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The Relationship between Negative Behaviors of Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Physical Education and Sports Lessons and Teachers' Burnout Levels

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to reveal the relationship between the behaviors of students in physical education and sports lessons in Special Education Application Centers in Turkey and the burnout levels of physical education and sports teachers. The sample group of the study comprised 195 physical education and sports teachers who work in Special Education Application Centers. The data gathered from the study group were statistically analyzed using SPSS 18.0 for package software. In conclusion, the obtained findings demonstrated that the physical education and sports teachers in the study group were faced with the reality of burnout.

Keywords: students with intellectual disabilities, student behaviors, physical education and sports teachers, burnout

Introduction

The teaching profession is one of the most stressful professions. The burnout caused by the stress of the profession and the physiological and psychological problems caused by the burnout reduces the quality of teaching (Kyraicou, 1987). When teachers start to experience burnout, they may start to be more authoritative, conflicting, obstructive and controlling. This state may affect their behavior

both inside and outside of the classroom. Teacher burnout may be exemplified as a negative behavior which develops against the stressful education environment, students, education state and a lack of support from the management (Cemaloğlu & Kayabaşı, 2007; Tümkaya, 1996).

Burnout is the last step of the process of losing the will to work in individuals with high spirits to work. It is observed in individuals who started to work with high spirits, could not achieve the desired success, and experienced physical, emotional and mental exhaustion (Pines, 2003). Every type of behavior which may affect teaching in a negative way is considered as an unwanted behavior (Çelik, 2002).

In Turkey, individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism can continue their education with individuals without disabilities by inclusion of every type and at every level. For these individuals, official and private special education day schools and facilities at every level are being opened (Legislation of the Ministry of National Education, 2016). Special Education Application Centers, which are opened within this framework, are educational facilities in which children with intellectual disabilities, who cannot benefit from the general education programs, progress. These education institutions provide education programs which are mainly focused on basic life skills and functional academic skills (Sucuoğlu, 2010: 44). In Turkey, the purpose of special education provided for individuals with intellectual disabilities is to ensure that these individuals gain the required independent life skills in order to maintain their lives in society without depending on others (Karabulut & Yıkılmış, 2010: 104).

Recently, via studies on burnout, it is observed that studies are carried out on work and various jobs (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012), teachers (Dalgac & Tekşen, 2014; Özgan et al., 2013), healthcare personnel and nurses (Güllüoğlu-Işık, 2015; Akpınar and Barlas, 2015; Sarsılmaz et al., 2015). It is inevitable to experience positive or negative interactions in places where interactive human relations occur. Today, the determination and evaluation of burnout in the teaching profession in the education system are rather crucial. By determining the levels of burnout and elements which cause burnout in teachers, the subject of minimizing the effects of burnout in the teacher is still a researched subject. This study was aimed to reveal the burnout levels of physical education and sports teachers, who work in Special Education Application Centers in Turkey, according to several variables and how the behaviors of students with intellectual disabilities affect the burnout level of physical education and sports teachers. Additionally, it was aimed to contribute to the efforts of improving the qualities in these schools by determining the burnout levels of physical education and sports teachers who work in Special Education Application Centers and behaviors of students with intellectual disabilities.

Research Methodology

The study group comprised 195 physical education and sports teachers who work in Special Education and Application Centers (schools for individuals with intellectual disabilities) in Turkey.

In order to gather data about the study group, a survey form, developed by the researchers, aimed to determine the frequency of the behaviors of students with intellectual disabilities and Maslach Burnout Inventory, developed by Maslach & Jackson (1981), were employed.

In the development of the survey form aimed to determine the frequency of the behaviors of students, the study, which was carried out by Özdemir (2009), was benefited from.

In this study, prior to the factor analyses of the obtained data from MBI, the appropriateness of the factor analysis was tested by using “Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity” tests. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was calculated to be 0.76 and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity result was calculated to be $\chi^2 = 1253.309$ ($p < 0.05$). In the analysis of the reliability of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha coefficients of sub-dimensions were investigated. The coefficients were determined to be 0.89 in the emotional exhaustion sub-dimension, 0.72 in the depersonalization sub-dimension and 0.77 in the personal failure sub-dimension.

Frequency and percentage calculations were performed in order to demonstrate the distribution of the study group according to professional variables. As for the burnout sub-dimension scores, independent sample t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were performed on parametric data in order to evaluate differentiation levels which are dependent on the independent variables. In non-parametric data, Kruskal Wallis and Mann-Whitney U tests were performed. In order to determine correlation levels between the sub-dimensions of the scale, the Pearson Correlation and Linear Regression tests were used. Statistical significance degree (alpha (α) error rate) was regarded as $p < 0.005$.

Research Results

In accordance with the aim of the study, the obtained findings and results of physical education and sports teachers who work in Special Education Application Centers in Turkey are presented in the tables below.

Table 1. Mean score levels regarding unwanted student behaviors which the study group encountered

Items	Unwanted Student Behaviors	N	Mean	SD
1	Speaking without permission	195	3.53	0.86
2	Walking around without permission	195	3.12	0.95
3	Disturbing other students	195	3.01	0.81
4	Speaking in a rude and offending way	195	2.69	0.92
5	Not fulfilling the assigned tasks	195	2.71	0.92
6	Not keeping the surroundings clean	195	2.53	0.88
7	Damaging the belongings of other students and teachers	195	2.53	0.98
8	Constantly playing with objects	195	2.95	0.98
9	Acting in a way that disturbs the lesson flow	195	3.04	0.98
10	Eating something during the lesson	195	2.26	0.84
11	Being interested in things irrelevant to the lesson	195	3.03	0.86
12	Constant complaints about other students	195	3.06	0.94

SD= Standard Deviation

In the analysis of the opinions of the study group, the complaints with the highest mean scores among the unwanted student behaviors were observed to be “Speaking without permission”, “Walking around without permission”, “Constant complaints about other students” and “Acting in a way that disturbs the lesson flow”. The least amount of complaint was observed to be in the matter of “Eating something during the lesson” (Table 1).

Table 2. Analysis of the results of the study group, according to gender

Scale	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	p-Value
Emotional Exhaustion	Male	75	1.48	0.80	3.933	0.000*
	Female	120	1.06	0.60		
Depersonalization	Male	75	0.84	0.77	-0.048	0.962
	Female	120	0.84	0.58		
Personal Failure	Male	75	1.45	0.57	0.407	0.684
	Female	120	1.41	0.57		

SD= Standard Deviation *p<0.05

The emotional exhaustion sub-dimension scores ($t=3.933$; $p<0.05$) of the male physical education and sports teachers in the study group were observed to be higher compared to the female physical education and sports teachers, suggesting that this forms a statistically meaningful difference (Table 2).

Table 3. Analysis of the results of the study group, according to education status

Scale	Education Status	n	Mean	SD	Z	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Undergraduate	180	1.20	0.70	-1.268	0.205
	Post-graduate	15	1.48	0.78		
Depersonalization	Undergraduate	180	0.81	0.65	-2.307	0.021*
	Post-graduate	15	1.24	0.72		
Personal Failure	Undergraduate	180	1.40	0.51	-1.549	0.121
	Post-graduate	15	1.70	1.05		

*p<0.05

It was observed that there were meaningful differences between the burnout levels of the physical education and sports teachers, according to education status, in the depersonalization sub-dimension ($Z=-2.307$; $p<0.05$). In the depersonalization sub-dimension, it was determined that the physical education and sports teachers with post-graduate education had higher burnout levels (Table 3).

Table 4. Analysis of the results of the study group, according to service time

Scale	Service Time	n	Mean	SD	F	p-Value	Scheffe
Emotional Exhaustion	0–5 years (a)	75	1.16	0.85	0.642	0.589	
	6–10 years (b)	51	1.28	0.61			
	11–15 years (c)	42	1.30	0.64			
	16–20 years (d)	27	1.13	0.55			
Depersonalization	0–5 years (a)	75	0.84	0.74	0.154	0.927	
	6–10 years (b)	51	0.82	0.63			
	11–15 years (c)	42	0.90	0.63			
	16–20 years (d)	27	0.80	0.52			
Personal Failure	0–5 years (a)	75	1.30	0.43	10.485	0.000*	b>d c>a,b,d
	6–10 years (b)	51	1.47	0.47			
	11–15 years (c)	42	1.78	0.70			
	16–20 years (d)	27	1.13	0.58			

*p<0.05

It was observed that in the study group the physical education and sports teachers with the service time of 11–15 had higher levels of burnout in the personal failure sub-dimension (Table 4).

Table 5. Correlation results between the burnout sub-dimensions of the study group

Scale	Identifiers	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization
Emotional Exhaustion	r	1	-
	p	-	-
	N	195	-
Depersonalization	r	0.512*	1
	p	0.000	
	N	195	195
Personal Failure	r	0.367*	0.217*
	p	0.000	0.002
	N	195	195

*p<0.05 r= Pearson Correlation p = Significance N = Number of Subjects

In the analysis of the data gathered from the study group, it was determined that there was a positive linear and moderate correlation ($r=0.512$; $p<0.05$) between the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization sub-dimensions (Table 5). It was observed that there was a positive linear, yet mild correlation ($r=0.367$; $p<0.05$) between the emotional exhaustion and personal failure sub-dimensions. Additionally, it was determined that there was a positive linear, yet mild correlation ($r=0.217$; $p<0.05$) between the depersonalization and personal failure sub-dimensions.

Table 6. Multiple regression analysis, according to emotional exhaustion and unwanted student behaviors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-0.404	0.280	-	-1.443	0.151
1	0.120	0.087	0.146	1.384	0.168
2	-0.119	0.088	-0.159	-1.353	0.178
3	0.325	0.086	0.351	3.765	0.000*
4	-0.056	0.091	-0.074	-0.619	0.537
5	0.188	0.088	0.240	2.126	0.035*
6	0.202	0.102	0.245	1.991	0.048*
7	-0.139	0.075	-0.182	-1.861	0.064
8	-0.021	0.087	-0.028	-0.239	0.812

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
9	0.108	0.090	0.146	1.203	0.231
10	-0.181	0.080	-0.213	-2.254	0.025*
11	-0.063	0.079	-0.074	-0.796	0.427
12	0.145	0.071	0.191	2.038	0.043*

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

In the multiple regression analysis, it was observed that emotional exhaustion, which is the dependent variable, was affected by 5 unwanted student behaviors, which is the independent variable (Table 6). These five behaviors are matters 3, 5, 6, 10 and 12, respectively.

Table 7. Multiple regression analysis according to depersonalization and unwanted student behavior

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-0.032	0.259	-	-0.125	0.900
1	-0.119	0.081	-0.154	-1.474	0.142
2	0.058	0.081	0.083	0.716	0.475
3	-0.004	0.080	-0.004	-0.045	0.964
4	-0.035	0.085	-0.049	-0.416	0.678
5	0.051	0.082	0.070	0.629	0.530
6	0.105	0.094	0.136	1.117	0.266
7	-0.069	0.069	-0.097	-1.001	0.318
8	-0.216	0.080	-0.309	-2.689	0.008*
9	0.379	0.084	0.546	4.535	0.000*
10	0.023	0.075	0.028	0.303	0.762
11	0.011	0.073	0.015	0.157	0.875
12	0.127	0.066	0.179	1.931	0.055

a. Dependent Variable: Depersonalization

In the multiple regression analysis, it was observed that depersonalization, which is the dependent variable, was affected by 2 unwanted student behaviors, which is the independent variable (Table 7). These two behaviors are matters 8 and 9, respectively.

Table 8. Multiple regression analysis according to personal failure and unwanted student behavior

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	0.509	0.204	-	2.493	0.014
1	-0.239	0.063	-0.368	-3.766	0.000*
2	0.014	0.064	0.023	0.215	0.830
3	0.118	0.063	0.163	1.877	0.062
4	0.122	0.067	0.203	1.827	0.069
5	-0.006	0.064	-0.010	-0.098	0.922
6	0.216	0.074	0.333	2.915	0.004*
7	-0.028	0.055	-0.046	-0.506	0.613
8	0.030	0.063	0.051	0.475	0.635
9	0.031	0.066	0.054	0.474	0.636
10	0.007	0.059	0.010	0.114	0.909
11	-0.002	0.057	-0.003	-0.040	0.968
12	0.128	0.052	0.215	2.470	0.014*

a. Dependent Variable: Personal Failure

In the multiple regression analysis, personal failure, which is the dependent variable, was affected by 3 unwanted student behaviors, which is the independent variable (Table 8). These three behaviors are matters 1, 6 and 12, respectively.

Discussion

When the research results were analyzed according to the gender variable, it was observed that the burnout levels of the male teachers were higher compared to the female teachers (Table 2). The reason for the fact that the female teachers' burnout levels were lower may be interpreted as that the female teachers approach students more emotionally. It is believed that the maternal instincts are dominant to these children, too. In the analysis of previously conducted studies, it was determined that some studies reported more burnout in females while some studies reported more burnout in males. Additionally, in the analysis of several other studies of the subject, it was reported that gender does not influence burnout (Karataş, 2009; Kuvan, 2009; Özdemir, 2009; Yıldırım, 2009; Maslach et al., 2001).

In the depersonalization sub-dimension of physical education and sports teachers, according to education status, it was observed that the teachers with post-graduate education had higher levels of burnout (Table 3). The reason for that finding may be the fact that teachers with post-graduate education make greater efforts in lessons, which is related to their career plans, thus, they have higher expectations. It is believed that physical education and sports teachers with higher expectations cannot meet their expectations and for this reason they encounter stress. In the analysis of previously conducted studies, it was reported that there was meaningful correlation between the education level of teachers and burnout levels (Gündüz, 2004; Tuğrul & Çelik, 2002; Peker, 2002).

It was found that the physical education and sports teachers with 11–15 years of service had higher levels of burnout in the personal failure sub-dimension (Table 4). The teachers who are in the midway of their service time, with gained experience, demonstrate better performance in their lessons. Thus, they are able to conduct their lessons in a more positively structured way. The results obtained in the study are supported by the studies of Arslan and Arslan (2014), Aydemir (2013), Çağlayan (2012), Öktem (2009) and Karahan (2008). Additionally, Karakaya et al. (2015) reported in their studies that teachers with 6–10 years of service had higher levels burnouts in the personal failure sub-dimension compared to teachers with 0–5 years and 16–20 years of service.

As a result of the regression and multiple regression tests in the study, the following results were obtained: Emotional exhaustion, which is the dependent variable, was affected by 5 unwanted student behaviors (Table 6). Depersonalization, which is the dependent variable, was affected by 2 unwanted student behaviors (Table 7). Personal Failure, which is the dependent variable, was affected by 3 unwanted student behaviors (Table 8).

In the study, the fact that there is a difference in the emotional exhaustion sub-dimension points out that individuals are disheartened and discouraged by their jobs. The existence of the meaningful difference in the emotional exhaustion sub-dimension explains the negative and unserious behaviors and emotions which individuals express without considering the fact that each person they serve is an individual. The existence of the meaningful difference in the personal failure sub-dimension explains the individuals' tendency to negative self-evaluation. Within this scope, the effectiveness of school counseling services in special education application centers may be enhanced. The support and motivation provided by executives and inspectors may be helpful in reducing the burnout of physical education and sports teachers.

In this study, it was determined that students with intellectual disabilities exhibit unwanted behaviors during physical education and sports lessons. For these unwanted behaviors, precautions should be taken by institution executives and physical education and sports teachers. If teachers do not know how to cope with these behaviors, they will have to spend a large amount of their energy solving these problems. Precautions against these problems should be taken in the classrooms and a scientific approach should be adopted in the solutions to these problems. In conclusion, the obtained results in the study demonstrated that the physical education and sports teachers in the study group were faced with the reality of burnout. Additionally, the fact that the study group experiences higher burnout in the personal failure sub-dimension, compared to other sub-dimensions, proves how essential it is to take precautions, because this sub-dimension explains the individuals' tendency to negative self-evaluation. In the conducted analysis within this study, the obtained results will provide a meaningful contribution to an understanding of the elements which cause physical education and sports teachers to experience burnout.

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