Investigation of Secondary School Students' Reading Anxiety and Academic Self-Efficacy Beliefs in Terms of Various Variables

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Extended Summary

Introduction: Reading is an important skill both in academic life and in daily life of the individual. When this skill is gained accurately and effectively, the individuals who read fluently and correctly, understand what they read, learn from what they read and convey their thoughts by writing or verbally can be trained. Reading is considered to be particularly important among the four basic language skills, as it is regarded as the major means that help the individual acquire new knowledge and improve himself/herself. The individual is active both cognitively and affectively during the reading process. The reading anxiety felt by the individual during the reading activity occurs in the affective dimension of this process. The state of reading anxiety first appears spiritually, but physical symptoms can also be seen. It requires to take measures to encourage, motivate him/her and reduce the anxiety level in order to prevent the individual from worrying about the reading process. It is stated that using metacognitive strategies is an important factor to reduce the reading anxieties of students. In this case, it can be said that individuals having high self-efficacy can cope with reading anxiety more easily. The concept of self-efficacy is one of the main concepts that is at the core of the Social Learning Theory developed by Bandura for the first time and contains the perception of the individual's self-motivation. Self-efficacy is not a skill but rather a belief that the individual has the answer of the question "What can I do?" using the skills he has in some circumstances. It is also stated that it is easier for the individuals with high self-efficacy belief to cope with the problems.

It is thought that this study should be carried out to determine whether the secondary school students' reading anxiety and self-efficacy beliefs differ in terms of gender, grade level, maternal and paternal education status. It is also aimed to determine the correlation between students' reading anxiety and self-efficacy beliefs. For this purpose, the answers of the following questions will be sought.

   a) Are the reading anxiety of secondary school students significantly different according to sex, grade, mother and father education status?
   b) Are the self-efficacy beliefs of secondary school students significantly different according to sex, grade, mother and father education status?
   c) Is there a significant relationship between secondary school students' reading anxiety and self-efficacy beliefs?

Method: In the study, non-random sampling method was used. The study was conducted on 496 students, 241 females and 255 males in 11 different secondary schools from Sivas province centre. Two different scales were used in the study to determine the reading anxieties and self-efficacy beliefs of secondary school students. The "Reading Anxiety Scale " developed by Çeliktürk ve Yamaç (2015) were used to determine the student's reading anxiety levels. The reliability of the scale was determined as .92. The "Self-Efficacy Scale for children" adapted by Telef and Karaca (2012) developed by Muris (2001) was used in order to determine the self-efficacy beliefs of the students. The reliability of the scale was determined as .86. In the data analysis, arithmetic average, percentage, T-test, Anova, LSD and correlation analysis techniques were used.

Findings, Discussion and Recommendations: It was determined that the students' reading anxiety differed significantly according to class, father education status variables; the students' academic self-efficacy

differed significantly according to class, mother education status and father education status variables. According to the gender variable, ıt was determined that reading anxiety scores of middle school students did not show any significant difference. According to the grade variable, it was determined that there is a fundamental difference between "the 5th and 7th grades", between "the 5th and 8th grades", "the 6th and 7th grades" and between "the 7th and the 8th grades" in terms of reading anxiety. According to the educational status of the mother, ıt was determined that reading anxiety scores of middle school students did not show any significant difference. According to the educational status of the father, a significant difference was found out between the "primary school and the university" and significant difference seems to be more in favor of elementary school paternal education. According to the gender variable, ıt was determined that self-efficacy beliefs scores of middle school students did not show any significant difference. According to the grade variable, it was determined that there is a fundamental difference between "the 5th and 6th grades", between "the 5th and 7h grades", between "the 5th and 8h grades", between "the 6th and 8h grades" and between "the 7th and the 8th grades" in terms of self-efficacy beliefs. According to the educational status of the mother, there is an important difference between "primary school and high school", "secondary school and high school" in terms of self-efficacy beliefs. According to the educational status of the father, there is an important difference between "secondary school and high school", "secondary school and university" in terms of self-efficacy beliefs. According to the correlation results of students' self-efficacy and reading anxiety total scores were found out to be moderate (-.34).

The study can be conducted on different levels of schools. The relationship between reading anxiety and different high-level skills can be studied. The study can be conducted by using qualitative or mixed method to determine the reasons of reading anxiety. Teachers need to plan the activities related to reading skills better and evaluate the data related to the results accurately by using different evaluation techniques. For this purpose, it will be appropriate for teachers to be informed about what kind of tools and equipment will be used for reading. It is thought that it will be useful for students to be assigned at different social events so that they can improve their reading. It is considered that the studies should be conducted appropriately related to the effectiveness of the reading activities at school.