

The Effect of Positive Teacher-Student Relationship on Physical Education Classes in Secondary School Students

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Abstract

The study aims at finding out the students' attitude towards physical education classes in secondary schools corresponding with the positive teacher-student relationships. As the sample survey, totally 326 students, 173 girls and 153 boys, who are eight graders from 6 public schools in Konya, Selçuklu during 2018-2019 academic year have taken a questionnaire with 100% face to face meeting method. As a result, it is understood that the student's relationship with their physical education teachers is generally positive. The analysis proved that positive teacher-student relationship enhances the students' positive attitude towards physical education classes. Moreover, when the teachers' gender is considered, it is determined that the students tend to have better relationship with female teachers rather than male teachers. On the other hand, It is decided that the gender and economical level of the students do not contribute to the statistical data.

Keywords: Teacher, student, positive relationship, physical education, attitude

Introduction

Learning is an active process that begins at birth and continues throughout life. Part of this process is informal while the other part of this process is formal. Informal learning begins with the communication and the relationship with parents and relatives of the individual. Then this goes on with the relationship and communication formed by the individual with his/her environment that the parents control and permit. Socializing more, the individual forms new interactions away from the parents control and the learning process continues with peers or other people met. The formal education starts when the individual is at the required age for formal education. From that time on the individual has to learn and obey the institutional rules everybody has to obey. This stage of life is compulsory for certain time and then formal education is optional. The institutions which provide this formal education is called schools.

In this formal education process teachers, who have the instructive and the most important role in schools, get involved. The notion of teacher stands for the protector, instructor, coordinator and rule maker. Teacher is the key factor for education in schools.

According to Myers (1994), the teacher has the vital role in the effective and efficient learning process being the coordinator and provider of the teacher-student, student-student communication which means full-scale masterminding the communication. The teacher is the sole provider of this kind of communication.

Pianta (1998) point out that the way the teacher interprets the bond between the student and teacher, the way the student perceives this bond contributes greatly to the way the student behaves and adapts. The student who has positive relationship with the teacher is academically more successful and can adapt more than others.

The teachers new to the occupation tend to be reluctant in providing one-to-one and explicit relationship with the students (Celep, Erdoğan 2002), however, "The teachers' direct relevancy to the teaching process and close relationship to the student form their major role in school and also shape the image of the institution" Lightfoot (1983). As a matter of fact, effective communication skills used in the class by the teacher contributes positively to the teacher-student relationships (Jones & Jones, 1998, 100-101). Fraser and Chiohn (2009) too points out that positive relationship in class is very important for permanent learning.

It is known that not only the teachers' but also the students' personality is very important to identify the relationship. What is more, the age, sex and whether the student is active and successful or not shape the teachers' attitude. Nevertheless, the crucial point in this relationship is that how the teacher influences the student and how the student is affected. This natural asymmetry among teacher-student relationships in terms of the quality of the relationship is mostly a burden on the teacher (Pianta, 1998).

The primary duty of the teacher training schools must be to educate teachers who are not only academically qualified but also pedagogically competent. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that even if the teachers have equal academic and pedagogic qualifications, their social lives, social environment, characters and how they are brought up also form how they shape their relationship with the students. Therefore, these differences are important factors in terms of teacher-student relationship.

The teachers' intellectual capacity, personal maturity and childhood here are the fundamental components for training a person. Teaching methods become meaningful only if it is combined with teachers' personal qualifications. The primary key to learning is the interest rather than the teachers' character and the relationship between teacher-student and student-student that the teacher formed. In other words, interest stems from social relations and

continues by means of social relations. Teachers' character stands at the center of these relationships (Özakpınar, Yılmaz 1988).

Önder, Külahoğlu (2000) states that the teachers' characters and attitudes towards students strongly related to the students' behaviors in class. No doubt that the behaviors of a sensitive and caring teacher and the behaviors of a strict and reserved teacher differ from each other and thus it is clear that negative attitudes will not form a positive reaction from the student; on the contrary the student is going to form more negative behaviors. It is of no importance which party, teacher or the student, started the quarrel in a class as both parties will inevitably be sad in the end (Smitt, Laslett, 1996, 67).

In this respect, according to Goh and Fraser (1998), teachers' relationship with the students and even the relationship among students will provide a better learning environment and thus better academic development. What is more, they take their claim one step further and state that positive relationships prevent possible negative behaviors.

The good relationship formed by the teacher with the student develops the students' feeling of trust and when the students feel confident mentally they tend to behave academically positive, they see themselves as the part of the school and become successful (Murray and Greenberg 2000), (Fraser and Chiohn 2009).

Teacher-student relationship is so important in education that (Pittman and Richmond, 2008), the target in education, enhancement of positive behavioral change in student, the acceptance of school rules and applications can be achieved through this relationship.

Teachers who are academically qualified, helpful, caring and have respectful and positive attitude towards students, are thought to support students' social and academic development, increase their sense of belonging and bring learning process to perfect; while the students who have bad relationship with their teacher are believed to have tendency to be less successful in their lessons (Baker 1998, Ma, 2003, Gordon 2010, Yaşartürk, 2019).

From this point forth, the teacher who can effectively apply constructive and positive way of communication, especially when the students are in the adolescence period which is defined as a period that the student has competitive, all-knowing and self-proving emotions and behaviors, get positive feedback from the student not only in education but also positive behavioral change. Therefore, the teacher is primarily responsible for the student to have a positive attitude towards the lessons and be active during classes.

Thus, one of the questions raised concerning whether the attitude of students towards the lessons are important for the fruitfulness or not. The answer to the question is hidden in the concept of attitude. Hence, the definition of attitude should be explained in detail.

The concept of attitude has many definitions; that is, area of social psychology is said to have been emerged from the curiosity and debates on this concept (Allen et al., 1980). While Franzoi (2003) defines attitude as “an individual's evaluation of a thing as positive or negative”, Krech and his friends (1980) define attitude as “an enduring organization of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive processes with respect to some aspect of the individual's world (Özgün vd., 2017).

When the definitions considered it is not a mistake to say that attitude appear in two dimension in the individual, that is, while one may stem from a bad situation, the other from a positive situation. Therefore, positive or negative attitude towards a situation may then be a reason for that situation to become positive or negative.

Students may form an attitude towards a lesson. However, this attitude is formed by the student a while after meeting with his/her teacher. Because individuals are not born with attitudes, they learn them after a while (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005).

Students may form a negative or positive attitude towards physical education lessons. If the attitude is positive, the lesson may reach its target and enable students to make physical activities a habit. If the attitude is negative, the student can't be happy during the lesson and this negatively affect the class and make the lesson less fruitful (Silverman and Scrabis, 2004).

Physical education lessons in schools are more bridgeable and require mental and physical relation more than the other theoretical lessons. Physical education lessons aim at educating an individual as contributor to development in psychomotor, cognitive and social areas, socially sensitive, can relate to peers and social environment, helpful, respectful to people and human rights, honest, physically and mentally healthy human beings by means of physical activities. The lesson is included in the syllabus of Turkish Republic Ministry of National Education in various grades with various hours and have theoretical and practical field of application. It has an important role in supporting the individual's social life and personality development.

Furthermore, it is stated in the second item of constitutive law of Ministry of National Education that “The main purpose of Turkish National Education is to raise science-loving, skilled, and ethical individuals who take an interest in culture and are willing to use present and future skills for the wellbeing of humanity” (meb.gov.tr). This statement shows how important physical education lessons are for the education system. The other feature of physical education lessons that differ from other lessons is that it not only focuses on the mental development of the individual but also focuses on physical development of the individual considering the improvement of muscle, bone and connective tissues and making physical activities become a habit for the individual.

Then it is important to provide students with understanding of the importance of physical education lessons. Generally, it is an advantage for the teacher that most of the students like physical education classes rather than the other lessons. The students are readily motivated as they like physical activities and games.

Sometimes the students can have a negative attitude towards physical education classes because of various reasons. One of these negativities is the lack of good relationship between the teacher and the student.

Hence, this study aims at searching the positive relationship of teacher and student in secondary schools and how this positive relationship effects their attitude towards the lesson as well as the dimension of the relationship between the student and the teacher. The result of survey targets to find out to what extent the student perceives positive relationship between the student and teacher and whether there is a correlation between physical education lesson attitudes or not. The study aims at answering the following questions:

RQ: What kind of correlation is there between the level of teacher-student relationship and the students' attitude towards physical education lessons?

H1: Positive teacher-student relationship effects the attitude towards the physical education lesson positively.

H2: The students' level of positive relationship with female teacher are higher than the male teachers.

H3: Female students' positive relationship with the physical education teachers are higher than the male students.

H:4 The higher the economical welfare of the student is, the better the positive relationship of the student is.

Method

As the study group, secondary school eighth graders are chosen as they are thought to put forth the results of the study best.

Universe and Sample

The study group are from 8th graders in district of Selcuklu in Konya, Turkey and are available samples. Samples are chosen according to the sampling method. 398 eighth grader students are chosen from the secondary schools in second term of 2018-2019 school year, a week after the high school competency exams. They are from six public schools in Selcuklu district. The study is implemented via personal information form and positive teacher-student relationship scale, secondary students' attitude towards physical education lessons scale which are prepared before and are applied using face to face interview technique.

Scales that are applied are carefully studied and the ones with missing information in personal information form, falsely completed personal information form, same options ticked systematically in the scale and the ones with unanswered questions more than acceptable level are not included in the evaluation process. As a result, 71 out of 398 students were left out of the evaluation and totally 326 students 173 of whom are girls and 153 of whom are boys are evaluated.

Data Collection Tool

The evaluation scale is formed of three sections first of which is personal information and demography form, second of which is the scale of 24 questions to determine the positive effect of teacher-student relationship in secondary school education and the third of which is the scale of the students' attitude towards the physical education classes in secondary schools. SPSS 23 statistical package program was used to analyze the data.

Positive Teacher-Student Relationship Scale

The scale has been developed by Celep and Erdoğan (2002) for 356 3rd grade high school students. One dimensional scale is formed of 24 positive statements. The items are formed with 5 choice Likert Scale which are affirmative statements. Items are scored as (1) Never, (2) Rarely, (3) Sometimes, (4) Often (5) Always. The reliability of the scale (Crombach's Alpha) 0,90. The reliability of scale in this study is calculated as (Crombach's Alpha) 0,92.

Physical Education Attitude Scale in Secondary School Students

The scale has been developed by Güllü and Güçlü (2009) on 600 secondary school students. One-dimension secondary school students' attitude scale has 35 items that are formed as negative 11 items and 24 positive items. The reliability of the scale is (Crombach's Alpha) 0,94. The reliability of the scale in this study is calculated as (Crombach's Alpha) 0,86.

Findings

“Positive Teacher-Student Relationship Scale” is recalculated and divided into three equal categories in order to categorize secondary students' level of positive relationships with their teachers. Table 1 shows the level of students' positive relationship.

Table 1. Level of Students' Positive Relationship

	F	%
Low	4	1,2
Moderate	101	31
High	221	67,8
Total	326	100

As seen in Table 1, students' level of positive relationship with their teachers is high.

There is positive and moderate relationship between positive teacher-student relationship and physical education class attitude levels ($r=,515$, $p<.01$). According to the aforementioned relationship, the higher the positive relationship of teacher-student is, the better level of physical education class attitude of the student is.

Table 2 shows Linear Regression analysis results to determine effect of positive teacher-student relationship on students' attitude towards physical education classes

Table 2. Effect of Positive Teacher-Student Relationship on Students' Attitude Towards physical education

	B	SH	β	t	p
Stable	1,877	,138		13,648	,000
Positive Relationship	,400	,037	,515	10,825	,000

$R=0,515$ $R^2=0,27$ $p=0,000$ $F(1,324)=117,191$

According to the regression analysis results shown in Table 2, there is high and meaningful relationship between the students' attitude towards physical education classes and positive teacher-student relationship ($R=0,515$ $R^2=0,27$ $p<0,001$). Positive teacher-student relationship level variance of students' attitude towards physical education classes explains approximately 27 percent. These results verify the first hypothesis

Table 3 shows the results of Independent Two Sample t-Test implemented to verify the second hypothesis of the study that is; female teachers' positive relationship level with the students is higher than the male teachers.

Table 3. Teachers' Positive Relationship Level and The Teachers' Gender

	N	\bar{X}	SS	t	p
Gender of Female	50	3,87	,562		
the Male	276	3,61	,748	2,840	,006
Teacher					

According to the analysis results shown on Table 3, the proximity of female teachers' positive relationship level with the students ($\bar{X}=3,87$) is higher than the proximity of male teachers' positive relationship level ($\bar{X}=3,61$) with the students. These results verify the second hypothesis.

Table 4 Shows the results of Independent Two Sample t-Test implemented to verify The Students' Gender and Level of Positive Teacher Student Relationship

Table 4. The Students' Gender and Level of Positive Teacher Student Relationship

		N	\bar{X}	SS	t	p
Students' Gender	Girl	173	3,71	,080	1,569	,006
	Boy	153	3,58	,081		

As seen in Table 4, the students' gender and the level of positive teacher-student relationship level doesn't have meaningful relation. That is to say, each sex, boy or girl, may have high or low positive relationship with the teacher. According to this, the third hypothesis, level of girls' positive teacher-student relationship is higher than that of the boys', isn't verified.

The fourth hypothesis, the higher the economical welfare of the student is, the better the positive relationship of the student is, is tested via One Dimension Variance Analysis (ANOVA). The results are shown on Table 5.

Table 5. Economical Welfare and Level of Positive Teacher-Student Relationship

		N	\bar{X}	S	F	p
Level of Relationship	Very Good	26	3,71	1,07	,995	,411
	Good	123	3,65	,65		
	Moderate	169	3,62	,71		
	Bad	7	4,16	,67		
	Very Bad	1	3,41			

Level of Relationship As seen in Table 5, Economical Welfare of the students and Level of Positive Teacher-Student Relationship level doesn't have meaningful relation. According to this, economical welfare is not a determinant for the level of positive teacher-student relationship.

Discussion

The analysis show that there is a direct proportion between the positive teacher-student relationship and the students' attitude towards physical education classes. When the literature is reviewed, many cases that support the meaningful correlation between the positive teacher-student relationship and the students' attitude towards physical education classes attract the attention (Celep ve Erdoğan 2002, Günay 2003, Durmaz 2007, İpek ve Terzi 2010, Fan 2012, Maulana et al., 2012).

Students may have positive or negative attitudes towards physical education classes. If the students' attitude is positive, it is easier for the teacher to reach the general and special target for the lesson and apply the required activities productively or it may even support student to participate in physical activities voluntarily (Silverman & Scrabis, 2004). Beytekin and Yalçınkaya (2014) also state in their study that efficient communication in teaching-learning environment provides more successful learning period. All of the aforementioned study results support the results of this study.

In the research, the analysis concerning the gender of teachers and positive teacher-student relationship, female teachers are determined to be more successful. When the literature is reviewed, other studies concerning the subject supports the data of this study (Öner 1999, Erdoğan 2001, Bulut 2004, Bedur 2007). Nonetheless, the gender and the economic welfare

of the students don't have a meaningful correlation when the positive teacher-student relationship is concerned.

Result

In order to define the level of positive teacher-student relationships of secondary school students with their physical education teacher and then to determine the effects of positive relation on the students attitudes towards the physical education lesson, a survey was conducted on 326 eighth grader students chosen from the secondary school from six public school in Konya, Selçuklu district.

According to the survey results, students have high level of positive teacher-student relationships with their physical education teachers and this provides a positive attitude towards the physical education classes as shown in statistical analysis.

It is thought that the physical education classes in curriculum is liked more by the students rather than the other lessons because of the structure of the lesson which enables students to express themselves easier, makes easier for the student to realize themselves and entertaining due to the fact that the lesson involves games that they may like. Furthermore, the physical education classes do not have a limited learning environment such as classes. On the contrary, the lessons are outdoors or in gym and the materials of the lesson, such as football, volleyball and basketball etc., may be the things that many children would like to have. Being able to use these materials enable the students to be motivated. Because being late to the class means using these materials less and this provides positive reinforcement for the student. Therefore, the relationship of the physical education class teachers and the students' relationship level is high due to the students' will of making the teacher happy and becoming active as soon as possible.

Furthermore, some drawbacks of theoretical lessons some students have the anxiety of being active in class due to some various reasons such as lack of review, being back from other students. These students tend to have fear of being humiliated by the peers or the teacher. Therefore, these students think that physical education class offers equality of opportunities and that they can have right to speak up. Thus, it is clear that the students have positive attitude towards physical education classes.

In this research, it is clearly determined that female teachers' positive relationship level with the students is higher than the male teachers.

The reason for the female teachers' high positive relationship with the student may be various. Women tend to be more calm and compassionate and also being a mother, women tend to embrace the students with the sense of motherhood. These and some other reasons may be the subject to other surveys. However, the students subject of this study state that female teachers use more of an emotional way of addressing the students such as calling them honey, dear, honeybun, sweetheart and also the female teachers tend to be more physical with the students such as rewarding the students with a pinch or kiss on the cheek. These behaviors are not considered to be awkward when it comes from a female teacher. Thus, these positive way of communication is more advantageous for female teachers. Furthermore, when the present conditions considered, male teachers' such contact to the children of this age might be considered bizarre and it may even further cause the male teacher to be charged with immoral accusations even if they do not deserve. The subjects also added that there are many examples of these lawsuits. In order to protect themselves from these kinds of lawsuits male teachers tend to be more reserved towards the students regardless of their gender. Therefore,

the male teachers seem to have less positive teacher-student relationship compared to female teachers.

Nonetheless, when this comparison is done among boys and girls, both gender seems to have no big difference statistically. In consequence of the mentioned result, boys and girls have the equal opportunity in terms of building positive relationship with their teachers.

The analysis concerning positive teacher-student relationship and economical wealth of the students shows that there is no correlation between the two variables. It wouldn't be wrong to say that there is no relationship between positive teacher-student relationship and economical wealth of the students.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have not declared any conflicts of interest.

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