

Meryem Şeyda Özcan

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Education

2019 –
August 2025
(Expected)

Integrated Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology

Koç University, Istanbul, Türkiye

(100% English Instruction - QS Ranking: 431)

Ph.D. thesis topic: The role of technology on cognitive development

(Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yasemin Kisbu)

2012 – 2017

B.A in Psychology

Bilkent University, Ankara, Türkiye

(100% English Instruction - QS Ranking: 502)

Undergraduate thesis: Do educational apps enhance learning in cardinality and number magnitude comparison abilities?

(Advisor: Dr. Hande Ilgaz)

Positions and Affiliations

January 2024 –
Present

Visiting Scholar at Virginia Tech

Department of Human Development and Family Science

(Advisor: Dr. Koeun Choi)

February –
June 2022

Visiting Scholar at Georgia Southern University

National Science Foundation supported research (NSF #2027948): Project GAME: Developing and piloting a game design-based computer science curriculum

(Advisor: Prof. Dr. Mete Akcaoglu)

Teaching Experience

Spring 2023

Part-time Lecturer at Koç University

PSYC 206: Life Span Development (Fully English - Hybrid)

Summer 2022

Part-time Lecturer at Koç University

PSYC 206: Life Span Development (Fully English - Online)

2017 – 2024 Teaching Assistant at Koç University

- PSYC 206: Life Span Development
- PSYC 201: Scientific Methods in Behavioral and Social Sciences
- PSYC 301: Research Methods in Psychology
- PSYC 302: Psychological Testing and Measurement
- PSYC 501: Research Methods I (Graduate level)
- PSYC 502: Research Methods II (Graduate level)

Research Experience

- 2024 – Present **Lab Member at Cognitive Developmental Science (CoDeS) Lab, Virginia Tech** <http://kchoi.org/>
- 2017 – Present **Lab Member at Independent Evaluation Laboratory (IEL), Koç University** www.evalresearchlab.com
- 2015 – 2017 **Lab Member at Bilkent Development (Bil-Ge), Bilkent University** <http://web2.bilkent.edu.tr/bilge/>
- 2015 – 2016 **Child Development Lab, Middle East Technical University** <http://cdlab2.psy.metu.edu.tr>

Research Interests

- Media and child development
- Designing and using technology to support development and education
- Cognitive development
- Executive functions
- Programming education / Computational thinking

Statistical Analysis Programs

SPSS (advanced)
MPLUS (advanced)
R (intermediate)

Analysis Methods

Structural Equation Modelling
Latent Profile Analysis
Meta-analysis
Experimental data analysis
Qualitative data analysis
(content analysis, focus group)

Research Support

Current

- 2025-2026
- Supporting playful parent-child joint reading experiences through AI digital technology, Caplan Foundation for Early Childhood
- *Hired as a graduate research assistant*
 - Awarded: \$58,320
 - Koeun Choi (PI); Caroline Hornburg, Sang Won Lee (Co-PIs)
 - Reimagining early learning through AI-enhanced parent-child playful joint reading, Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology (ICAT) SEAD Mini-Grant
- *Hired as a graduate research assistant*
 - Awarded: \$6,000
 - Koeun Choi (PI); Caroline Hornburg, Sang Won Lee (Co-PIs)

Pending

- 2025-2027
- Understanding young children's attention and learning from online video platforms using EEG, National Institute of Health (R03)
- *Listed as the designated trainee*
 - Requested: \$150,803
 - Koeun Choi (PI); Martha Ann Bell, Sang Won Lee (Co-PIs)
 - Understanding learning from YouTube: Effects of video-switching and executive function on young children's attention and learning, Spencer Foundation
- *Listed as the designated trainee*
 - Will be requested \$50,000
 - Koeun Choi (PI); Sang Won Lee (Co-PI)

Awards, Funding, and Other Supports

- 2024
- Cognitive Development Society 2024 Diversity Travel Award (\$750)
 - TUBITAK 2214 - International PhD Research Scholarship (\$22,800)
- 2023
- TUBITAK 2250 - Performance-Based Scholarship for PhD Students (\$2400/yr; 2023-2024)
 - TUBITAK 2247 - National Outstanding Researchers Program Doctoral Bursary
 - Best Poster Award at the II. International Adolescence and Youth Research Congress
- 2020
- TUBITAK 1003 - Priority Areas R&D Projects Support Program Doctoral Bursary
- 2017
- Koç University Graduate School Scholarship
 - TUBITAK 2211 - National Ph.D. Student Scholarship
- 2016
- TUBITAK 2209 - Scholarship for Undergraduate Senior Thesis (\$300)
- 2012
- Bilkent University Comprehensive Scholarship: based on entrance exam score (\$14,500)

Publications

1. **Özcan, M. Ş.**, & Kisbu, Y. (2025). Exposure to interactive media, but at low levels, is associated with better executive functioning in children: A meta-analysis. *Media Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15213269.2025.2471583>
2. Oksuz, I., **Özcan, M. Ş.**, Dost-Gözkın, A., & Kisbu, Y. (2024). Health risk behaviors of adolescents in Europe: A latent profile analysis of HBSC data from 43 countries. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 76, 115-121. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2024.08.001>
3. **Özcan, M. Ş.**, Goksun, T., & Kisbu Sakarya, Y. (2024). The impact of learning to code on higher-order executive functions: A systematic review of the literature. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*. 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15391523.2024.2381231>
4. Kisbu, Y., **Özcan, M. Ş.**, Kuşcul, G. H., Bozok, M., Kaya, M., & Fişek, G. (2023). Fathering styles in a traditional culture and its association with marital relationship: A latent profile analysis with a nationally representative sample. *Family Process*, 00, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12948>
5. Akcaoglu, M., **Özcan, M. Ş.**, & Hodges, C. B. (2023). Exploring the relationship among motivational constructs and preservice teachers' use of computational thinking in classrooms. *Computers in the Schools*, 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07380569.2023.2172987>
6. Akcaoglu, M., **Ozcan, M. Ş.**, & Dogan, S. (2023). What keeps teachers engaged during professional development? The role of interest development. *Education Sciences*, 13, 188. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13020188>
7. **Özcan, M. Ş.**, Çetinkaya, E., Goksun, T., & Kisbu Sakarya, Y. (2021). Does learning to code influence cognitive skills of elementary school children? Findings from a randomized experiment. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 91, 1434-1455. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12429>

Manuscripts Under Review

1. **Özcan, M. Ş.**, Hong, Y., & Choi, K. (under review). Early media use predicts later executive function difficulties through problematic media use: a cross-lagged panel model in middle childhood with an early childhood media use predictor. *Computers in Human Behavior*.
2. **Özcan, M. Ş.**, & Akcaoglu, M. (under review). Development and validation of the multidimensional interest development survey (MIS): An interest survey measuring phases and components. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*.
3. Sabuncuoglu, A., **Özcan, M. Ş.**, Kisbu, Y., & Sezgin, M. (under review). Developing an open-source middle school programming environment and its curriculum for an affordable education. *ACM Transactions on Computing Education*.
4. Rajadhyaksha, U., Aycan, Z., Rantanen, J., Feldt, T., Cinli, D., **Özcan, M. Ş.**, & Baskurt, A. B. (under review). Work-family interface during COVID-19: Gender and gender role ideology perspectives. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*.

Manuscripts in Preparation

1. Beers, C., Yu, S., **Özcan, M. Ş.**, Smith, C. L., & Choi, K. (in preparation). Understanding media guilt among mothers of young children.
2. **Özcan, M. Ş.**, & Choi, K. (in preparation). The role of digital media on young children's executive functions: Testing potential moderating and mediating effects.
3. Gürdal, M.S., **Özcan, M. Ş. (co-first author)**, Smith, C., & Choi, K. Screen time and emotion regulation in young children: a meta-analytic review.

Conference Presentations

1. **Özcan, M. Ş.**, & Choi, K. (2025, May 1-3). *Exploring the role of child temperament, parenting stress, and parental disruptive phone use in preschoolers' problematic media use* [Poster presentation accepted]. The Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) Biennial Meeting, Minneapolis, MN.
2. **Özcan, M. Ş.**, & Akcaoglu, M. (2025, April 23-27). *Development and validation of the multidimensional interest survey (MIS)* [Paper presentation accepted]. American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting, Denver, CO.
3. **Özcan, M. Ş.**, & Kisbu, Y. (2024, March 21-23). *Exposure to interactive media, but at low levels, is associated with better executive functioning in children: A meta-analysis* [Poster presentation]. Cognitive Developmental Society (CDS) Biennial Conference, Pasadena, CA.
4. Oksuz, I., **Özcan, M. Ş.**, Sunmaz, N., & Kisbu, Y. (2023, September 6-8). *Health risk behaviors among European adolescents: A latent profile analysis* [Conference presentation abstract]. II. International Adolescence and Youth Research Congress, Kapadokya, Türkiye. https://www.egad2023.org/downloads/kongre_ozet_kitabi.pdf
5. Turunç, G., & **Özcan, M. Ş.** (2023, September 6-8). *Bullying and adolescent well-being: Insights from Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory* [Paper presentation abstract]. II. International Adolescence and Youth Research Congress, Kapadokya, Türkiye. https://www.egad2023.org/downloads/kongre_ozet_kitabi.pdf
6. **Özcan, M. Ş.**, Turunç, G., Çetinkaya, E., & Kisbu, Y. (2022, September 8-9). *Cognitive functions and academic skills in children living under conflict: Investigation of mediation mechanisms using UNICEF MICS Palestine data* [Poster presentation]. Third Development Symposium in Türkiye, Istanbul, Türkiye.
7. **Özcan, M. Ş.**, Çetinkaya, E., Goksun, T., & Kisbu Sakarya, Y. (2021, April 7-9). *Does learning to code improve cognitive skills of elementary school children?* [Poster presentation]. The Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting (SRCD), virtual.
8. **Zayim, M. Ş.**, & Kisbu-Sakarya, Y. (2019, March 21-23). *Fathering styles in Turkey: A latent profile analysis based on a representative sample* [Poster presentation]. The Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting (SRCD), Baltimore, MD.