Accordingly, it can be said that as the participant's help-seeking experience's duration increases, their scores of help-seeking attitudes increase.

For the type of help that the participants received before, it is seen that the difference between the participants' attitudes according to the kind of aid they received is significant ($F = 5.755$; $p < .05$). Significant differences were found between individuals who received assistance in a single interview with a person, individuals who received psychological counseling or psychotherapy support for a regular period, and individuals who had not previously received psychological counseling assistance. The mean scores of the individuals who received help in a single interview with a person ($\bar{x} = 27,6429$) and those who received psychological counseling or psychotherapy support for a regular period ($\bar{x} = 28,0395$) have not received psychological counseling help before. It can be said that as the participants' psychological counseling help increases, their scores of psychological help-seeking attitudes increase.

For the type of help that the participants' families received before, it is seen that the difference between the attitudes of the participants according to the difference between the type of the participants' families received help has been significant ($F = 3.141$; $p < .05$). According to the Scheffe test, significant differences were found between individuals who received regular psychological counseling assistance with individuals who received medication only. When the mean scores of the attitudes of the type of assistance received by the participants were examined, individuals who received regular psychological counseling assistance mean scores ($\bar{x} = 26.5714$) were lower than individuals who received medication-only mean scores ($\bar{x} = 28,0909$).

Table 4. Independent t-Test Results Regarding PCG Undergraduate Students' Help-Seeking Attitudes According to Their Gender

	Gender	n	\bar{x}	Ss	Sd	t	P
Help-seeking attitudes	Female	333	27,4204	3,03	414	6,36	0,00
	Male	83	24,9759	3,49			

In the study, the Independent Samples T-Test results related to help-seeking attitudes of PCG students according to demographic variables are presented in Table 3. Help-taking attitudes are compared according to genders, and a statistically significant difference is found between the sexes of the students who received education in the PDR undergraduate program. ($t = 6.36$, $p < .01$). Female students' getting help scores ($\bar{x}=27,4204$) are higher than male students ($\bar{x}=24,9759$).

Table 5. Independent t-Test Results Regarding PCG Undergraduate Students' Help-Seeking Attitudes According to Their Help-Seeking Experiences, PCG students who have previously received psychological help ($\bar{x} = 27.73$) is higher than the mean of PCG students who have not previously received psychological help ($\bar{x} = 26.35$).

Help Seeking Experience		n	\bar{x}	Ss	Sd	t	p
Help seeking attitudes	Yes	173	27,73	3,07	414	4,32	0,00
	No	243	26,35	3,30			

Independent Samples T-Test results show a statistically significant difference between the students' attitudes toward help-seeking and having previously received psychological help ($t = 4.32, p < .01$).

Table 6. Independent t-Test Results Regarding PCG Undergraduate Students' Help-Seeking Attitudes According to Their Decision to Study PCG

Selection of PCG Voluntary		n	\bar{x}	Ss	Sd	t	p
Help-seeking attitudes	Yes	359	27,08	3,19	414	2,32	0,02
	No	57	26,00	3,64			

In this analysis, in which the scores of help-seeking attitudes were compared according to the volunteering status when choosing the PCG program, a statistically significant difference was found between the students who were willing to attend the PCG program and their attitudes toward attitudes of help-seeking ($t = 2.32, p < .05$). More generally, students who chose the PCG program willingly are more likely to get help than those who did not prefer the program.

Table 7. Independent t-Test Results Regarding PCG Undergraduate Students' Help-Seeking Attitudes According to Their Status of Finding Themselves Suitable for the PCG

Status of Finding Yourself Suitable for the PCG		n	\bar{x}	Ss	Sd	t	p
Help-seeking attitudes	Yes	372	27,20	3,16	414	5,16	0,00
	No	44	24,59	3,29			

Perception of suitability for the PCG, the mean of PCG students' help attitude scores who believes the PCG program appropriate for their personality, interests, and abilities ($\bar{x} = 27.20$) is higher than PCG students who did not think ($\bar{x} = 24.59$) the PCG program suitable for their personalities, interests, and abilities. A statistically significant difference was found between the help-seeking attitudes scores and PCG students who believe the PCG program is appropriate for their personality, interests, and abilities ($t = 5.16, p < .01$). Individuals who find the PCG program suitable for their personality, interests, and skills are more likely to receive help than individuals who do not see the PCG program as ideal for their characters, interests, and abilities.

Table 8. Independent t-Test Results Regarding PCG Undergraduate Students' Help-Seeking Attitudes According to Their Satisfaction from the PCG

Satisfaction from the PCG		n	\bar{x}	Ss	Sd	t	P
Help-seeking attitudes	Yes	372	27,21	3,12	414	5,32	0,00
	No	44	24,52	3,59			

It is seen that the mean of PCG undergraduate students' attitudes towards receiving help points ($\bar{x} = 27.21$) and the mean of PCG undergraduate students who are not satisfied with studying at the PCG program ($\bar{x} = 24.52$). A statistically significant difference is found between the attitudes towards getting help scores from being confident with looking in the PCG undergraduate program ($t = 5.32, p < .01$). More generally, students who are satisfied with studying in the PCG program are more likely to receive help than those who are not satisfied with studying in the PCG program.

There is no statistically significant difference between the students' attitudes who have or did not have internship experiences ($t = 0.01, p > .05$). There is no statistically significant difference between students' attitudes with and without the family members who have a counseling degree ($t = 0.18, p > .05$). There is no statistically significant difference between the students' attitudes whose families' professional help types ($t = 1.63, p > .05$).

DISCUSSION

When the findings are examined, it is seen that as the age and grade level of the counseling students increase, the mean of psychological help-seeking attitudes increases. In the literature, studies are showing that getting help rises with increasing age (Al-Krenawi, Graham, Dean, & Eltaiba, 2004; Deane & Chamberlain, 1994; Koydemir-Özden & Erel, 2010; Mackenzie, Gekoski ve Knox, 2006; Oliver, Pearson, Coe & Gunnell, 2005; Shea & Yeh, 2008; Topkaya, 2011; Wadman et al., 2018) as well as studies with different results (Deane & Chamberlain, 1994; Kaya, 2015). Similarly, studies are showing that as the class level increases, the attitude towards getting help increases (Koydemir-Özden & Erel, 2010; Yelpeze, 2016; Cankaya, 2008) and opposingly (Dilek, 2010; Akaydin, 2002; Cebi, 2009; Kırımlı, 2017).

It is observed that female students' attitudes towards getting help are higher than male students. There are studies showing consistency with this finding (Aydın, 2017; Cihangir Çankaya & Terzi, 2012; Dilek, 2010; Kalkan & Odacı, 2005; Mahmoud & Zawawi, 2011; Mackenzie, Gekoski ve Know, 2006; Nebizade, 2004; Oliver et al., 2005; Sahin & Yüksel Uyar, 2011; Topkaya, 2014; Topkaya, 2011; Topkaya & Meydan, 2013; Topkaya & Meydan, 2011; Türküm, 2005) and are not showing consistency (Haskan Avcı, Tuna, Büyükçolpan, Güngör & Yörükoğlu, 2019; Simşek, 2016; Zhang & Dixon, 2003; Arslantaş, 2005; Akaydin, 2002). Adolescent males have higher rates of mental health disorders but lower rates of mental health help-seeking when compared to adolescent females and other populations (Slade, Johnston, Oakley Browne, Andrews, & Whiteford, 2009). Adolescent males consistently demonstrate lower levels of mental health literacy when compared to adolescent females (Burns & Rapee, 2006; Cotton, Wright, Harris, Jorm, & McGorry, 2006).

There is evidence that, in adolescent male samples, mental health help-seeking is inhibited by greater alignment with norms of hegemonic masculinity and traditional masculinity and a socially constructed 'men don't seek help' gender stereotype (Pederson & Vogel, 2007; Seidler, Dawes, Rice, Oliffe, & Dhillon, 2016). Traditional masculinity comprises social norms that emphasize competition, strength, avoiding emotions and perceived femininity, and being action-orientated (Coleman, 2015). Several qualitative help-seeking investigations have identified social norms of traditional hegemonic masculinity as a barrier to male mental health help-seeking due to a fear of stigma (Gair & Camilleri, 2003; Gilchrist & Sullivan, 2006). A more significant percentage of adolescent males were able to identify depression symptoms in a female vignette than a male vignette (Burns & Rapee, 2006). However, the number of male students is

low in the sample and generally in the counseling programs in Turkey. Relatively more minor reporting of the problems of male students (Martin et al., 2013) and a lower likelihood of studies with no gender difference being published (Franco et al., 2014) may play a role in this situation.

It has been found that there is no significant difference between the economic income level of the participants and their attitudes towards getting help. Findings indicate that the higher the level of financial income, the higher the attitude to seek help (Parent, Hammer, Bradstreet, Schwartz & Jobe, 2016; Hammer, Vogel & Heimerdinger-Edwards, 2013; Arslantaş, Dereboy, Aştı & Pektekin, 2011; Kılınc & Granello, 2003) and some studies do not show such a relationship (Akaydin, 2002; Erkan, Cihangir-Çankaya, Özbay & Terzi, 2012; Eisenberg, Golberstein & Gollust, 2007; Dilek, 2010). Since university students can access free psychological help, their income level may not affect their attitude towards help.

It was observed that the higher the academic achievement level, the higher the scores for getting help. There are similar findings (Vogel & Wester, 2003; Vogel et al., 2005; Erkan et al., 2012; Tinsley, Brown, Aubin & Lucek, 1984; Kakhnovets, 2011; Meydan & Lüleci, 2013; Kenney, 1994; Atik & Yalcın, 2011; Türküm, 2005) and other findings (Yıldırım, Atlı & Çitil, 2014; Karaalp, 2009). In addition, students who found the counseling program suitable for their personality, interests, and abilities were found to have higher attitudes towards getting help than those who did not. Studies with similar findings state that the variables of grade level, age, academic achievement, and satisfaction with the field of education are interrelated (Bicil, 2012). Students who work in their preferred job may be more interested in counseling lessons and believe more in the power of giving help (Shea & Yeh, 2008), so this attitude towards seeking help can be more positive. Participants' satisfaction with their education may increase their sense of professional belonging (Shifron, 2010); Individuals with a high sense of belonging may be more willing to sit on the client's chair. In addition, as the age and grade levels of individuals increase, they start to take more lessons from the field. As the academic success of the students interested in the courses they take increases, their interest in the field courses increases (Shea & Yeh, 2008).

It was observed that the individuals who had previously received psychological help had higher scores than those who did not, and the scores increased as the duration of the help received advanced. Similar findings (Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010; Gulliver et al., 2010; Topkaya, 2011). The fact that individuals have benefited from their help may positively affect their help-seeking attitudes (Gomez, 2003). The desire to solve their problems in an environment where they feel understood based on mutual relations, instead of using only outpatient treatment or medication, may have affected their psychological help-seeking attitudes (Goodman, Sewell, & Jampol, 1984). At the same time, it can be thought that the attitude scores of individuals who have not received psychological counseling help before may be low (Downs, & Eisenberg, 2012; Yelpeze, 2016) due to reasons such as students not knowing from whom and how to get counseling help.

It was observed that the attitudes of seeking help are not different from individuals who had previously received psychological counseling in the participants' families. On the other hand, those who live with their families have higher attitudes towards getting help than those living alone. Similar findings (Rickwood, Deane, Wilson, & Ciarrocci, 2005; Topkaya & Meydan, 2013; Shea & Yeh, 2008; Vogel, Wade & Hackler, 2008) are encountered. Parents play a significant role in the help-seeking process as primary decision-makers and gatekeepers of service use (Rickwood et al., 2005; Zwaanswijk et al., 2003). In addition, the inability of participants who do not live with their parents to open up their problems due

to social stigma in a friend or dormitory environment (Shea & Yeh, 2008; Vogel, Wade, & Hackler, 2008) may have a role in low help-seeking attitudes.

Limitations and Recommendations

One of the limitations of this study is that a limited number of students could be reached. Only the effort to get a particular audience, such as counseling students, has a role. It was attempted to reduce this limitation by going to students from different universities and, therefore, from other regions. A total of 333 female and 83 male PCG undergraduate students participated in the study. When attention was paid to the research results, a significant difference was found between the attitudes of male and female students to get help. In future studies, the participants can be expanded to work with a sample that includes individuals such that male and female students are closer in number. Future studies can focus on a more diverse population based on gender, culture, religion, or race to make the research more inclusive.

The other end of this study is that the data are collected using self-report scales; therefore, the study results are subject to all the limitations of using self-report scales, such as midpoint responding and social desirability (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Although the researcher attempted to prevent some limitations related to self-report scales by allowing participants to answer the questionnaires anonymously and using scales that include negatively scored items (Podsakoff et al., 2003), future studies should employ different data collection methods complement and extend the current research. Also, a similar analysis can be made comparatively between other undergraduate programs and the PCG undergraduate program. Thus, more comprehensive data can be obtained by doing comparative research.

Looking at the research results, it has been seen that women's attitudes towards getting help are higher than men's, and men have difficulty getting help. Studies on these obstacles can be done, and efforts can be made to better benefit from community mental health services. In line with these findings, mental health professionals should identify the barriers to getting help, and projects related to these barriers should be produced. State policies should be determined to reduce the impact of gender roles on the behavior of seeking help. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth counseling has become common. Future work should investigate whether telehealth increases accessibility among students and any differences in impact between genders.

Attitudes begin to occur from a very young age. This research was conducted with university students; however, for individuals to have positive attitudes towards getting help, their experiences should be optimistic about getting help. It is believed that primary and secondary education curricula and projects carried out in schools should be arranged to break the gender stereotypes and increase getting help. Future studies should address effective help-seeking behaviors via curriculum. Even though most universities have counseling centers for students, students may not be aware of these opportunities and access them.

Individuals should have a positive attitude towards getting help first. This positive attitude can be obtained by proving the effectiveness of the psychological counseling services of universities. University staff should make statements to make students believe this requirement. It is essential to establish psychological counseling centers in each university and promote students receiving free help from these centers.

Future research should examine mental health care beliefs for immigrant students who may come to Turkey with different frames of reference regarding mental health. For future studies, additional variables such as access to mental-health resources, cost of mental health services, and trust in mental-health service providers could be examined to assess their relationship to people's attitudes towards help-seeking.

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Author Contributions

This study was conducted by all the authors working together and cooperatively. All of the authors substantially contributed to this work in each step of the study. This study is a part of KC's 2019 Master's dissertation at Hacettepe University, Psychological Counseling and Guidance. ÖHA is the advisor for this dissertation.

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It has been reported by the authors that there is no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Statement

This research was completed in line with the Helsinki Declaration. In line with this, the study was permitted by the Ethics Commission of Hacettepe University.

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