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Opinions of the physical education and sports candidate teachers about reading¹

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Abstract

This research aimed at exploring reading habits, opinions and attitudes about reading of the candidate teachers who studied at School of Physical Education and Sports of Adnan Menderes University. A questionnaire form -the first part of which addressed demographic questions and the second part targeted at candidate teachers' opinions and attitudes about reading- was administered to 102 candidate teachers who participated in the research voluntarily (female candidate teachers=39 and male candidate teachers=63). Attitude Scale towards Reading Habit is a Likert type scale consisted of six subscales and contains 30 questions. Its validity and reliability tests have been performed. Percentages, Mann-Whitney Test and Kruskal-Wallis Test were conducted for the data analysis.

As results of the research, values obtained for female candidate teachers' reading habits and desire to read were higher than male teachers in all six subscales and also there was a significant difference in love, habit, desire and benefit subscales and general total scores ($p<0.05$). Female and male candidate teachers emphasized the importance of reading whereas effects and benefits of reading were adopted by female candidate teachers more.

Keywords: reading; reading habit; candidate teacher of physical education

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Introduction

Every day, many articles are written on various issues and they are communicated to the readers via newspapers, magazines, books and internet etc. thanks to the developing technology. Reading is imperative for the individuals to know and to make sense of the continually renewed information, ideas and advancements. It is an undisputable fact that a society should possess individuals who follow each kind of innovations and have already acquired a regular and continuous reading habit so that social development can be achieved.

Reading habit is described as “making reading a need, considering it as a part of life (Bircan and Tekin, 1989)” and as “performing reading activity in a continuous, regular and critical way after the reading has been perceived as a need.” (Gönen et al., 2004; Saracaloğlu et al., 2003; Yılmaz, 1992).

Reading becomes important for everybody in a world of changing technology age in order to deal with new information; the importance and necessity of which has been increasing each year. However, the number of those who can read but do not have a regular reading habit has been increasing day by day (Sangkaeo, 1999).

Reading is a key instrument for individuals which enhances the ability to use language, enables them to think in a deeper way and thus is a necessary tool to take more accurate decisions. Reading is an individual activity. Yet, reading serves as social function for the society to manage the events in a more rational way, too. Reading is one of the methods of the continuous learning and thus answers the needs that occur in time (Odabaş, Odabaş and Polat, 2008).

Results obtained from observations, interviews and questionnaires that are administered to the children, the youth and the adults –separately or together- are one of the indicators that indicate the level of reading habits of the society (Odabaş et al. 2008). Habits and attitudes are improved through learning process that starts at the early age. In this regard, primary school period plays an important role in the sense that child begins reading during this period. In this regard, period of primary school plays an important role in the sense that child begins reading. During this period, child-book interaction may turn into the period in which the reading culture is acquired. Reading culture is explained as the culture adopted by the individuals in which they have already met the products of the written culture, have already acquired the ability to share, to test and to question the messages given by these products; have had the habit of living together with the opportunities provided by these messages (Sever, 2004).

It is probable that the child who has just started reading during the primary school period may or may not show interest in reading due to the poor reading habit. Therefore, it is possible to enable the child to get a reading habit and to show interest in reading by guiding him / her towards reading, making him love reading from the early childhood periods. It is compulsory to consider the personal and environmental factors that may affect the acquisition of the reading habit during this process (Aslantürk and Saracaloğlu, 2010). Reading habit acquired at an early age becomes a positive determining factor of life long reading habit (Cunningham, 1997).

Reading is also a necessary skill that should be acquired by the students who study at universities, the final phase of education and training. Reading habit becomes very important while the students study for the courses and evaluate extracurricular lives (Mavi and Çetin, 2008). In a recently conducted study, it was reported that the Japanese averagely read 25 books a year, the Swedish 10 books and the French 7 books. As for our country, six people read only one book a year (Odabaş, 2003). In light of these findings, families, school and teachers should assume critical responsibilities in improving reading interest and in providing reading habits among the children.

It is expected from the candidate teachers who will assume the most important responsibility in training students to become individuals who can understand what they read, can express and perform what they understand. Therefore, it is reported that primarily teachers themselves should acquire reading interests and habits so that they can develop themselves, perform their tasks properly during their professional lives and can train individuals who can research, think, read and question (Işık, 2002).

It was noted in some researches which investigated reading habits among the university students (Sağlamtuñç, 1990; Dökmen, 1994, Esgin and Karadağ, 2000) and candidate teachers (Esgin and Karadağ, 2000, Semerci, 2002; Balcı, 2003; Saracaloğlu et al., 2003; Filiz, 2004) that the reading habits of the youth were poor. When the fact that these above mentioned researches were conducted with students was considered, the reading interests and habits of the candidate teachers and teachers themselves should be investigated, too. In light of these findings, the aim of the present research was to investigate reading habits of the candidate teachers of the physical education and sports in terms of some variables.

Materials and Methods

The aim of the present research was to explore reading habits of the students who studied at School of Physical Education and Sports of Adnan Menderes University and their opinions and

attitudes about reading and to assess whether or not these opinions and attitudes about reading differed in terms of sex variable. 102 candidate teachers (female candidate teachers= 39 and male candidate teachers=63) who studied at School of Physical Education and Sports of Adnan Menderes University and participated in the research voluntarily constituted the research group of the research. "Attitude Scale towards Reading Habits" developed by Gömleksiz (2004) was used as the data collection tool. It has 30 items. The Scale is a five-point Likert scale and contains six domains of reading: love, requirement, effect, benefit, habit and desire. The questionnaires were distributed to the students and then were collected.

Percentages, standard deviations, Mann-Whitney Test and Kruskal-Wallis Test were used for the analysis of the data. SPSS 15.00 software was used and results were considered significant at $p < 0.05$.

Research group

The population of the research was consisted of the students who studied at School of Physical Education and Sports of Adnan Menderes University during fall term of 2010-2011 academic year. There were 177 students at the School of Physical Education and Sports (Females= 65 and Males=112). The sample group was made up of 102 volunteer students (Females= 39 and Males=63) who were selected using simple random-sampling method.

Measurement tool

Attitude Scale towards Reading Habits was used as the data collection tool and its validity and reliability tests were performed. The scale contains 30 items; 21 of which are positive items and 9 items are negative items. There are six subscales: 1st subscale is termed as "Love", 2nd subscale is termed as "Habit", 3rd subscale is termed as "Requirement", 4th subscale is termed as "Desire", 5th subscale is termed as "Effect" and 6th sub scale is termed as "Benefit". Croanbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the Scale was .88. Croanbach Alpha reliability coefficients of the subscales are as follows: .78, .73, .72, .70, .75 and .79 respectively. It is Likert type scale. The options are as follows: "I generally agree", "I agree", "I partly agree", "I disagree" and "I generally disagree". Positive items are scored as 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 while negative items were reverse-scored as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Administration of the scale

Attitude Scale towards Reading Habits and Questionnaire Form which was consisted of socio-demographic questions were administered to the students who participated voluntarily at the

classrooms and were collected again. The time to fill in the questionnaires did not exceed 10 minutes.

Results

Table 1. Percentige values, kruskal-wallis and mann whitney u test results of subscales of attitude scale towards reading habits of candidate pe teachers

	love	habit	requirement	desire	effect	benefit	Total
economic situation	.38*	.010*	.094	.055	.482	.134	.017*
	X ²	X ²	X ²	X ²	X ²	X ²	X ²
	8,448	11,366	6,384	7,618	2,466	5,574	10,155
Hold scholarship ^a	.000*	.001*	.091	.002*	.012*	.014*	.000*
	U	U	U	U	U	U	U
	746,000	816,500	1046,500	845,500	922,000	932,000	749,500
sparing money	.000*	.000*	.096	.002*	.117	.115	.001*
	U	U	U	U	U	U	U
	726,500	748,000	1056,500	844,000	1067,500	1068,000	821,000
Reading book	.000*	.000*	.027*	.003*	.126	.145	.000*
	X ²	X ²	X ²	X ²	X ²	X ²	X ²
	38,947	36,806	10,946	15,922	7,184	6,826	26,021

*p<0.05

As seen in Table 1, 51 % of the candidate PE teachers played sports and 49 % did not play sports. At the high schools; 15.7 % of the participants graduated from department of sports, 34.3 % graduated from department of literary studies, 12.7 % graduated from department of mathematics, 35.3 % graduated from the department of social studies and mathematics and 2 % graduated from department of social sciences. 25.5 % of the candidate teachers said to have a personal library whereas 74.5 % did not have a personal library. Not having a library and parents' reading together with their children play a key role in providing a reading habit (Yılmaz, 2002). Another study conducted by Yılmaz (2004) reported that 79.3 % of the students did not have any personal library.

It was found out that 27.5 % of the candidate teachers watched TV for 1-2 hours a day whereas 49.1 % watched TV for 3-4 hours a day. Similarly, it was noted in the study of the Mavi and Çetin (2008) that 61.6 % of the participants watched TV for 2-3 hours a day while the students watched TV for 2 hours a day in the study of Odabaşı (2003). Another study conducted with primary school teachers reported that 38 % of the participants read for 1-2 hours a day while 79 %

of them spared 4 hours to watch TV. However, there was not any significant correlation between TV watching and reading habit (Yılmaz, 2006).

The rate of the participants who spared 1 hour a day for reading was by 23.5 % and 79.4 % had their own rooms. There was not any significant correlation between subscales and playing sports, graduation departments at the high schools (department of sports, department of literary studies, department of mathematics, department of social studies and mathematics, department of social sciences), having a personal library, reading time, TV watching time ($p>0.05$). On the other hand; we found significant differences between love, habit and general total score and economical status ($p<0.05$); between getting a scholarship and love, habit, desire, effect, benefit and general total score ($p<0.05$); sparing money and love, habit, desire, effect, benefit ($p<0.05$). As the result of the findings obtained; we can conclude that students who spare money for books love reading, are satisfied with reading and have had the reading habits.

There was a significant difference between reading and love, habit, desire, requirement and general total score ($p<0.05$). The study conducted by Filiz (2004) at the School of Physical Education and Sports of Gazi University revealed that 68.4 % of the male students and 85.5 % of the female students had positive opinions about reading while it was found out in the study results of the Çınar and Sanioglu (2004) that only 7.2 % of the 195 PE students read books.

Table 2. Candidate teachers' man whitney u test of the subscales in terms of sex variable

Subscales	sex	n	Range mean	Total Mean	U	p
Love	Female	39	66,83	66,83	630,500	.000*
	Male	63	42.01	42.01		
Habit	Female	39	63.17	63.17	773,500	.002*
	Male	63	44,28	44,28		
Requirement	Female	39	57.04	57.04	1012,500	
	Male	63	48,07	48.07		
Desire	Female	39	62.78	62,78	788,500	.002*
	Male	63	44,52	44.52		
Effect	Female	39	57.27	57.27	1003,500	
	Male	63	47,93	47,93		
Benefit	Female	39	60.77	60.77	867,000	.011*
	Male	63	45.76	45.76		
general total	Female	39	64,78	64,78	710,500	.000*
	Male	63	43.28	43.28		

* $P<0.05$

In relation with the subscales, we did not find any difference between the groups in terms of playing sports ($p>0.05$). Also, there was not any significant difference between subscales and graduation departments at high schools according to the Kruskal Wallis test ($p>0.05$). And also, we

could not find any difference between the subscales and having a personal library, residence type, having his / her own room ($p>0.05$).

It was seen that there was a significant difference between reading and love, habit, desire, benefit and the general total score in terms of sex variable ($p<0.05$) and female students had higher mean scores towards reading. As far as these subscales were concerned, we could say that female students were more interested in reading compared to male students.

Discussions

As the result of the study conducted by Arslan et al. (2009), similar findings were obtained and it was found out that female students read more books than male students; the reason of which is perhaps that their reading habits have been improved since early ages. Similarly, the study of Mavi and Çetin (2008) reported that female candidate teachers had higher levels of reading habits compared to male candidate teachers and they concluded that females had the effect of reading more and loved reading more. The study of Gömleksiz (2004) conducted with the students of the Education Faculty demonstrated that female students told that they loved and desired books more and believed the benefits of reading. Our study was similar to the literature.

Generally speaking; similar to other studies, it was seen that candidate teachers of physical education and sports had poor reading habits and with advanced technology, high rate of internet use and TV watching affected reading attitudes negatively. Reading habit should be acquired at an early age with love and encouragement. Reading habit acquired at an early age will be a determining factor of the future reading habit.

Meanwhile, it may be recommended to the families to fix a reading-hour with their children. Finally, educational programs at schools should emphasize the importance of reading.

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