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An Evaluation Of Classroom Management Skills Of Teachers At High Schools (Sample From The City Of Adana)

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Abstract

The main purpose of this research is to detect classroom management skills of teachers working at high schools in terms of different variables and then the skills that teachers find themselves adequate or inadequate. 467 female and 533 male teachers participated in this descriptive study on voluntary basis. "Classroom Management Skills Scale" developed by İlgar (2007) was used to collect the data. At the end of the study, significant relations were found between classroom management skills and some variables such as gender, age, professional experience, classroom management courses/seminars taken before, reading classroom management books, pedagogical background, types of schools. The skills that must be improved most are collaboration with administration, parents and counseling service foundation for the problems that teachers cannot overcome; using educational equipment in correlation with the course content; guiding students for more productive activities rather than taking the problematic behaviors under control.

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Keywords: Classroom management, high school teachers, classroom management skills, teacher training.

1. Introduction

Classroom management is one of the skills that teachers need to have for effective teaching. Classroom management is an ongoing process requiring teachers to make decisions about variable situations such as where and with whom the students should sit down; which teaching methods should be followed; how to ensure motivation and student participation; which materials to use; how to deal with misbehaviors, etc. (Emmer & Gerwels, 2005; Jones & Jones, 2004). Teachers' efficacy in classroom management depends on their academic and pedagogical background

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as well as their classroom management skills and experiences. According to the literature, most teachers are likely to spend a lot time on classroom management, they find themselves inadequate and they need training (Brouwer & Tomic, 2000; Johansen et al., 2011; Kaufman & Moss, 2010; Melnick & Meister, 2008; Merrett & Wheldall, 1993; Nelson, 2002). In-service training programmes to improve classroom management skills firstly need to reveal skills that teachers' find themselves effective and ineffective in order to become relevant. According to the literature in Turkey, it has been found that the studies on teachers' attitudes, skills and experiences about classroom management have usually been done with teachers from elementary schools (Çubukçu & Girmen, 2008; Kazu, 2007; Sadık & Doğanay, 2008; Yalçınkaya & Tonbul, 2002), and there are only a few studies on high school teachers (Akpınar & Özdaş, 2013; Çelik, 2007; Siyez, 2009). There is an increasing tendency for adolescents to show negative behaviors due to their physical, social and emotional changes and their changing needs are effective in their relation with their peers and teachers (Piowowar et. al. 2013). Therefore, classroom management behaviors of teachers in high schools are important not only for adolescents' academic but also psycho-social development (Wentzel, 1999). In this respect, this study investigates the classroom management skills of high school teachers in terms of different variables and aims to detect skills that teachers find themselves effective or ineffective.

2. Method

2.1. The Research Model

This descriptive study aims at detecting skills teachers find themselves adequate or inadequate in teaching by means of investigating classroom management skills of teachers working at high schools in terms of different variables.

2.2. Population and Sample

The population of the study is consists of teachers working at high schools in the city of Adana during the 2013-2014 academic year. 1000 teachers from randomly chosen 34 high schools, 10 of which are general and 15 of which are vocational, participated in the study on voluntary basis.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

In the collection of data, "Classroom Management Skills Scale" (CMSS) developed by İlgar (2007) was used. The 5 point type scale survey consists of one dimension and 81 items related to classroom management skills. Cronbach Alfa reliability coefficient was found as .98 while Spearman-Brown reliability coefficient was found as .95.

2.4. Data Analysis

The mean and standard deviation of scores that teachers got from CMSS were calculated to determine their classroom management skills. Independent t-test and ANOVA tests were used to find out whether there was significant difference in teachers' CMSS scores in terms of discussed variables. The significance level was accepted as .05.

3. Findings

The mean and standard deviation values of CMSS scores of teachers are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of CMSS scores.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	\bar{X}	Std. Deviation
CMSS	1000	2.51	5.00	4.28	.45

As can be seen in Table 1, the mean of CMSS scores of participant teachers is 4.28 and the standard deviation is .45. According to the five-scale questionnaire, these results reveal that teachers found themselves “very good” in classroom management skills involved in CMSS.

Table 2 illustrates the results of independent samples t-test performed in order to describe whether there is a significant difference between the CMSS points of participants in terms of gender, marital status, reading classroom management (CM) books, types of schools, types of programme and types of school systems.

Table 2. The results of independent samples t-tests.

Variables		N	\bar{X}	Std. dev.	t	p
Gender	Female	467	4.32	.43	2.937	.003*
	Male	533	4.24	.47		
Marital status	Single	186	4.26	.43	-.568	.570
	Married	814	4.28	.45		
Classroom Management Skills Scale (CMSS)	Reading CM books	689	4.32	.43	4.247	.000*
		No	311	4.19		
Types of schools	General high schools	522	4.31	.44	2.249	.025*
	Vocational high schools	478	4.24	.45		
Types of programme	Full- day	673	4.28	.46	.213	.831
	Half-day	327	4.27	.42		
Types of school system	Co-ed schools	914	4.27	.45	-2.314	.021*
	Single-sex schools	85	4.39	.43		

As Table 2 illustrates, the differences in CMSS averages of teachers is significant in favor of females for gender, reading CM books as for CM books literate, those working in state high schools according to school types, and of those working in girls schools according to the types of schools [$t(998) = 2.937, p < .005$; $4.247, p < .001$; $2.249, p < .05$; $-2.314, p < .05$]. There is no statistically significant difference among CMSS scores in terms of marital status and types of programme ($p > .05$).

Table 3 shows the results of ANOVA tests done in order to examine whether there is a significant difference among the scores of teachers in terms of age, professional experience, degree programmes, school subjects, pedagogical background, classroom management (CM) training background, socio-economic status of the school, levels of classes and class size.

As Table 3 illustrates, a significant difference was found among CMSS scores of teachers according to age, professional experience, pedagogical background, classroom management training background, socio-economic status of the school, and levels of classes. The LSD test results shows that teachers who are over 41 years old [$F(3-1000) = 3.160, p < .05$], who have more than 10 years of professional experience [$F(4-1000) = 3.620, p < .05$], who had pedagogical education during bachelor programme [$F(2-1000) = 7.916, p < .001$], who participated teacher training programmes on classroom management [$F(2-1000) = 3.161, p < .05$], who work at middle socio-economical schools [$F(2-1000) = 5.521, p < .005$] and who teach 11th and 12th grades have significantly higher CMSS scores than the others [$F(3-1000) = 4.089, p < .05$]. There is no statistically significant difference among CMSS scores in terms of degree programmes, school subjects they teach and class size.

Lastly, means of CMSS scores of teachers were ranked from highest to the lowest in order to determine the skills teachers find themselves “weak”. In this respect, classroom management skills that teachers need to improve are collaboration with administration, parents and counseling service foundation for the problems that teachers cannot overcome; using educational equipment in correlation with the course content; guiding students for more productive activities rather than taking the problematic behaviors under control; making use of group dynamics in classroom effectively and including various activities in classes. Teachers find themselves “very good” are being fair for disciplinary actions, being aware of what is going on, showing compliments for positive attitudes, adjusting tone of voice and intonation properly, and communicating with class leader, assistants to the leaders, and class presidents.

Table 3. The results of ANOVA tests.

Variables		N	\bar{X}	Std. dev.	F	p	LSD
Age	A. 21-30 ages	70	4.17	.44	3.160	.024*	C > A C > B
	B. 31-40 ages	461	4.25	.44			
	C. 41-50 ages	367	4.32	.45			
	D. 51 ages and +	102	4.29	.49			
Professional experience	A. 1-5 years	87	4.13	.45	3.620	.006*	C > A D > A E > A
	B. 6-10 years	122	4.25	.39			
	C. 11-15 years	260	4.26	.47			
	D. 16-20 years	244	4.31	.45			
	E. 20 years and +	287	4.33	.45			
Degree programmes	A. Education Faculty	295	4.28	.45	.167	.919	
	B. Technical Education Faculty	179	4.26	.45			
	C. Science and Letters Faculty	457	4.28	.45			
	D. Others	68	4.30	.44			
Classroom Management Skills Scale (CMSS)	A. Social science lessons	186	4.28	.44	.959	.429	
	B. Science lessons	296	4.26	.49			
	C. Vocational lessons	202	4.25	.46			
	D. Skills lessons	86	4.24	.41			
	E. Language lessons	230	4.28	.45			
Pedagogical background	A. Part of undergraduate education (4 years)	838	4.30	.44	7.916	.000*	A > B A > C
	B. Part of graduate education (1 year)	60	4.14	.41			
	C. Teaching certificate program after undergraduate education (1 year)	102	4.15	.52			
CM training background	A. None	395	4.29	.47	3.161	.043*	A > B C > B
	B. Lecturers taken before	253	4.22	.44			
	C. Courses, seminars taken before	352	4.31	.43			
Socio-economic status of the schools	A. Low	530	4.23	.46	5.521	.004*	B > A
	B. Middle	448	4.32	.43			
	C. High	22	4.38	.51			
Class year	A. 9.year	267	4.22	.46	4.089	.007*	A < C and D B < C and D
	B. 10.year	246	4.25	.43			
	C. 11.year	306	4.31	.45			
	D. 12.year	181	4.35	.45			
Class size	A. Less than 20 students	40	4.31	.52	.198	.898	
	B. 21-30 students	482	4.28	.45			
	C. 31-40 students	440	4.27	.44			
	D. 41-50 students	38	4.32	.44			

As Table 2 illustrates, the differences in CMSS averages of teachers is significant in favor of females for gender, reading CM books as for CM books literate, those working in state high schools according to school types, and of those working in girls schools according to the types of schools [$t(998) = 2.937, p < .005; 4.247, p < .001; 2.249, p < .05; -2.314, p < .05$]. There is no statistically significant difference among CMSS scores in terms of marital status and types of programme ($p > .05$).

4. Conclusion and Discussion

According to the results of the study, 41 year-old and older teachers with a pedagogical background during their bachelor programme, classroom management training, more than 10 years of professional background find themselves “very good” in classroom management skills. It can be concluded that long term pedagogical education is more effective in gaining Professional knowledge and skills but teachers need minimum 10 years of experience to reach self-efficacy in classroom management. On the other hand, the reason for teachers who had classroom management in-service training to have higher scores in CMSS than those who took classroom management courses can be related to the fact that in-service training can be understood better in accordance with real life experiences of teachers in classrooms. However, the recent research reveals that young teachers have less effect on high school students (Erden, 2001); experienced teachers are more effective in teaching and behavior management (Çubukçu & Girmen, 2008); in-service training programmes addressing needs help teachers develop themselves (Arslan & Şahin, 2013; Çakır, 2013; Sadık & Doğanay, 2007). The study shows that teachers working at middle social-economic

status schools with 11th and 12th grade students find their classroom management skills better. These results can be derived from the disadvantageous conditions of vocational high schools. The vocational high schools in Turkey are less-fortunate in terms of physical and technological conditions. The students are usually unsuccessful male students coming from rural areas. The teaching programmes in these schools with a need of teachers are found as inadequate to prepare students for a profession or university and the students and teachers at those schools are insensible to each other (Demirtaşı & Küçük, 2008; Kayır, 2004). Most of the studies show that male students in high schools tend to misbehave (Akpınar & Özdaş, 2013; Çelik & Ereskici, 2008; Sadık & İnal, 2011). The results also show that female teachers find themselves better than male teachers while teachers reading about classroom management find themselves better than those who do not. Teachers are the best recourse to develop them in terms of profession. Another resource for professional development is following related publications. 70% of participant teachers stated that they read books on classroom management which might mean that they are open to Professional development and the books they read address their needs. The reason why female teachers find themselves better than male teachers might be because regular high schools in which they work have better conditions than vocational high schools.

In this study, the researchers found that teachers found themselves poorer in collaboration with school administration, parents and educational counseling services and educational issues. The reason could be that teachers are lack of help from the councilors, schools are lack of materials, and students are passive in learning process. The related literature also illustrates the fact that educational counseling services are inadequate in schools (Hatunoğlu & Hatunoğlu, 2006; Yüksel-Şahin, 2008), councilors usually spend their time on different things (Deniz, 1993; Tennyson et al. 1989) and the biggest problem of high school students are related to classes (Kulaksızoğlu, 1989; Sadık & İnal, 2011). In this respect, it can be concluded that teachers should take in-service training on attention getting, generating motivation, teaching methods and techniques and material development.

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