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Physical education teacher's views of effective teaching methods in physical education

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine Physical Education (PE) teacher's self reported view about various teaching methods and Turkish PE curriculum and to investigate the gender differences in selecting the teaching methods. Sixty six PE teachers (32 men, 34 women) were participated voluntarily in this study. After having permission, 36 - item questionnaire administrated to the PE teachers. The results showed that (a) 70.6 % of women and 68.8% of men PE teachers considered the PE lesson curriculum as an insufficient, (b) when asked "which teaching style do you think you have the best result?" 29.4 % of women PE teachers selected command style, 43.8 % of men PE teachers selected practice style, (c) 35.3 % of women and %31.3 men PE teachers reported that they were most frequently used command style in their classroom, (d) when asked "which teaching strategies do you prefer?" 64.7 % of women and 34.4 % of men teachers reported that they preferred expository teaching strategies and there was a significant gender difference in preference of teaching strategies, $X^2(5, N=66)=12.58, p=.03$. According to the results of the present study, there was an incongruity between PE teacher's views, preferences and Turkish PE Curriculum suggestions about teaching methods for PE classes.

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1. Introduction

Education can be described as a planned and programmed process which is applied in order to attain the desired changes in a person's behavior. In the general education the teaching is defined as a thoughtful, planned and systematic organization of learning. Learning is a process of acquisition of specific knowledge, skills and habits (Demirel, 1993).

Physical education is defined as a process through which an individual obtains optimal physical, mental, and social skills and fitness through physical activity (Lumpkin, 1998).

The examination of teaching effectiveness, within educational domains such as sport pedagogy, remains an important focus. As many different variables contribute to learning, teachers should have the skills to use a various teaching methods to match the demands of their students (Jaakkola, & Watt, 2011). In physical education, Kulinna and Cothran (2003) suggested that an effective approach to pedagogical practice is to use a number of different teaching styles.

The current Turkish physical education curriculum was renewed by the Ministry of National Education for primary school in 2006, for secondary school in 2010. This renewal of the curriculum can be considered as a reform movement in the Turkish education system taken towards achieving more quality and contemporary education,

which is essential to survive and prosper in our rapidly changing world. Unlike the former curriculum that was heavily drawn from behaviorist understanding, the new primary curriculum is based on constructivist paradigm and multiple intelligence theory, which imposed on considerable changes in schools (Çalışkan, & Tabanlı, 2009).

The effective physical education program targets the development of a physically active lifestyle directly. It does so by providing an instructional program that is aimed at the acquisition of the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that make a volitional engaging in moderate to vigorous physical activity both possible and probable (Rink, & Hall, 2008).

Research studies have provided a wealth of information regarding the characteristic of effective teaching, but relatively few researchers have examined how teacher themselves define effective teaching. Teachers' perception of their own effectiveness will ultimately provide the basis for their action and advised researchers to discover more about the subjective beliefs of teachers (Chatoupis, & Vagenas, 2011).

The aim of this study was to examine Physical Education (PE) teacher's self reported view about various teaching methods and Turkish physical education curriculum and to investigate the gender differences in selecting the teaching methods.

2. Method

Sixty six PE teachers (32 men, 34 women) who worked in Primary and Secondary school of Antalya city center in Turkey were participated voluntarily in this study. Views of PE teachers were determined by the questionnaire which was prepared by the researchers by examining the questionnaires of previous studies. The questionnaire has 36 items related to teachers' demographic characteristics, method selections in the Mosston's spectrum of teaching styles and views about new PE curriculum. A preliminary pilot-study was carried out for reaching the final form of questionnaire. After having permission from the Antalya National Education Director of Province, questionnaire administrated to the PE teachers in their school environment. All participants were informed about the aims of the study. In the first part of the statistical analysis, descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and frequencies) were computed. Chi-squared test was calculated on frequencies for determining gender differences. The independent sample t - test was used to determine differences in age and teaching experiences. All statistical procedures were performed in SPSS Version 10.0; the alpha level was set at .05.

3. Findings

Descriptive statistics of age and teaching experiences of PE teachers, including means (M) and standard deviations (SD), are reported in Table 1. There were 34 (51.5 %) women and 32 men (48.5 %) totally 66 PE teachers with the mean age of 39.99 ± 6.68 yrs and mean teaching experience of 16.11 ± 6.84 yrs.

Table 1. Age and teaching experiences of PE teachers

PE Teachers	Age (years)		Teaching Experiences (years)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Women (n=34)	39.35	6.67	16.04	6.95
	$t_{(64)} = -.81, p=.42$		$-.09, p=.93$	
Men (n=32)	40.69	6.74	16.18	6.84

Statistical analyses showed that there were no gender differences in age [$t_{(64)} = -.81, p=.42$] and teaching experiences [$t_{(64)} = -.09, p=.93$].

Responds of the PE teachers to the item "which teaching methods do you think you have the best results?" are reported in table 2.

Table 2. PE teachers respond to the item "which teaching methods do you think you have the best results?"

Teaching Methods	Women		Men		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Command	10	29,4	5	15,6	15	22,7
Reciprocal	4	11,8	4	12,5	8	12,1
Self Check	3	8,8	–	–	3	4,6
Divergent	1	2,9	–	–	1	1,5

Practice	8	23,5	14	43,8	22	33,3
Inclusion	7	20,6	8	25,0	15	22,7
Guided Discovery	1	2,9	1	3,1	2	3,0

In women, command method (29.4 %) was the most preferred method for the best results in teaching PE. Divergent and guided discovery methods had the lowest rating (2.9 %) among women PE teachers. In men, while practice method had the highest ratings (43.8 %) in reaching the best results, self-check and divergent methods were not preferred. There was no gender difference in best results methods ($p>.05$).

PE teachers’ views about teaching methods which they were most frequently used in their classroom settings are shown in table 3.

Table 3. PE teacher’s views about teaching methods which they were mostly used

Teaching Methods	Women		Men		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Command	12	35,3	10	31,3	22	33,3
Reciprocal	2	5,9	3	9,4	5	7,6
Self Check	1	2,9	1	3,1	2	3,0
Practice	11	32,4	8	25,0	19	28,8
Inclusion	7	20,6	9	28,1	16	24,2
Guided Discovery	1	2,9	1	3,1	2	3,0

The item related to PE teachers’ views about most frequently used methods showed that 35.3 % of women and %31.3 of men PE teachers most frequently used command style in their classroom. Self-Check and Guided Discovery methods were used very rarely by PE teachers. There was no gender difference in frequencies of method that used by PE teachers in their classroom ($p>.05$).

Table 4. Responds of the PE teachers to the item “which teaching strategies do you prefer?”

Teaching strategies	Women		Men		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Inquiry-based learning	5	14,7	6	18,8	11	16,7
Constructivist	2	5,9	1	3,1	3	4,5
Mastery Learning	1	2,9	2	6,3	3	4,5
Expository	22	64,7	11	34,4	33	50,0
Cooperative	4	11,8	9	28,1	13	19,7
Experiential	–	–	3	9,4	3	4,5

Responds of the PE teachers to the item “which teaching strategies do you prefer?” are shown in table 4. Results of analyses revealed that, 64.7 % of women and 34.4 % of men PE teachers preferred expository teaching strategies and there was a significant gender difference in preference of teaching strategies, $\chi^2 (5, N =66) = 12.58, p=. 03$. Constructivist, experiential and mastery learning strategies had a lowest preferred rating (4.5 %) among PE teachers.

Responds of the PE teachers to the item “Do you think the new PE curriculum is sufficient and effective” are reported in table 5.

Table 5. PE teachers respond to the item of “Do you think the new PE curriculum is sufficient and effective?”

	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
Women	10	29,4	24	70,6
Men	10	31,3	22	68,8
Total	20	30,3	46	69,7

The results showed that 70.6 % of women and 68.8% of men PE teachers considered the new PE curriculum is not sufficient and effective. There was no gender difference in PE curriculum view’s of the PE teachers ($p>.05$).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine Physical Education teachers' self-reported views about various teaching methods, Turkish physical education curriculum and to investigate the gender differences in selecting the teaching methods and strategies. The results revealed that Turkish PE teachers who worked in Primary and Secondary school of Antalya city center used the command and practice styles the most, and self-check, divergent and guided discovery styles the least. The trend of using teacher rather than student-centered teaching strategy was evident in this sample of Turkish PE teachers. The expository teaching strategies more preferred than constructivist, experiential and mastery learning strategies by Turkish PE teachers. In addition, this study revealed that significant differences existed in teacher use of teaching strategies in relation to gender. In the current study, the women PE teachers viewed the command method as the most beneficial and divergent and guided discovery methods as the least beneficial for their students. The men PE teachers viewed the practice method as the most beneficial and self check and divergent methods as the least beneficial for their students.

The present findings were similar to those of Şirinkan & Gündoğdu (2011), Jaakkola and Watt (2011), Kulinna and Cothran (2003). In their study Şirinkan & Gündoğdu (2011) found that Turkish PE teachers mostly used command and practice methods in their lessons. Jaakkola and Watt (2011) examined what teaching styles Finnish PE teachers report using and how beneficial they perceive the different styles to be for their students. Finnish teachers were found to use command and practice styles the most, and the self-teaching, self-check, and convergent discovery styles the least and they preferred teacher rather than student-centered teaching strategies. Similar results were revealed in the study of Kulinna and Cothran (2003) with American PE teachers. Cothran et al. (2005) showed that the use of different teaching methods varied across countries; however, the main approach for teachers in all countries was the use of teacher-centered styles.

The current Turkish physical education curriculum was renewed by the Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education for primary school in 2006, for secondary school in 2010. The new curriculum aims to increase students' awareness of their own learning through exposing them multiple but holistic learning experiences enriched by various instructional strategies and materials. Students are no longer seen as passive learners, as it was the case in the former curriculum, which was heavily relied on the traditional teacher-centered teaching methods. The new PE curriculum emphasizes the use of constructivist rather than behaviorist approaches (Çalışkan, & Tabanlı, 2009). In the advice to PE teacher part of the new PE curriculum, use and benefits of student-centered methods like reciprocal, self-check, inclusion, guided discovery and divergent methods are suggested. In the present study most of the PE teachers (69,7 %) did not have positive views about new PE curriculum. According to their views new PE curriculum was not efficient enough. Findings revealed that there was an incongruity between PE teacher's views and new PE curriculum suggestion about teaching methods and strategies. The reason of this incongruity may be not discussing new PE curriculum with a wider range of stakeholders like students, teachers, inspectors, parents, coaches and academics in developing process. It is suggested that the outcomes of the application of new PE curriculum, including teacher and student feedback, and the modifications made based on the feedback, should be reported and discussed in a big open forum. In service training activities for PE teachers concerning the new curriculum and new teaching approaches and methods should be done more frequently.

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