



Investigation of Undergraduate Student's Self-Esteem Levels in Terms of Some Variables

Üniversite Öğrencilerin Öz Saygı Düzeylerinin Bazı Değişkenlere Göre İncelenmesi

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ABSTRACT: In this research, it has been examined that whether the self-esteem degree of university students differ according to some variables. Self-Esteem Scale has been used as data collection tool. Data was obtained from 6443 subjects. Result of the analysis made, self-esteem degree has been found high in favor of female students in terms of gender, and in favor of evening program students in terms of education type. In the comparison of age levels, significant differences were found in favor of older students..

Key Words: Self-esteem, self-esteem degree, university students.

ÖZET: Bu araştırmada üniversite öğrencilerinin öz saygı düzeylerinin onların cinsiyet, öğretim türü, yaş ve fakülte türlerine göre farklılık gösterip göstermediği eğitim yönetimi açısından incelenmiştir. Veri toplama aracı olarak Kendine Saygı Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Üniversitede öğrenim gören 6443 öğrenciden veri elde edilmiştir. Yapılan analizler sonucunda cinsiyet bakımından kadın öğrenciler lehine, öğretim türü bakımından II. öğretim öğrencileri lehine öz saygı düzeyi yüksek bulunmuştur. Yaş düzeylerinin karşılaştırılmasında yüksek yaş grubuna mensup öğrenciler lehine anlamlı farklılık bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Öz saygı, öz saygı düzeyi, üniversite öğrencileri.

1. INTRODUCTION

Self-esteem is a concept about the individual's perception regarding him/her. The appreciation level of the individual he reaches as a result of evaluating himself in such matters like his clothing in daily life, his thoughts, his interests, his speaking style, his relations with different people infer self-esteem. On the other hand, self-esteem and narcissism are different concepts. Narcissism is the admiration and adherence which the individual feels for his own bodily and inward ego. It has been seen that individuals having narcissism behave more aggressively than other individuals when they are made feel ashamed (Papps & O'Carroll 1998; Thomaes & Bushman, 2008). Also, the individuals admiring themselves devilishly and having narcissism have a tendency for force and dissonance (Bushman & Baumeister 1998; Bushman et al 2009; Locke 2009; Martinez, Zeichner, Reidy & Miller 2008; Salmivalli 2001).

School does something to individuals themselves as much as it does to people (Aydın, 2000). Individual's perception style his self-esteem may be positive or negative. According to Bogenç (2005), self-esteem is a self defining system composed of estimations which the individual gains about his features by looking at himself as an object. Individuals' estimations about themselves may be evaluated on a straight line going from exiguous to hyper (Bandura 1986; Bogenç 2005). Çevik (2007) has evaluated self-esteem in four dimensions and examined it respectively as general self-esteem, social self-esteem, family self-esteem and academic self-esteem.

Individual's ego emotions concerning himself he/she has produced since childhood are examined as 'general self-esteem', his/her evaluating himself/herself in friend groups in social

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environments as ‘social self-esteem’, his/her thoughts and feelings he/she has produced by being a member of family as ‘family self-esteem’ and his/her perception concerning his/her successes by being a student in educational environments as ‘academic self-esteem’.

That individual gets positive feedbacks about himself/herself and that (s) he is approved in group and society cause him/her to consider himself/herself as a valuable creature and consequently his/her respect concerning himself/herself to increase. Otherwise, it causes his/her respect concerning him/her to decrease. Elements affecting individual’s self-esteem positively or negatively are variable diversities and they may occur in different ways on each individual. Self-esteem is a learned experience and a process continuing during life. The structure of the family individual comes from, socio-economical level, parents, many variable elements about the culture and education taken may be effective on developing of self-esteem. For instance, some university students who haven’t got enough economical support work in part-time jobs. Education administration and other lower units of university should take this situation into consideration because it has been seen that there is a decrease in working students’ self-esteem depending upon increase in their working time/day (Razı, Kuzu, Yıldız, Ocakcı & Arifoğlu 2009).

Student’s self-esteem and academic successes are important matters involving education administration area. It is seen that there are many researches done when literature concerning self-esteem is examined (Seferoglu 2007). There are research findings showing there is a positive relation between individual’s self-esteem level and his academic success (Arseven 1979; Baymur 1990; Chiohn & Fraser 2009; Erdinç 1995; Güngör 1989; Morgan 1991). Okada (2009) examining about 20 essays concerning self-esteem has reached at the conclusion that there is a negative relation between self-esteem stability and self-esteem instability.

Bogenç & Kuzgun (1994) point out self-esteem is related to individual’s requirements, his knowing himself, his thinking of others’ honour, his developing himself and his considering himself valuable. As Barker (2009) points out, even social network sites used on internet on our day are effective on self-esteem.

Events of force using seen at schools in last 10 years have become one of the main matters which need to be stressed and concern also education managers. Fewness of self-esteem individual feels for himself may cause him to use force and to have anti-social behaviours (Ostrowsk 2010). Insufficiency emotion formed as a result of self-esteem together with individual’s self-saving and defending attitude turns into aggressiveness against other people (Lochman & Dodge 1994; Ostrowsk 2010; Trzesniewki & others 2006; Walker & Bright 2009). It has been found out that, that there are positive relations between self-esteem of young adolescents and individual’s general self image also makes individual set up a romantic communication with a partner and makes him be sincere (Dong, Ursta & Gundrum 2008). University administration should observe students’ individual progresses and register background concerning students, because positive or negative memories of individuals concerning their past also influence their success level. Positive remembrances affect success positively; negative remembrances affect success negatively (Ivcevic at al. 2008). The individual with high self; esteem, trusts in himself/herself, sets up effective communication and develops sound relations and (s) he is socially harmonious.

School administration’s duty is to lead the Organization suitably for its aims (Bursalioglu, 2000). The thought of society to live in peace and individual’s getting rid of bad customs are among the aims of educational organizations. The relations between self-esteem level of students and attitudes towards peace have been made the research subject. In this matter, Eryılmaz (2009) has reached at the conclusion that there is a positive relation at medium level between individual’s self-esteem and his attitudes towards peace. Self-esteem is also related to some individual bad customs. For instance, Çalyurt, Molla, Vardar and Abay (2005) have found out that cigarette and alcohol consumption is in relation with self-esteem and they affect each other

mutually. Being prevented from probable force events occurred between students and being saved of them against force are found in duty and responsibility of field of education administration. Because negative situations students come face to face at school and their experiencing force also affect their self-esteem level. In this matter; Fong, Vogel and Vogel (2008) and Coşkun (2009) point out that students expressing that they are exposed to force by teachers or other personnel at school have lower self-esteem compared with others. Also, students' bodily and physically appearances affect their self-esteem level. In this matter, Yelsma and Yelsma (1998) have found out that there are negatively significant relations between self-esteem and bodily and physical appearance.

That students get the member of a group is a situation disturbing school managers. Education managers should be able to see group membership as a dynamic power which is able to be benefited in the direction of profits and aims of the Educational Organization. That there is differentiation between groups is about categorized behaviour at social level (Long & Spears 1998). Self-esteem is in relation with the structure of group or organization. Group or organization membership is an important factor affecting individual's self-esteem level. That individual enhances himself with the relations between individuals, between groups and in group, can also make a contribution to development of self-esteem level. According to Long & Spears (1998), high collective self-esteem increases positive feedback on social identity of individual and decreases negative feedback. Generally, that self-esteem is saved and maintained and it is one of the most known incentives for behaviour. This incentive is seen as the centre of self-expressing suggested by social personality theory.

2. THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

Students studying at university area are naturally in interaction with school and friend groups and environmental pressure groups having different features. A student who comes to university area by developing value and behaviour models peculiar to himself comes together with students having different values, beliefs and opinions. Students' judgements may change during higher education. The effort of having an autonomous and independent personality and developing a self-peculiar value system gains importance in this period. Depending upon this, there may be changes also in self-esteem levels of students during university education. University and some personal features possessed may affect individual's self-esteem level. There may occur differentiations in self-esteem level as a result of these variables. It is thought that examining and researching variables affecting self-esteem level in terms of education administration would make a contribution to theory and application. Therefore, those self-esteem behaviour levels of students studying at university are examined in terms of some variables and education administration has been considered necessary and important. In this research, it has been searched that whether self-esteem behaviour levels of university students differ according to their genders, education types and ages or not.

3. METHOD

This research is a descriptive survey. Self-esteem level of students studying under the responsibility of university administration which is a lower system of education administration has been examined as dependent variables whereas gender, age and education type which are considered to have effect on self-esteem level have been examined as independent variables.

3.1. Population and Sampling

57340 students studying at 11 Faculties, 6 Vocational Colleges with a 4-year program, 19 Vocational high schools with a 2-year program and 3 MA and PhD Program Institutes of Kocaeli University in 2009-2010 education year make up the universe of the research. Representational rate of the research population is about 11%. Distribution rates of 6443 samples according to schools are as follows; Faculty of Education; 4,3%, Faculty of Medicine; 2%, Faculty of Science and Literature; 7,4%, Faculty of Technical Education; 6,1%, Faculty of Management; 12,2%, Faculty of Arts; 1,4%, Faculty of Law; 7%, Faculty of Architecture and Design; 0,8%, Faculty of Communication; 4,9%, Vocational Colleges; 8,2%, Faculty of Engineering; 22,4%, Vocational High Schools; 29,6%, Institute of Social Sciences; 0,7%, Institute of Sciences and Technology; 0,6%, and Institute of Medicine; 0,2%. 3714 of the 6443 samples were students of the day program, while 2729 of them are students of evening program. In every group of samples, there were students both from day and evening programs.

The sampling of the research includes 6443 students. Simple random sampling method has been used to choose the samples. In this method, probability of all subjects to be chosen is at the same level. The choice of one subject doesn't affect the choice of other subjects (Balci 2001; Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel 2008).

3.2. Data Collection Instruments

“Self-Esteem Scale” (SES) developed by Bogenç (2005) has been used as data collection means (Kuzgun & Bacanlı 2005). In the scale formed of Likert-type 20 statement points, the subjects have been given those to be graded respectively: ‘never’, ‘rarely’, ‘occasionally’, ‘frequently’ and ‘always’. SES was projected in such a style that it could be sent to experts through the ASP programming language, and also to students via the web of Kocaeli University. Its style also made it possible for the researchers to download it to their computers through their personal code and in Excel format. After the questions were harmonized, the questionnaire was applied.

3.3. Validity and Reliability

Bogenç (2005) has done the study about validity and reliability of scale and taken advantage of the evaluations of master group concerning validity. Scale is one-factored; factor's load values have been found out over .30 and total variance explained % 36, 3. Scale's Cronbach' Alpha coefficient concerning interior coherence has been realised at such a high level like alpha = .81 (Bogenç 2005). The researcher has increased its validity and reliability also by making a pre-application with the scale on 108 subjects. It is seen that factor's load values of all 20 articles found in the scale are between .50 and .70, article-total correlations between .40 and .73 and explained variance %36, 69. Scale's Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient is .91. Spearman-Brown has found out that two-half test reliability is .78 for the first part and .85 for the second one. These results have resemblance to the results of Bogenç (2005). These analysis done show that scale supplies the validity and reliability condition.

3.4. Analysis of the Data

While data are evaluated, ‘never’ has been calculated by being given 1 point, ‘rarely’ 2 points, ‘occasionally’ 3 points, ‘frequently’ 4 points and ‘always’ 5 points. As 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th and 12th statement in scale are expressed negatively, ‘never’ has been calculated by being given 5 points, ‘rarely’ 4 points, ‘occasionally’ 3 points, ‘frequently’ 2 points and ‘always’ 1 point. Then, point averages of groups forming independent variables have been compared with each other. Groups have been subjected to t-test for gender and education type in which they are binary; and F-test for age forming more than two groups (Green, Salkind & Akay 2000). In the condition that there was found significant differentiation as a result of F-test, LSD test was applied in ,95

confidence interval. While qualifying the points obtained in scale, 0, 8 intervals have been used as coefficient. According to this, self-esteem level intervals have been defined as 20,00-35,99 'very few'; 36,00-51,99 'few'; 52,00-67,99 'medium'; 68,00-83,99 'high' and 84,00-100,00 'very high'.

4. RESULTS

T-test was applied about the difference between the point averages of students concerning their self-esteem levels in terms of sex variable.

Table 1: The Results of the T-Test on the Students' Levels of Self-Respect Behaviour According to the Gender

Sex	N	\bar{x}	SD	Level of importance t	P
Female	2348	81,45	9,84	2,07	.03*
Male	4095	80,92	10,05		

*p<.05; **p<.01; df =6441

When data in Table 1 were examined, self-esteem level of female students has been found out as (\bar{x} =81, 45) and of male students as (\bar{x} =80, 92). Although both of two groups' self-esteem level has been found 'high', significant differentiation has been found at p<.05 level in favour of female students in the comparison of their point averages (p=.03). According to this, female students' self-esteem levels are at higher level than those of male students.

T-test was applied about the difference between the point averages of students concerning their self-esteem levels in terms of education type.

Table 2: The Results of the T-Test on the Students' Levels of Self-Respect Behaviour According to the Education Type.

Education Type	N	\bar{x}	Sd	Level of importance t	P
Day Program	3714	80,82	10,11	2,77	.00**
Evening Program	2729	81,52	7,78		

*p<.05; **p<.01; df =6441

When Table 2 was examined, self-esteem level of students studying at 1.education has been found as (\bar{x} =80, 82) and of students studying at the evening program as (\bar{x} =81, 52). Self-esteem level of both of two groups has been found 'high' but in the comparison of point averages of two groups, significant differentiation has been found out at p<.05 level (p=.00) in favour of the evening program. This finding shows that self-esteem levels of students studying at the evening program are higher than ones studying at day classes.

Averages of students' self-esteem level points in terms of age groups have been respectively as: 17-19 age group \bar{x} =80,94; 20-22 age group \bar{x} =80,88 and 23 and above age group \bar{x} =81,11. Self-esteem level of each of 3 age groups has been found 'high'. One-directed variance analysis (ANOVA) has been applied in order to find out whether average self-esteem level points of students differ according to age groups or not.

Table 3 : The Results of The LSD Test Done Between the Average Values of The Students' Self-Respect Behaviour Found According to the Age Groups

Age Groups	N	\bar{x}	SD	Level of importance (p)		
				17-19	20-22	23 and above
17-19	1143	80,94	9,93			*
20-22	3706	80,88	9,98			*
23 and above	1594	81,79	9,99	*	*	
Total	6443	81,11	9,98			

*p<.05; **p<.01

When Table 3 is examined; it is seen that, as level of age group increases, self-esteem level's averages also increase. It is seen that there is significant differentiation in favour of 23 and above age group between 17-19 with 20-22 age groups and 23 and above age group in terms of self-esteem level.

Table 4: The Results of the Variance Analysis on the Students' Self-Respect Behaviour According to the Age Groups

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	2	961,43	480,71	4,83	.00**
Within Groups	6440	641006,02	99,53		
Total	6442	641967,45			

*p<.05; **p<.01

When Table 4 is examined, there is seen significant differentiation at p<.05 level between students' self-esteem average points (F=4, 83; p=.00). LSD test was applied in order to find out between which groups this differentiation is.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Self-esteem levels of university students have shown differentiations in terms of gender variable. The differentiation is in favour of female students. So, gender variable may be accepted as a variable element of self-esteem. Pritchard (2009) has found out in a similar research he made on university students that self-esteem differs in favour of female students in terms of gender variable. Yelsma & Yelsma (1998) has found out that female students are shown respect more than male students by teachers. A finding has been reached at that female students listen to their teachers more patiently than male ones, female students are shown respect by them, female students use a suitable tongue and they are admired in terms of their personal features (Yelsma & Yelsma 1998). However, in some researches, it has been seen that there are no differentiations in terms of gender variable (Erman, Şahan & Can 2008; Otacıoğlu 2009). There are also some findings pointing out that gender variable is not a changeable variable of self-esteem and students of 4th class have higher self-esteem than students of 1st class (Ancak & Onur 1999).

It has been seen, in terms of education type, that there is some differentiation between students of day program and those of evening program in terms of self-esteem level and this differentiation has been considered in favour of students of the evening program. Any similar research in which self-esteem level of university students are compared isn't present in literature. Also, it can be said that students of day program may be higher than those of evening program in terms of socio-economic level. It has been seen that socio-economic level of the family of which the individual is a member is a positive variable of self-esteem (Otacıoğlu 2009; Suner 2000; Tatoğlu 2006; Yörükoğlu 1986). That students of the evening program have higher level in terms of socio-economic could have caused a differentiation in self-esteem level.

It has been seen that; as level of age group of which students belong to increases, there is also increase in their self-esteem points. It has been found out that there is differentiation between age groups of 17-19 with 20-22 and 23 and above age group; and this differentiation is in favour of 23 and above age group. It has been seen that; as level of age and class increases, level of self-esteem increases (Ayaz 2002; Baybek & Yavuz 2005; Menteş 2007; Onur 2006; Otacıoğlu 2009). In a similar way; Erşan, Erdoğan & Erdoğan (2009) have found out that self-esteem increases depending upon age (Aksayan & Gözüm 1998). Together with age, students increase their boldness and their abilities for solving problem by gaining much more experiences; therefore, effect of authority of parents decreases and trust at themselves increases (Acar, Arıcıoğlu, Gültekin & Gençtanırım 2008). There is a positive relation between problem solving and self-esteem with life saturation and this is able to make a contribution to individual for escaping from loneliness. Also, boldness and decrease in authority of parents affect self-esteem positively (Hamarta 2009; Top & Kaya 2009; Heaven & Ciarrochi 2008). Being trustable, efficient, interested and autonomous for an individual increases as age increases. It has been seen that self-esteem has a positive relation with individual's being trustable, efficient, interested and autonomous (Hepner et al. 2009). As Baybek and Yavuz (2005) have pointed out, ending of some confusion experienced and developing of identity emotion may cause self-esteem increase as age increases.

Student is a customer of university administration. University has to supply the conditions to respond to students' necessities in the best way (Özden 2000). University administration should supply an area of interaction and communication which is effective for student, apply administration's law openly and clearly and also supply areas in which they feel themselves comfortably and express themselves easily.

University and education managers found in lower units should take measures to support students and to observe and register students' developments. University, first of all, should set up psychological consultancy and guidance services in units in order that nearly 250 students have one psychological consultant or guidance expert. That students are pleased with university they study at and its units increases their academic successes and their organizational attachment (Celep 2000; Çetin 2006). This situation may make a contribution for administration units at university to solve probable administrative problems, which may come out about students, more easily.

Just as seen in this research and similar researches in literature, self-esteem level students have, is effective on their behaviours and also is affected by many factors. That individual accepts his features in terms of physic, body, mentality, interests and ability in group and society expresses his reconciliation with himself. Individuals who are reconciled with themselves are aware of their potential abilities and harmonious with norms and behaviour patterns of society or group they exist in (Tanrıöğen 2009). Students, whose self-esteem level is at the expected level, can act suitable behaviours to develop themselves and use their potentials.

University students experience some handicaps in solving some educational and administrative problems. They have sometimes passive and yielding acting as a way to go beyond these handicaps. The way of yielding behaviour is frequently compared with concept of respect in Turkey. As long as developing of yielding behaviours is given opportunity in the name of respect and approval, the crisis found in relations between students don't get bigger. Moreover, individual's need to be close to people who are important to himself and to be approved increases also yielding behaviour (Yüksel-Şahin 2008). According to Özkan and Özen (2008), individual having the feature of yielding behaviour is forced to consider himself less valuable and unimportant and to say 'no'. Individuals having such behaviour qualities cannot attempt easily and show leadership behaviour. Their self-confidence is low and they avoid changes and taking responsibility. Consequently, educational managers may make their problems much more complex and difficult concerns to be solved, instead of solving them.

Consequently, self-esteem has a great importance for individuals to use their potential in terms of educational administration. Therefore, university administrations and other educational managers in other lower units should make a contribution to preparing suitable training programmes and education- training areas which can affect self-esteem of students positively. Also, it is clear that training staff should develop themselves to make their academic behaviours suitable for features of students. Personal self-esteem possessed should be considered as a potential power which has the ability to represent individual's honour supported by manpower source.

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Geniş Özet

Bu araştırmada üniversite öğrencilerinin öz saygı davranışı düzeylerinin onların cinsiyet, öğretim türü, yaş ve fakülte türlerine göre farklılık gösterip göstermediği araştırılmıştır. Araştırma, betimleme - alan araştırması (survey) niteliğindedir. Yükseköğretimde öğrenim gören öğrencilerin öz saygı düzeyi bağımlı değişken, öz saygı düzeyi üzerinde etkisi olduğu düşünülen cinsiyet, öğretim türü ve yaş ise bağımsız değişken olarak değerlendirmeye alınmıştır. Araştırmanın evrenini, Kocaeli Üniversitesi'nde öğrenim gören 57340 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır; örneklemini ise 6443 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Veri toplama aracı, Bogenç (2005) tarafından geliştirilen "Kendine Saygı Ölçeği" (KSÖ) kullanılmıştır (Kuzgun & Bacanlı 2005). KSÖ, ASP programa dili kullanılarak Kocaeli Üniversitesi'nin sağladığı web alanı yoluyla gönderilebilen ve yanıtların araştırmacı tarafından özel şifresi ile Excel formatında bilgisayarına indirilebileceği biçimde tasarlanmıştır. Ölçeğin geçerliği ve güvenilirliği ile ilgili çalışmayı Bogenç (2005), yapmış ve geçerlilik ile ilgili uzman grubunun değerlendirmelerinden yararlanmış. Yapı geçerliği ile ilgili ölçek tek faktörlü, faktör yük değerleri .30'un üzerinde ve açıklanan toplam varyans % 36,3 bulunmuştur. Ölçeğin iç tutarlılıkla ilgili Cronhach' Alpha katsayısı $\alpha=0.81$ gibi yüksek bir düzeyde gerçekleşmiştir (Bogenç 2005). Elde edilen veriler, grupların ikili olduğu cinsiyet ve öğretim türü değişkenleri için t-testi, ikiden çok grupları oluşturan yaş değişkeni için F testine tabi tutulmuştur (Gren, Salkind & Akey 2000). Sonuçlar amaca uygun çözüm getirebilecek biçimde tablolara aktarılmıştır.

Üniversitede öğrencilerinin öz saygı düzeyleri cinsiyet değişkenine göre farklılıklar göstermiştir. Farklılık kadın öğrenciler lehine çıkmıştır. Buna göre cinsiyet değişkeni öz saygının bir değişkeni olarak kabul edilebilir. Pritchard (2009), benzer bir araştırmasında üniversite öğrencileri üzerinde yaptığı bir araştırmada öz saygının cinsiyete göre kadın öğrenciler lehine farklılaştığını bulmuştur. Yelsma & Yelsma (1998), kadın öğrencilerin erkek öğrencilere göre öğretmenlerinden daha yüksek düzeyde saygı gördüklerini bulmuştur. Kadın öğrencilerin erkek öğrencilerden daha fazla öğretmenleri sabırla dinlediği onlardan saygı gördüğü, uygun bir dil kullandıkları ve kişisel özellikleri bakımından takdir edildikleri bulgusuna ulaşılmıştır (Yelsma & Yelsma 1998). Buna karşın bazı araştırmalarda cinsiyet değişkeni bakımından farklılaşmaların olmadığı görülmüştür (Otacıoğlu 2009; Erman, Şahan & Can 2008;). Cinsiyetin öz saygının bir değişkeni olmadığı dördüncü sınıf öğrencilerinin birinci sınıf öğrencilerine göre daha yüksek bir öz saygıya sahip olduğunu belirten bulgular da bulunmaktadır (Ancak & Onur 1999).

Öğretimin türüne göre II. öğretim öğrencilerinin I. öğretim öğrencileri arasında öz saygı düzeyi bakımından farklılaşmanın olduğu ve bu farklılaşmanın II. öğretim lehine çıktığı görülmüştür. Literatürde üniversite öğrencilerinin öz saygı düzeylerinin I. ve II. öğretim değişkeni bakımından karşılaştırıldığı benzer bir araştırmaya rastlanılmamıştır. Bununla birlikte, II. öğretim öğrencilerinin sosyo ekonomik düzey bakımından I. öğretim öğrencilere göre daha yüksek olduğu söylenebilir. Bireyin üyesi olduğu ailenin sosyo ekonomik düzeyinin öz saygının olumlu yönde bir değişkeni olduğu görülmektedir (Yörükoğlu, 1986; Suner, 2000; Otacıoğlu, 2009; Tatoglu, 2006). II. öğretim öğrencilerinin sosyo ekonomik bakımından daha yüksek düzeye sahip olmaları öz saygı düzeyinde farklılaşmaya yol açmış olabilir.

Öğrencilerin üyesi oldukları yaş grubunun düzeyi arttıkça öz saygı puanlarında da artış olduğu görülmüştür. 17-19 ve 20-22 yaş gruplarının 23 ve yukarı yaş grubu arasında farklılaşmanın olduğu ve bu farklılaşmanın 23 ve yukarı yaş grubu lehine olduğu bulunmuştur. Yaş ve sınıf düzeyinin artmasıyla birlikte öz saygı düzeyinin arttığı görülmektedir (Ayaz 2002; Baybek & Yavuz 2005; Onur 2006; Menteş 2007; Otacıoğlu 2009). Erşan, Erdoğan & Erdoğan (2009), benzer biçimde öz saygının yaşa bağlı olarak arttığı bulgusuna ulaşmıştır (Aksayan & Gözüm, 1998). Yaşla birlikte öğrenciler daha fazla deneyim kazanarak problem çözme yeteneklerini ve atılganlıklarını artmakta, buna karşılık anne baba otoritesinin etkisi azalmakta ve kendilerine olan güven artmaktadır (Acar, Arıcıoğlu, Gültekin & Gençtanırım 2008). Problem çözme ile öz saygı ve yaşam doyumu arasında olumlu yönde bir ilişki bulunmakta ve bireyin yalnızlıktan kurtulmasında katkı sağlayabilmekte, atılganlık ve anne baba otoritesinin azalması da öz saygıyı olumlu yönde etkilemektedir (Hamarta 2009; Top & Kaya 2009; Heaven & Ciarrochi 2008). Yaşın artmasıyla birlikte bireyin güvenilirlik, yeterlik, özerklik, ilgililik yönü de artmaktadır. Öz saygının bireyin güvenilirlik, yeterlik, özerklik ve ilgili olma durumu ile olumlu yönde ilişkisi olduğu görülmüştür (Hepner at al. 2008). Baybek & Yavuz'un (2005), belirttiği gibi yaş ilerledikçe kimlik duygusu gelişimi ve yaşanan bazı kargaşaların son bulması öz saygının artmasına neden olabilir.

Bu ve literatürdeki benzer araştırmalarda da görüldüğü üzere öğrencilerin sahip olduğu öz saygı düzeyi onların davranışları üzerinde etkili olmakta ve aynı zamanda çok sayıda faktör tarafından etkilenmektedir. Bireyin fiziksel, bedensel, zihinsel, ilgi ve yetenek bakımından grup ve toplum içinde

kendi özelliklerini olduğu gibi kabul etmesi, kendisi ile olan barışıklığı ifade eder. Kendisi ile barışık bireyler potansiyel yeteneklerinin farkında olur, içinde bulunduğu grup ya da toplumun norm ve davranış kalıplarıyla uyumluluk gösterirler. Öz saygı düzeyi beklenen düzeyde olan öğrenciler kendini gerçekleştirme ve geliştirmeye uygun davranışlar sergileyebilir.

Üniversite öğrencilerin sorunlarını çözmede bazı engellerle karşılaşmaktadır. Bu engelleri aşabilmenin bir yolu olarak bazen edilgen ve boyun eğici davranış özellikleri göstermektedir. Boyun eğici davranış biçimi Türkiye’de sıklıkla saygı kavramıyla karıştırılmaktadır. Saygı ve onaylanma adına boyun eğici davranışların gelişimine olanak verildikçe, kişiler arası ilişkilerde kriz büyümektedir. Ayrıca, bireyin kendisi için önemli olan kişilere yakın olma ve onaylanma ihtiyacı da boyun eğicilik davranışını arttırabilmektedir (Yüksel-Şahin 2008). Özkan ve Özen’e göre (2008), boyun eğici davranış özelliğine sahip olan birey, kendisini daha az değerli ve önemsiz görmekte ve ‘hayır’ demekte zorlanmaktadır. Bu tür davranış niteliklerine sahip bireyler liderlik davranışı gösteremez, kolayca girişimde bulunamaz, kendine güveni düşüktür, sorumluluk almaktan ve değişikliklerden kaçınırlar.

Sonuç olarak öz saygı, bireyin kendini gerçekleştirme bakımından büyük önem taşımaktadır. Bu yüzden öğrencilerin öz saygısını olumlu yönde etkileyebilecek uygun öğretim programları ve eğitim-öğretim ortamlarının hazırlanması gerekir. Öğretim elemanlarının da akademik davranışlarını öğrenci özelliklerine uygun duruma getirebilmesi için kendini geliştirmesi gerektiği açıktır. Sahip olunan kişisel öz saygı, insangücü kaynağını destekleyen bireyin onurunu temsil yeteneğine sahip potansiyel bir güç olarak görülmelidir.

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