

Pre-service Preschool Teachers' Humor Style According to Statistical Classification of Region Units of Turkey

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Extended Summary

Purpose

Making use of positive and healthy humor styles at educational settings by the pre-school teachers help children retain the knowledge they learnt at school (Cornet, 1986 as cited in Torok et al., 2004), enhance their problem solving skills (Klavir & Gorodetsky, 2001), increase their learning pace, reduce their stress level, enhance their attentiveness (Goriham & Christophel, 1990) and all in all foster the whole development of the child. The findings show the importance of using positive and healthy humor styles at educational settings. However, it has already been accepted that there are differences in individuals' perception, interpretation and making use of humor, according to their experiences, culture, gender and age. Therefore, there arises a need for determining and developing the positive and healthy humor styles of preschool teachers in order to assist them before they finish university. For this reason, in this study it was aimed to investigate pre-service preschool teachers' humor styles according to some variables based on the information provided by Statistical Classification of Region Units of Turkey (SCRU).

Method

The population of the study included pre-service preschool teachers enrolled in one of the 44 universities in Turkey which offers a major degree in Early Childhood Education during the 2011-2012 academic year. 1144 pre-service preschool teachers in either their first year (n=681) or fourth year (n=433) at universities were selected through stratified sampling and included in the sample. As a data gathering tool, a demographical information questionnaire and Humor Styles Questionnaire which was developed by Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, and Weir (2003) and adapted

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to Turkish by Yerlikaya (2003) were used. The data then analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis H test with Bonferroni correction and Mann-Whitney U test.

Findings

As a result of analysis of pre-service teachers' humor styles according to the region where their universities were located, it was found out there was no significant difference between the region they study in and the subjects' affiliative and self-enhancing humor scores whereby a significant difference was apparent between the region and aggressive and self-defeating humor scores. According to the findings, in terms of gender, female pre-service preschool teachers' aggressive humor scores were significantly lower than those of males. On the other hand, no significant difference was observed between the humor styles mean scores and subjects' duration of study at university or their ages. Finally, the subjects who used to live in a city scored significantly higher on total humor styles in comparison with the ones who used to live in rural areas before starting their studies.

Discussion and Conclusion

Since aggressive humor style is positively correlated with stress (Durmuş & Tezer, 2001), social anxiety, depression (Tucker et al., 2013), loneliness (Çeçen, 2007; Zhao, Kong & Wang, 2012) and desperation (Şar & Sayar, 2012), it can justify the fact that the pre-service preschool teachers studying in overpopulated zones with lots of urban problems like Istanbul region is more likely to use aggressive behavior compared to the ones residing in Aegean, Mediterranean and East Black Sea Region. In addition the ones having self-defeating humor style are likely to escape from reality, feel an emotional need or have low self-esteem although they seem to be humorous. Moreover, the self-defeating humor style is positively correlated with stress (Durmuş & Tezer, 2001), social anxiety, depression (Tucker et al., 2013), loneliness (Çeçen, 2007; Zhao, Kong & Wang, 2012) and desperation (Şar & Sayar, 2012). Therefore self-defeating humor characteristics seen more in subjects residing in Aegean and Mediterranean region compared to the ones studying in West Anatolia, East Black Sea region and East Anatolia region can be explained in a way that Aegean and Mediterranean region has immigration problems which cause overpopulation with side effects such as stress, depression, burn out feeling and loneliness.

Inal Kızıltepe et al. (2012), Dyck and Holtzman reported that males are likely to use aggressive humor more compared to males. This finding is parallel with the results of this study.

Ilhan (2005), Avşar (2008), Sümer (2008) and Erözkan (2009) did not find any statistically significant difference between the humor styles and the pre-service teachers' duration of study. Similarly, Saltuk (2006) and Avşar (2008) did not report a statistically significant difference between students' ages and their humor styles. On the other hand, in Sayar's (2012) study no significant difference was reported be-

tween the humor styles and the region the subjects used to live before they start university. All these findings are in parallel with the ones derived from this study.

In the light of the findings of this study, some recommendations for future research can be made as follows: this study can be re-carried out by including data from East Marmara and West Black Sea regions after getting consent which the authors could not due to several reasons. The individual and psychological elements (stress, anxiety level, well-being, self-esteem, empathy, shyness, emotional IQ, etc.) which can affect pre-service preschool teachers' humor styles can be studied as a whole and the relationship between these elements and humor styles can be investigated in forthcoming research. Apart from these, in order to assist pre-service preschool teachers in using positive humor styles, more emphasis can be put in departmental courses in terms of fostering the students' humor skills.

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