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Examining the relationship between the communication skills and self-efficacy levels of physical education teacher candidates

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Abstract

The purpose of the present research is examining the relationship between the communication skills and self-efficacy levels of physical education teacher candidates. The sample of the research was selected via random sampling. A total of 130 students; 55 students studying at Near East University, School of Physical Education and Sports, Department of Teaching in Sports and Physical Education Department, and 75 students studying at Mugla Sitki Kocman University, Department of Physical Education and Sports participated in the research. In the present research; "Communication Skills Inventory" developed by Ersan and Balci (1998), "Teacher Competence Expectation Inventory" (TCEI) developed in accordance with the teacher competence indicators in the YOK (Board of Higher Education)/World Bank Development of National Education project (1998), and personal information form were used as data collection tools. Pearson Correlation Analysis was used to determine the relationship between communication skills and self-efficacy levels of teacher candidates; and significance tests were used to test whether there are significant differences in the communication skills and self-efficacy levels of participants in terms of demographic data. According to research findings; there is a positive significant correlation between the communication skills and self-efficacy levels of teacher candidates. There are no significant differences between communication skills and self-efficacy levels across genders ($p > 0.05$).

*Keywords:*teacher; communication skill; self-efficacy.

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1. Introduction

In the minds of societies, teaching is a proud and also satisfying and exciting profession as it requires great responsibility. No profession has ever shaped the lives of so many children and young people (Farris, 1996). No matter how well the goals are set in education, how well and functionally the course content is organized; it won't be possible to reach these goals as long as they are not carried in the hands of comprehensive teachers (Sunbul, 2001). Teachers who undertakes the function of raising humans in all societies are considered as the most strategic part of the social systems called as schools (Unal and Ada, 2001). For the education system to reach its goals, teachers play determinative and directive roles; which is more important than the factors such as physical conditions. These features of the teachers make them the most important and effective elements of educational environments (Demirtas et al., 2011).

Communication is the most important element required for humans to adapt the environment. Through communication, people can find the opportunities to reveal, share and evaluate the concepts and ideas in their minds. Affecting others, being affected by them, making use of them, being useful for them and being successful can all occur through communication (Caliskan, 2003). Communication skills that form the basis for many other skills can be defined as sensitivity to verbal and non-verbal messages, efficient listening and efficient reacting (Korkut, 2004). Communication can also be defined as the process of affecting the other party by using a number of symbols (Dokmen, 1989). Although each individual starts communication from the moment they are born, this communication may not be an efficient one all the time. Mistakes made in exchanging messages may result in the mis-delivery of the feelings, thoughts or information. In other words, when communication activity is done without paying attention to the necessary elements in the process, problems may occur in people's understanding each other. This results in a situation when individuals cannot express themselves as they intended to or misunderstand the other party (Demirci 2002).

Self-efficacy perception is related to the individuals' beliefs in themselves in establishing control on their own functionality or the events that affect their lives (Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacy belief is one of the variables that is used in many researches conducted in various subject fields. People have the capacity to think about and criticize themselves. With the knowledge, and experience they gain in the course of time, they record their ideas about themselves. They can decide about the efficacy of these ideas according to the results of their activities. All these decisions may develop the individuals' opinions on how efficient they will be in doing a job successfully (Yavuzer and Koc, 2002). Self-efficacy is an important indicator of how individuals organize their thoughts and behaviors. Especially the researchers conducted in psychology and education proved that self-efficacy is a more consistent predictor of the results of the behaviors than the other motivational variables (Schunk and Pajares, 2010). Self-efficacy belief is one of the most important concepts in Bandura's social learning theory, and it can be defined as the individuals' belief in their capacity to organize activities required to perform certain tasks and to realize these successfully (Bandura, 1986). Individuals' judgements related to how successfully they can use their efficiencies in accordance with their purposes is conceptualized by Bandura as "Self-Efficacy Beliefs"(Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy beliefs may affect individuals' ways of thinkings and their emotional reactions. Individuals with high self-efficacy can be more comfortable and more productive when they face jobs with high-level difficulty (Pajares, 2002). Self-efficacy beliefs are individuals' self-perceptions about their abilities. These beliefs of self-efficacy form the basis for motivation, well-being and personal gain. For this reason, if individuals don't believe that they can produce the desired results, they will have less encouragement for acting or moving on when they face difficulties (Schunk and Pajares, 2010).

The greatest responsibility falls to teachers in realizing the targeted skills for students in the curriculum. Teachers need to have some qualifications to perform their duties and responsibilities. Teachers' level of teaching competency is an important pre-condition for the efficiency of the implementations (Buyukkaragoz and Civi, 1997). Teachers with lower communication skills, have lower contribution to the success of students. Students need to clearly and easily understand what their teachers say (Basar, 2003). Expressing an opinion in a more efficient way is not only an issue of educators but of everyone. Pictures on cave walls, use of body language as a means of communication, invention of writing, perpetuating the writings on tablets, leathers or other material, and activities for educating the young people are all typical proofs of communication in educational (Simsek, 2000).

A teacher's self-efficacy belief is the belief in his/her skill to provide student participation even among difficult or unmotivated students and producing the desired results of learning; and there are many effects of this belief (Gulebaglan, 2003). Teachers should develop the students' skills of setting goals and evaluating themselves (Schunk, 2003, Cited in: Senel, 2013). In this context, teacher self-efficacy can be defined as their beliefs in their competency of implementing the teaching and learning process successfully and being able to change student behaviors (Sahin, 2010). Efficient teachers should create classroom environments where fight for academic sternness and intelligence; and required emotional support and encouragement for gaining the academic excellence exist together. All teachers perform their duties of taking a serious responsibility for reinforcing the students' beliefs in themselves in the best way because it is obvious that these self-beliefs may have constructive or destructive effects. Teachers who consider themselves as the only responsible for developing students' cognitive skills or the teachers who believe that developing students' fragile egos is beyond their purposes, re-consider their teaching duties and these duties are reflected on their natural roles as the educators of young people (Pajares and Shunk, 2001;Cited in: Senel, 2013).

In the light of this information, the purpose of the present study is examining the relationship between communication skills and self-efficacy levels of Physical Education and Sports teacher candidates in terms of some variables.

2. Method

A total of 130 students; 55 students studying at Near East University, School of Physical Education and Sports, Department of Teaching in Sports and Physical Education Department, and 75 students studying at Mugla Sitki Kocman University, Department of Physical Education and Sports voluntarily participated in the research. 38 of the participants were female and 92 of them were male. "Communication Skills Inventory" developed by Balci (1996), and finalized by Ersan and Balci (1998), was used to measure the communication skills of the students participated in the research; and "Teacher Competence Expectation Inventory" (TCEI) developed in accordance with the teacher competence indicators in the YOK (Board of Higher Education)/World Bank Development of National Education project (1998) was used to measure the students' self-efficacy levels.

Personal information form: This form consists of questions related to gender, class, graduated school type, parents' occupations, accommodation style, place of settlement and the university they study currently.

Communication Skills Inventory (CSI): Communication Skills Inventory was first developed by Balci (1996). Validity and reliability studies of the first version of the inventory was done and it consisted of 70 items. The inventory was implemented on 500 university students later, and the number of items was decreased to 45 after a factor analysis (Ersanli &Balci, 1998). The inventory finalized by Ersanli and Balci (1998) consists of likert type 45 questions. The inventory measures the communication skills in cognitive, emotional, and behavioral terms. There are 15 items for each sub-dimension. The items falling into each sub-dimension are as follows:

- Cognitive: 1, 3, 6, 12, 15, 17, 18, 20, 24, 28, 30, 33, 37, 43, 45
- Emotional: 5, 9, 11, 26, 27, 29, 31, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44
- Behavioral: 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 32, 41

Following the implementation on 500 university students, Ersanli and Balci (1998) conducted the inventory on a group of 170 people to test the reliability after one month period. 2 halves reliability coefficient was found as 0.64 in the reliability study done via split-half method, and reliability coefficient was found as 0.68 in the reliability study done via test-retest method. Cronbach Alpha coefficient calculated in order to define the internal consistency was found as 0.72. Factor analysis revealed that items are accumulated under three dimensions and these dimensions were named as cognitive, emotional and behavioral communication skills in accordance with their contents. The correlations between each of the dimensions and the total communication skill score are respectively; 0.83, 0.73 and 0.82. In the validity study carried with "Communication Skill Evaluation Scale" developed by Korkut (1996), validity coefficient of the scale was found as 0.70 (Ersanli & Balci, 1998).

Teacher Competence Expectation Inventory (TCEI): 38 items forming the Teacher Competence Expectation Inventory was developed in accordance with the teacher competence indicators in the YOK (Board of Higher

Education)/World Bank Development of National Education project (1998). Students were asked to read each statement carefully and answer the questions related to how much they believe in themselves in performing the behaviors defined in statements on a 5-level scale; 5=Always, 4=Frequently, 3=Sometimes, 2=Rarely, 1=Never. Item-total score correlations were calculated with the obtained data and 38 items with 0.001 significance level were accepted. Internal consistency of TCEI was calculated with Cronbach Alpha and found as 0.84. In addition, a 0.79 value was obtained with split-half method. Information related to students personal features was collected with a form prepared by researchers (Yavuzer and Koc, 2002). The highest score to be obtained from self-efficacy scale is 190, and lowest score is 38. Teacher self-efficacy score intervals are as follows:

- Low: 38.00 – 89.00
- Medium: 90.00 – 141.00
- High: 142.00 – 190.00

3. Findings

Table 1. T test results according to gender variable

	Gender	N	X	SS	Sd	t	p
Cognitive Communication Average	Female	38	3.77	.56	128	.99	.329
	Male	92	3.67	.50			
Emotional Communication Average	Female	38	3.44	.60	128	.87	.385
	Male	92	3.35	.53			
Behavioral Communication Average	Female	38	3.77	.57	128	1.24	.215
	Male	92	3.64	.50			
Communication Levels Total Score	Female	38	10.98	1.62	128	1.12	264
	Male	92	10.66	1.39			
Self-efficacy Total Score	Female	38	154.53	24.13	128	.80	.424
	Male	92	150.76	24.41			

p<0.05

Table 1shows that, there are no significant differences across genders in terms of communication levels total score and sub-dimensions. There is also no significant difference across genders in terms of self-efficacy levels.

Table 2. T test results according to Participants' University Variable

	University	N	X	SS	Sd	t	p
Cognitive Communication Average	Cyprus	55	3.56	.37	128	2.73	.00
	Mugla	75	3.81	.59			
Emotional Communication Average	Cyprus	55	3.15	.33	128	4.15	.00
	Mugla	75	3.53	.62			
Behavioral Communication Average	Cyprus	55	3.52	.40	128	3.09	.00
	Mugla	75	3.80	.57			
Communication Levels Total Score	Cyprus	55	10.23	.87	128	3.65	.00
	Mugla	75	11.14	1.68			
Self-efficacy Total Score	Cyprus	55	154.67	21.01	128	1.13	.27
	Mugla	75	149.80	26.40			

p<0.05

Table 2 presents that there are significant differences across universities in terms of communication total scores, and communication level sub-dimensions; and there is no significant difference across participants' universities in terms of self-efficacy levels.

Table 3. Correlation table on participants' communication levels, sub-dimensions and self-efficacy levels

		Cognitive communication	Emotional Communication	Behavioral Communication	Communication Total
Emotional Communication	r	.742**			
	p	.000			
	N	130			
Behavioral Communication	r	.835**	.721**		
	p	.000	.000		
	N	130	130		
Communication Total	r	.933**	.897**	.925**	
	p	.000	.000	.000	
	N	130	130	130	
Self-efficacy Total	r	.349**	.167	.391**	.327**
	p	.000	.058	.000	.000
	N	130	130	130	130

p<0.01**,p<0.05*

Table 3 shows that, there is a positive significant correlation between communication skills and self-efficacy levels of teacher candidates (r=.327). There are also significant correlations between self-efficacy total score and cognitive communication (r=.349) sub-dimension; and between self-efficacy total score and behavioral communication (r=.391) sub-dimension of communication skills inventory.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

In the present research, relationship between communication skills and self-efficacy levels of physical education teacher candidates is examined; and no significant differences were detected across genders in terms of communication levels total scores and sub-dimensions. We can assert that, the education of the teacher candidates are got equally by both genders, and their communication skills are similar to each other. In her study, Pehlivan (2005) found no significant differences across genders in terms of teacher candidates' communication skills; which supports the findings of our research. In a similar study, Acar (2009) claimed that there are no correlations between communication skills and gender. Moreover, he found no significant differences across genders in terms of self-efficacy levels of participants. Literature related to the finding of the present research revealed no different results. Koc and Yavuzer (2002), found in their research that there is no significant difference across genders in terms of students' teacher self-efficacy expectation scores; and female and male students have similar levels of self-efficacy. Erisen and Celikoz (2003) observed in their research that, there are no significant differences across genders in terms of individuals' self-efficacy levels.

Examination of participants' universities variable revealed a significant difference in communication levels total scores, and communication skills sub-dimensions; and no significant difference in self-efficacy levels. Students studying at Mugla Sitki Kocman University have higher score averages than students of Near East University in terms of communication skills score averages and communication skills sub-dimensions. There aren't many researches related to this subject in the literature. As different variables come into prominence for private and state universities, we suggest that further researches be conducted on the subject matter.

In the present research, a positive correlation between teacher candidates' communication skills and self-efficacy levels was detected (r=.327). There were also positive correlations between self-efficacy total score and cognitive communication sub-dimension of communication skills inventory (r=.349); and behavioral communication sub-dimension (r=.391). We can claim that, as the communication skills levels of teacher candidates increase, their self-efficacy levels increase as well.

Teaching self-efficacy levels of students studying in the department of Physical Education and Sports are high in general. According to the findings obtained in the research, students' teaching self-efficacy levels are high (Varol, 2007). In his research conducted on university students, Ceyhan (2006) found that personal, social and general adaptation levels of students are stronger in accordance with communication skills. Ergin and Birol (2000) emphasized that learning is a good communication product and as new learnings can only occur via acquiring new knowledge and skills, no learning can be realized without communication.

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