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Assessment of self-efficacy levels of Toros University students

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the self-efficacy levels of Toros University students according to some demographic characteristics between 2012-2013 academic year. The sample group includes 325 students studying in different departments in Toros University. Besides the questionnaire that contains demographic information, the self-efficacy scale was used in order to gather the data. The scale was developed Yıldırım and İlhan (2010). One way ANOVA for more than two groups and t test analysis were used. The results showed that there was not any significant difference for self-efficacy levels of students according to their gender, age and families' income level ($p>0.05$). As a result it could be said that self-efficacy levels of students did not differ according to the demographic variables which were examined in this research.

Keywords: Self-efficacy; gender; age; income level; student

Introduction

The term 'self-efficacy', as being an important determinant of human behaviour, was defined by Bandura (1989, 1994, 1997) within the scope of Social-Cognitive Theory and many theoretical and experimental studies that deal with this theory were carried out later on. Self-efficacy was defined as a person's belief about initiating an act in a way that he would have an effect on his surrounding and sustaining until achieving a result (Bandura & Adams, 1977; Bandura, 1994).

Self-efficacy does not mean a person's being talented but trusting his own sources. One who has enough talents in coping with any situation but has low self-efficacy will not be able to prompt those talents. The term 'self-efficacy' consists of such elements as planning of an act, being aware of organizing required talents, the motivation level that will arise as the result of revising the things

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gained with difficulty. A strong self-efficacy provokes success and well-being and the most important point is that it helps variations of personal development and skills. Previous successful experiences, other success models belonging to people having similar personal traits, positive feedbacks of other people and positive emotional being are the sources that reinforce the belief of self-efficacy. When an act results in a failure, a person who has high self-efficacy thinks that this failure does not result from his failure but from the improper procedures and strategies used.

Bandura (1997) pinpoints that the most important feature that distinguishes the ones who have high self-efficacy from those who have low self-efficacy is that the ones who have high self-efficacy recover in the case that they fail and keep their persistency for their aims. In other words, they do not give up.

To ensure the improvement that leads to success, it is essential that the teacher puts all the things that he/she knows forth and becomes a role model. At this point, the personal traits and awareness of the features of teaching styles of a teacher who has the responsibility of instructing and improving students will enable him/her to direct his/her students in all aspects.

Having a high self-efficacy helps individuals have control over the subjects in their life and reach the sources required. The term 'self-efficacy' is defined as cognitive, motivational and behavioral sources that are required to control the events in individual's lives and the beliefs that they have the capacity to prompt these sources when required (Bandura 1986, Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990, Zimmermann, 1995).

Self-efficacy is not what the person has but the general judgements about what he has and it is a cognitive process and an objective perception (Morris, 1995). Bandura states that self-efficacy is a person's own judgement about his capacity of organizing and achieving required tasks in a successful way to demonstrate a specific performance. (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). The term 'self-efficacy' which was put forward by Bandura in 1997 was combined with behaviour change theory in early years and it was interpreted in social cognitive theory of Bandura later (Gürsel, 2003).

The general aim of this study was to examine the self-efficacy levels of students studying at Toros University. Therefore, the self-efficacy levels of the students at Toros University were examined according to their gender, age and the income and of their family

Method

Participants:

325 students who studied in different departments at Toros University constituted the sample group of the study in 2012-2013 academic year. The students' age ranged 17 to 23. The students were chosen by convenience sampling method.

Instruments:**Self- efficacy Scale:**

General self-efficacy scale was used for data collection. Validity and reliability of the scale was done by Yıldırım and İlhan (2010). The coefficient of internal consistency of Cronbach's Alpha was found as 80 and the reliability of test-retest was found as 69. The scale has 17 items and some items were reversed. The total point differs from 17 to 85 in the scale in which answers ranged from 1 to 5. As the grade increases, self-efficacy belief of the individual increases too. Cronbach's Alpha value was found to be 0.77 for this research.

Analysis of Data:

One way ANOVA for income and age groups and t test analysis for gender comparison were used in data analysis. SPSS 17. program was used to analyse the data and level of significance was determined to be 0,05.

Results**Table 1. Analysis of self-efficacy according to gender**

Gender	N	M	Sd	t	p
Female	188	61.31	±9.44	-0,56	0,557
Male	137	61.91	±9.46		

According to data in the study there was not a significant difference for self-efficacy of students according to gender ($p > 0.05$).

Table 2. Analysis Self-efficacy according to age

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p
Intergroup	124,08	3	41,363	0,462	,709
Intragroup	28751,60	321	89,569		
Total	28875,69	324			

Table 2 demonstrates that there was not any significant difference between for self-efficacy levels according to age of the students ($p > 0.05$).

Table 3. Analysis self-efficacy of students according to the income level of their families

Source Of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p
Intergroup	410,79	4	102,700	1,155	,331
Intragroup	28464,89	320	88,953		
Total	28875,69	324			

The Data in Table 3 shows that there was not any significant difference for self- efficacy of three students according to their family's income level ($p>0.05$).

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine the self-efficacy levels of Toros University students according to some demographic variables. When national and international publications in education are searched, it can be seen that many of the studies are based on the teachers, their teaching methods or their characteristics etc. On the other hand, there have been few studies concerning the students and especially students' self-efficacy levels. It was found that students who have low self-efficacy have high stress level and low academic success level (Meece, 1990).

The data in our study highlights that there is not any significant difference for students' self-efficacy levels according to their gender. When Turkish social structure is taken into consideration, this is quite satisfactory and positive for female students. For example, Akbaş and Çelikkaleli (2006) did not found any significant difference between males and females students' self-efficacy levels. They reported that this result shows that traditional female roles have changed and there is a shift from traditional society to modern society in Turkey. Therefore, females could be more confident in their abilities. Sarı et al., (2011) reported in their study that female students scored significantly higher compared to males in self-efficacy. High self-efficacy scores of female students is a quite positive situation in Turkey which has the characteristics of patriarchy (Sarı et al., 2011).

According to the results of this study, there was not any significant difference for self-efficacy according to the students' age. This may have resulted from the fact that there was not any senior class student at Toros University and their age average was low. According to the researches, experience has a positive effect on self-efficacy. For example senior students computer self-efficacy score was found to be higher than other students. Therefore, it could be said that self-efficacy strengthens as length of study increases (Akkoyunlu & Kurbanoglu, 2003).

The data in the research illustrates no significant difference among the income level of the family. There have been different results on this subject in different studies. In a research made in Sakarya University, Aydnır, (2011) observed that as socio-economic level increased, the average score that participants got from the self-efficacy scale increased.

To sum up, students' self-efficacy level did not differ according to some demographic characteristics. Other factors that affect students' self-efficacy levels could be examined in the further researches.

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