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## PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR AND 4<sup>TH</sup> YEAR NURSING STUDENTS

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**Introduction:** One of the objectives of nursing education is helping nursing students acquire the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to deal with various problems.

**Objectives:** The study is descriptive.

**Aims:** To determine the “problem solving skills” of the 1<sup>st</sup>-year and 4<sup>th</sup>-year students.

**Methods:** The study is a descriptive one. The study sample comprised a total of 153 students in their 1<sup>st</sup>-year and 4<sup>th</sup>-year in Department of Nursing, Cumhuriyet University, Turkey. The research data were collected by means of the “Personal Information Form” developed in light of the relevant literature review and the “Problem Solving Inventory” which was developed by Heppner and Peterson (1982) and tested in Turkey in 1990 by Taylan in terms of fist validity-reliability properties.

**Results:** Of the first year students, 84.9% lived in a nuclear family, 61.6% lived in a city, 39.5% were first-born children. Of the fourth year students, 81.0% lived in a nuclear family, 67.2% lived in a city, 37.3% were first-born children. All of the students financial needs were met by their parents. There was no difference between the total “problem solving confidence” scores of the first year students (85.942±16.649) and the fourth year students (81.866±19.168) ( $p>0.05$ ). According to the sub-scales of the inventory, the first year students received higher scores than the fourth year students in “problem solving confidence”, “approach-avoidance behavior” and “personal control” ( $p>0.05$ ).

**Conclusions:** The education received by the students did not make a difference in the development of their problem solving skills.