

An Analysis of Secondary School Students' Attitudes towards Physical Education Course According to Some Variables

Meric Eraslan

Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Physical Education and Sport High School, Turkey

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this research is to analyze the attitudes of secondary school students towards physical education course using some variables. This study was carried out at different public secondary schools in Isparta. 463 male students and 377 female students within the age limit of 12.65 ± 1.11 years participated in the research. To determine the attitudes of the students who participated in the research, the Attitude Scale for Secondary School Students was used. In the statistical analyses of the data gotten from the study, SPSS 22.0 for Windows program Mann Whitney U test, Kruskal Wallis H test and descriptive statistics were used. Through this study, it was confirmed statistically that the students' attitudes towards physical education course did not differ greatly according to gender ($p > 0.05$). It was designated that when the 5th graders were compared with the 6th, the 7th and the 8th ones, the 5th graders had the highest attitude points for physical education classes ($p < 0.05$). When the survey was examined in terms of residential area, it was determined that to a great extent, the students living at villages had less attitude points compared to other students who resides in the urban areas ($p < 0.05$). It was also discovered that the attitude levels of the students whose families do physical exercise were higher than the ones whose families do not. According to the findings of this study, it can be said that some socio-demographic characteristics affect the secondary school students' attitude levels towards physical education classes.

INTRODUCTION

The mental, emotional and behavioral pre-reaction tendencies that of people organized with regard to experience, knowledge, emotion and incentives in response to themselves or an object around them, or social issue, an experience against an event are called attitude (Inceoglu 2010). In human life, attitude is an attribute learned subsequently, which could vary and change perpetually during the process of socialization (Levent and Umuzdas 2013). In our world today, a lot of multidimensional researches have been conducted on the nature and characteristics of attitude (Güllü and Güçlü 2009). Many researchers have focused on the significance of attitude lessons in an academic environment (Kangalgil et al. 2006; Çelik and Pulur 2011; Trudeau and Shephard 2005). Elementary education age is a period that children's physical development is fast because children within this school age are strong and energetic. Therefore, the need for mobility and physical activity in children of elementary education age also increases (Hergüner et al. 2004). At this stage, the physical education classes have characteristics supporting the physical development of children. In addition, as well as providing physical development in children, physical education programs also have positive effects on mental and social development. Therefore, physical education is in a complementary

position of general education (Celik and Pulur 2011). When examined physiologically, physiological characteristics of physical education classes supported developments (endurance, etc.) (Pasek et al. 2014), besides that they had a significant role in developing health quality and minimizing some disease risks (Meyer et al. 2014; Klakk et al. 2014).

To examine how physically and physiologically the children were affected by the sport activities they did is an important issue (Hekim et al. 2012). The main purpose of education is to reveal some hidden strengths and talents that individual has and help these characteristics to develop at the highest level. Training given to students paying attention to their mental, physical, emotional and social aspects of life is the basic focus of modern education. In pursuant of the today's modern conception, the realization of the targets is possible with individual's physical education, as well as mental education. Physical education which aims at learning the basic movement skills and learning through movement is an essential part of general education and it contributes to the purposes of general education through movements (Kangalgil et al. 2006).

More so, it is also possible for students to develop positive or negative attitudes towards the lesson in physical education classes (Celik and Pulur 2011). Students' negative attitudes towards physical education classes can lower

the efficiency of the course. The participation rate to the course of the students having low attitude level may decrease, their commitment to the subject may diminish and some problems may occur in the process of the subject (Gullu and Guclu 2009; Ekici et al. 2011). For this reason, elementary school students' attitudes towards physical education and sports are very significant for shaping the course format and achieving the objectives of the course. Moreover, in literature studies, it was indicated that elementary school students' attitudes towards physical education course were shaped according to particularly demographic features, gender, grade level, and some cultural features (Gurbuz and Özkan 2012; Subramabiam and Silverman 2007; Chung and Philips 2002; Celik and Pulur 2011). In this study, based on the variables generated analyses were made to determine the attitudes of secondary school students' attitudes towards physical education.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Research Sample

Having their education in Burdur province, from 12 different secondary schools under the Ministry of National Education, 840 volunteered students whose average age is 12.65 ± 1.11 years

participated in the research. In the study, the places where the participants continue their educations were divided into 4 sections, including villages, towns, county towns and the city center. The descriptive statistics of the participants are given in Table 1.

Most of the students who were involved in the survey are at the age of 13 (42.6%). Most of the students are 8th graders (39.8%) or 9th graders. The rate of the male students is 55.1% and the rate of the female students is 44.9%. The rate of the students living in the city is 42.1% and the rate of the students living in the villages is 25%. Besides, majority of the students have exercise habits (63.1%). However, their mothers (66.3%) and fathers (55.7%) do not have exercise habits.

Data Collection Instrument

In this study, two data collection instruments were used. The first one is the questionnaire form in which socio-demographic knowledge was developed by the researchers. The second one is "the Attitude Scale for Secondary School Students" developed by Gullu and Guclu (2009). The attitude scale consists of 35 items, including 11 negative items and 24 positive items. The scale is the 5-point likert type scale. The highest point that a participant can get from the scale is 175, the lowest is 35. The higher the total score

Table 1: The frequency and percentage distribution of the descriptive statistics belonging to the participants

Parameter	Low parameter	f	%
Age	10	40	4.8
	11	103	12.3
	12	159	18.9
	13	358	42.6
	14	168	20.0
	15	12	1.4
Grade	5	136	16.2
	6	111	13.2
	7	259	30.8
	8	334	39.8
Gender	Male	463	55.1
	Female	377	44.9
The Residential Area	Village	210	25.0
	Town	109	13.0
	County	354	42.1
	City center	167	19.9
Whether the Students do Exercise or Not	Yes	530	63.1
	No	310	36.9
Whether the Students' Mothers do Exercise or Not	Yes	283	33.7
	No	557	66.3
Whether the Students' Fathers do Exercise or Not	Yes	372	44.3
	No	468	55.7

on the scale, the higher the level of attitudes towards the physical education course of students.

Statistical Analysis

In the analysis of data obtained from the study, SPSS 22.0 for Windows software package was used. To determine the reliability of the data, reliability analysis was applied and the coefficient of Cronbach's alpha internal consistency was found as 0.92. This result shows that the scale is reliable. Following the analysis of reliability, before the basic statistical analysis was not done yet, the data had been examined whether they had showed normal distribution and then it was confirmed that the data had not shown normal distribution. For this reason, non-parametric methods for the analysis were used. In order to compare the attitude points according to the gender of the participants and the circumstances of the student's parents doing exercise, Mann Whitney U test was employed. According to the grade levels and there isidential areas, Kruskal Wallis W test was employed. In the result of Kruskal Wallis H test, there were cases of great differences between the groups, Mann Whitney U test was used as post-hoc test. In order to determine the average of attitude and the descriptive statistics belonging to the participants, the descriptive statistics were used.

FINDINGS

When it is taken into consideration that the highest point that a participant can get from the scale is 175, the lowest is 35, it can be deduced that the participants got points above the average from the attitude scale (Table 2).

It was identified that the average attitude level of the children involved in the survey is 145.63 ± 22.698 . It was ascertained that with regard to physical education and sport course, the attitude levels of the students who participated in the study did not show great difference statistically according to their genders ($p > 0.05$) (Table 3).

It was identified that the average attitude level of the male students is 146.44 ± 21.407 and the average attitude level of the female students is 144.65 ± 24.181 . It was determined that the attitude levels of the students who participated in the study towards physical education course showed statistically significant differences in terms of their grades ($p > 0.05$) (Table 4). According to Post-Hoc Test results, it was set that the attitude levels towards physical education course of the 5th graders are statistically higher than the 6th, the 7th and the 8th grade students' levels ($p < 0.05$). However, there is no significant difference statistically in the attitude points for physical education course in the 6th, the 7th and the 8th graders ($p > 0.05$).

Table 2: The descriptive statistics with regard to the students' average scores which they took from the Attitude Scale

<i>N</i>	<i>The lowest</i>	<i>The highest</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Ss</i>
840	41	175	145.63	22.698

Table 3: The comparison of the students' attitude levels for physical education course according to gender

<i>Gender</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Ss</i>	<i>Z score</i>	<i>P</i>
Male	463	146.44	21.407	-.746	.456
Female	377	144.65	24.181		

Table 4: The comparison of the students' attitude points for physical education course in relation to their grades

<i>Grade</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Ss</i>	χ^2	<i>p</i>
5	136	149.25	23.419	8.161	0.43
6	111	145.11	22.741		
7	259	145.11	22.813		
8	334	144.75	22.252		

It was identified that 5th graders hold the highest attitude level (149.25 ± 23.419) and it follows as, respectively, 7th graders (145.11 ± 22.813), 8th graders (144.75 ± 22.252) and 6th graders (145.11 ± 22.741). It was ascertained that the attitude levels towards physical education course of the students who participated in the study showed statistically significant differences according to the circumstances of the student's parents doing exercise ($p < 0.05$). The attitude levels towards physical education of the students whose mother and father do exercise are significantly higher than the attitudes of the students whose parents do not ($p < 0.05$) (Table 5).

The average attitude level of the children whose fathers do exercise is 147.96 ± 24.214 and the average attitude level of the children whose fathers do not do exercise is 143.79 ± 21.261 . Besides this, the average attitude level of the children whose mothers do exercise is 147.84 ± 22.638 and the average attitude score of the children whose mothers do not do exercise is 144.51 ± 22.666 . It was determined that the attitude levels towards physical education course of the students who participated in the study showed statistically significant differences in terms of their residential areas ($p > 0.05$). According to the results of Post-Hoc test, it was observed that the attitudes of the participants living at villages are lower compared to the participants living in towns, counties, and city centres ($p < 0.05$). There is no significant difference between the attitude levels of the participants living in towns, county and city centres ($p > 0.05$) (Table 6).

According to Table 6, it has been determined that while the kids, living in town have the highest attitude score, (146.92 ± 21.887) they are followed by the kids from city, (147.95 ± 19.748) then from big city, (146.84 ± 25.143) and lastly the kids from the village, (141.30 ± 23.015).

DISCUSSION

It was identified that the attitude levels towards physical education course of the students who participated in the study did not show a significant difference according to their grades ($p > 0.05$). In similar studies done on secondary school students, it was stated that gender was not a significant determinant factor in defining attitudes towards physical education course of the students (Gurbuz and Ozkan 2012; Tasmektepligil et al. 2006). The main reason for not showing any difference in the attitudes towards physical education course of the students who participated in the study according to gender can be thought that both male and female students live in similar social environments and their physical education course syllabus is also similar. On the other hand, in literature there are some study findings proving that gender affects attitude level towards physical education course (Akandere et al. 2010; Ekici et al. 2011; Aybek et al. 2011; Kangalgil et al. 2006; Erhan and Tamer 2009; Koca et al. 2005; Celik and Pular 2011; Tasgin and Tekin 2009; Shropshire et al. 1997). According to the results of the research, the researcher assessed some similar study findings taking place in literature, it was seen that in the sense of

Table 5: The comparison of the students' attitude points for physical education course in regard to the circumstances of the students' parents doing exercise

<i>Mother or Father</i>	<i>Whether they do exercise or not</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Ss</i>	<i>Z score</i>	<i>p</i>
Father	Yes	372	147.96	24.214	-4.208	.000
	No	468	143.79	21.261		
Mother	Yes	283	147.84	22.638	-2.635	.008
	No	557	144.51	22.666		

Table 6: The comparison of the students' attitude points for physical education course according to their residential areas

<i>The residential area</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Ss</i>	χ^2	<i>p</i>
Village	210	141.30	23.015	14.554	.002
Town	109	147.95	19.748		
County	354	146.92	21.887		
City Centre	167	146.84	25.143		

gender variable, the findings relating to attitudes towards physical education course of the students showed up contradictory results. However, when it is taken into account that physical education course supports physical, mental and social development of both male and female students, it can be said that interest of both gender for physical education course should be increased. In order to increase attitudes towards physical education course of both male and female students, increasing students' participation in physical education course is too important (Morgan and Carpenter 2002). Moreover, to know why male and female students' attitudes are negative and accordingly to take necessary precautions can help to increase attitude levels of both students.

However, attitude levels towards physical education course of the students who participated in the study were assessed in terms of their grades. It was identified that the fifth graders' attitude levels were higher than the sixth, the seventh and the eighth ones. It was also confirmed that the attitude levels towards physical education course of the sixth, the seventh and the eighth graders did not show a significant difference. In literature, there are some similar studies supporting our study findings and identifying the differentiation of the attitude levels towards physical education course of the students according to grade variable (Tasgin and Tekin 2009; Subramabiam and Silverman 2007). In a similar study carried out by Gurbuz and Ozkan (2012), it was found that the attitude towards physical education course of secondary school students did not indicate a significant difference according to their grade levels. When research results in literature and our study findings were evaluated, it was seen that in the sense of grade variable, the attitudes towards physical education course of elementary school students showed contradictory results. However, no matter the grade levels of the students, there will be increase in the interest of the students for physical education course will contribute to the students' physical development and their participation in the course. Accordingly, it can be said that if schedules of physical education courses are created in accordance with the personal characteristic of each student, this will be effective in enhancing the students' attitudes towards physical education course (Ekici et al. 2011). Furthermore, as the grade levels of the students increas-

es, the students' readiness for secondary education can be thought as the main reason for the decrease in the attitude levels towards physical education course of the students. The last graders of secondary school students experience more stress more than the low class students in terms of entrance examination to secondary school and conceivably this affects the students' attitudes towards the courses negatively.

It is understood that the attitudes towards physical education course of the students who participated in the study indicated a significant difference according to the circumstance of the students' parents engaging in exercise. According to the findings obtained, it was determined that the attitudes towards the course of the students whose parents engage in exercise are significantly higher than the attitudes of the students whose parents do not. What was effective for the emergence of this result can be thought that the children of parents giving importance to sport tend to develop positive attitudes towards physical education and sport. Therefore, having a positive attitude towards physical education and sports from the students tend to create a positive attitude about the lesson is an expected result (Aybek et al. 2011; Kangalgil et al. 2006). In a study carried out by Çelik and Pular (2011), it was designated that the attitudes towards physical education course of the students whose family members have the habit of doing regular exercise increased. It was determined that the attitude levels towards physical education course of the students who participated in the study showed statistically significant differences in terms of their residential areas and the attitudes of the participants living at villages are lower compared to the others. In the light of these findings, it can be said that the greater the residential area of the students the increase in attitude towards the course. At the bottom of this result, course materials of secondary schools in cities are better compared to the schools in small residential areas. Indeed, this study indicated that inabilities in facility and equipment affected the attitude towards physical education course of the students (Aybek et al. 2011), whereas in many schools equipment belonging to physical education course is not enough (Hergüner et al. 2004; Tasmektepligil et al. 2006). In a study carried out by Erhan and Tamer (2009), it was stated that suitable facility and equipment usage for

the purpose of the course would be effective in the increase of both students' and teachers' motivation for physical education course.

CONCLUSION

Following the survey, it was identified that the average attitude level of the male students is 146.44 ± 21.407 and the average attitude level of female students is 144.65 ± 24.181 . According to the findings, it was concluded that there is no significant difference between the attitude levels considering the gender.

Considering the attitude levels of the students according to their school grades, 5th graders hold the highest attitude level (149.25 ± 23.419) and it follows as, respectively, 7th graders (145.11 ± 22.813) 8th graders (144.75 ± 22.252) and 6th graders (145.11 ± 22.741). According to the findings, it was concluded that the attitude levels of the students vary across school grades.

According to the survey, the average attitude level of the children whose fathers do exercise is 147.96 ± 24.214 and the average attitude level of the children whose fathers do not do exercise is 143.79 ± 21.261 . Besides this, the average attitude score of the children whose mothers do exercise is 147.84 ± 22.638 and the average attitude level of the children whose mothers do not do exercise is 144.51 ± 22.666 . According to the findings, it was concluded that the attitude levels of the students vary considering the parents' exercise habits.

When the attitude levels were examined according to the residential areas of the students, it was identified that the students living in towns hold the highest attitude levels and it follows as, respectively, the students living in the cities (147.95 ± 19.748), the students living in metropolitans (146.84 ± 25.143) and the students living in villages (141.30 ± 23.015). According to the findings, it was concluded that the attitude levels of the students vary considering their residential areas.

It was confirmed that the attitude levels towards physical education course of the secondary school students did not differ greatly according to their genders, conversely it was also understood that the circumstance of the students' parents doing exercise and the residential areas of the students affected the attitude towards physical education course. When the purposes of physical education course in education system are taken into consideration, no matter what

the students' gender, grade level, residential area or other socio-demographic characteristics are, precautions should be taken to enhance the attitudes towards physical education course of all students. Especially in today's world that sedentary lifestyle has increased, in order to get rising generation adopt sport as habit and increase health quality of posterity, physical education courses should be paid attention.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Some new research should be carried out about the factors effecting students' attitude towards Physical Training class.
2. New studies should be carried out to determine the factors effecting their attitudes towards Physical Training class negatively and ideas to minimize these factors with negative effects on students' attitudes.
3. New research in which larger sample groups are involved could be carried out to comprehend the attitudes of the students towards Physical Training class better.

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