



EVALUATION OF COMMUNICATION SKILL LEVELS OF CANDIDATE TEACHERS IN TERM OF PLAYING SPORTS OR NOT

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Purpose. The aim of the research was to evaluate levels of communication skills of the candidate teachers who studied at the Faculty of Education and School of Physical Education and Sports Teacher of Mustafa Kemal University in terms of playing sports or not.

Methods. The sample of the research was made up by a total of 884 candidate teachers selected from the population [175 candidate teachers (53 female and 122 male candidate teachers) from Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching and 669 candidate teachers (424 female and 245 male candidate teachers) from the Faculty of Education]. Personal Information Form developed by the researchers and Communication Skills Evaluation Scale developed by Korkut (1996a) were used.

Results. The communication skill scores of the participant sample group were compared in terms of gender variable, it was noted that there was not any statistically significant difference between female students and male students ($P > 0.05$). There was statistically significant difference between the communication skills scores of participants in terms of faculty and departments where they studied ($P < 0.05$) and it was found out that candidate teachers who studied at Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching had significantly higher communication skill scores compared to those who studied at the Faculty of Education ($P < 0.05$).

Conclusion. Physical education and sports affect positively the improvement of communication skills of the candidate teachers.

Keywords: Communication skill, Sports, Candidate Teachers.

Introduction

Communication has been defined as “a process of making the meaning common by sharing it (meaning)” Aydın (1998), “transmission of feelings, thoughts or information to others via all possible ways” (Robbins 2005), “an exchange of inter-related messages between two units” Cüceloğlu (2006), “process of production, transmission and interpretation of information” Dökmen (2004); on the other hand, the aim of the communication has been defined as producing a partnership of information, thoughts and attitudes between the receiver and sender (Açıkgöz, 1996). An effective communication occurs only if the receiver understands the meaning of the message in the way that the sender means (Erözkan, 2009).

We can suggest that the fact that various approaches are observed in the definition of the communication may be resulting from the fact that it (communication) covers a broad range of different settings and different units. Therefore, communication can be defined differently when it occurs between different units. For instance; there are different communication forms such as self-communication, relations with mass media, international relations (Korkut 2005).

In this sense, it may be proposed that the most remarkable thing in the process of teaching and learning may be interpersonal communication because the school environment and its service area is a big community of teachers, students, their parents and school managements and they are in a position to use interpersonal communication during the process of supplying and demanding the services. For Balci (1996); the success of those who perform a profession

related to human relations relies on their effective use of communication skills.

Interpersonal communication has been defined as the ability to understand the meanings between two people at least (cited by Korkut, 2005), as the ability to consider others valuable in order to listen to and understand each other and as the ability to create sameness out of differences (Özer, 2006) and the source and aim of the interpersonal communication has been made up by humans (Dökmen, 2004).

There are three criteria to define a communication as “interpersonal communication”: face to face position of the people who participate in interpersonal communication (within a certain proximity), all of the participants should send messages to other members of the group and accept the incoming messages from them and the messages should be verbal or non verbal messages (Tubbs & Moss (1974); cited by Dökmen (2004).

Interpersonal communication becomes particularly important in educational settings and is accepted as one of the indispensable components of teaching profession because the communication between the teacher and student during the teaching-learning process carries a vital significance for the target behavior to be learnt. It is essential to develop and to maintain a healthy communication -particularly- in the educational settings because the communication process affects both individuals' behaviors and their learning because the individual learns new information and skills not only via his own experiences but also via others' experiences presented by the communication (Tabak, 1999).

A healthy education requires effective

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Received 15.03.2012 / Accepted 12.05.2012



communication among -particularly- teachers and students and managers and other workers (Çilenti, 1998). A healthy teaching and learning means a healthy communication. Communication in classroom settings occurs so that instructor can share the behaviors of a particular subject and the behaviors can be adopted by the students (Bangir and Senemoğlu 1999; Birol 1996; Deryakulu 1992).

“Much of the communicational information can be transferred to the receiver through bodily contact during the communication process and thus meanings are explained.” (Akoğuz, 2002). Mehrabian (1967) emphasized that non verbal elements in the communication constitute an important part of the communication. The most evident factor in these non verbal elements is physical contact. Physical contacts - such as patting one’s back, shaking hands after a nice movement, getting up after a foul with the help of the opponent player, apologizing after a foul by patting the player’s back and etc.- can receive appreciation but it is, also, normal to get disapproval for somebody who demonstrates his reactions using physical aggression (Kılıçgil et al., 2009).

“It will provide a healthier communication process in human relations if people who are employed in any kind of profession acquire communication skills. However, it is inevitable to know these communication skills for the professions whose nature is made up by strong human relations. It is thus very important that physical education teachers, trainers and sports managers who are charged with physical education and sports organizations should acquire these skills. Besides, shaping human’s ability to act (whose nature is made up by actions and thus communication through action is unavoidable) with the help of positive physical education programs and sports organizations may render interpersonal relations healthy and continuous.” (Tepeköylü, 2007).

The most effective and fastest communication is verbal and face to face communication. Feelings, thoughts and information-transfer become healthier and more fluent because sender (speaker) and receiver (listener) are in close relation with each other in verbal communication. Feedback occurs instantly in verbal (face to face) communication and thus, it is checked if the message is correctly understood or not (Cengiz, 2009). Therefore, the most preferred and commonly used communication is verbal and non verbal communication in school settings and consequently both verbal and non verbal communication (mimics, gestures, postures, eye contact) occur between the teacher and the student and teaching and learning process proceeds.

In this sense, it is very important for the teachers (who undertake important tasks in educating the future generations with bodily, psychologically and mentally improved characteristics in a healthy way in every aspect and in transforming them into good individuals) to acquire healthy communication skills at a desirable level.

Therefore, it is of importance to explore the level of communication skills of the candidate teachers who constitute the future teaching teams and whether participation in physical activities improves their communication skills or not.

The aim of the present research was to investigate the levels of communication skills of the candidate teachers who studied at Faculty of Education (Primary School Teaching Program, English Language Teaching Program, Fine Arts Teaching Program, Computer and Instructional Technologies Teaching Program, Science Teaching Program, Turkish Language Teaching Program, Special Education Teaching Program) and Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching of Mustafa Kemal University during 2009-2010 academic year.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Model

General screening model, one of the descriptive research methods, was used in this research. (Karasar, 2005) defines this model as an approach that aims at describing a present situation as it is.

Population of the research

The population of the research was totally consisted of 1371 candidate teachers (785 female candidate teachers and 586 male candidate teachers) who studied at Faculty of Education (Primary School Teaching Program, English Language Teaching Program, Fine Arts Teaching Program, Computer and Instructional Technologies Teaching Program, Science Teaching Program, Turkish Language Teaching Program, Special Education Teaching Program) and Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching of Mustafa Kemal University during 2009-2010 academic year.

The sample of the research was made up by a total of 884 candidate teachers selected from the population [175 candidate teachers (53 female and 122 male candidate teachers) from Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching and 669 candidate teachers (424 female and 245 male candidate teachers) from the Faculty of Education].

There were 1371 candidate teachers who currently studied at Faculty of Education and Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching of Mustafa Kemal University during 2009-2010 academic year. 785 candidate teachers were female and 586 were male.

1371 teaching program students who made up the population, 844 students participated in the research and 477 of the participants were female and 367 were male candidate teachers. Data were obtained from the office of student affairs of Faculty of Education and Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching of Mustafa Kemal University.

Data collection tool



Personal Information Form developed by the researchers and Communication Skills Evaluation Scale developed by Korkut (1996a) were used. Communication Skills Evaluation Scale (CSES), developed by Korkut (1996a) in order to understand how individuals evaluate their communication skills, was first introduced for high school students and later administered to university students and 61 adults. CSES is a Likert type scale with a 1-to-5 rating. It consisted of a total of 25 items and the highest score from the scale is 100 and the lowest score is 0. The rating is 5 "always", 4 "often", 3 "sometimes", 2 "rarely" and 0 "never". There are not any reversed items on the scale and higher scores mean that individuals consider their communication skills as positive. The validity and reliability trials of the scale were performed by Korkut and alpha internal consistency coefficient was found as .80. In the current study alpha internal consistency coefficient was found as .77.

Data Analysis

SPSS statistics software Version 16.0 was used for the data calculations and evaluations. The data were summed with means and standard deviations. Normality test of the data was performed using One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and it was assumed that data followed a normal distribution. Therefore, the data were analyzed with Independent sample-t test of the parametric tests. Error threshold in the present research was accepted as 0.05. These techniques used for the data analysis belonged to descriptive statistics (Büyüköztürk, 2006).

Results and discussions

According to the results which shown on the table shown below, when the communication skill scores of the participant sample group were compared in terms of gender variable, it was noted that there was not any statistically significant difference between female students and male students ($P>0.05$).

On the other hand, there was statistically significant difference between the communication skills scores of participants in terms of faculty and departments where they studied ($P<0.05$) and it was found out that candidate teachers who studied at Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching had significantly higher communication skill scores compared to those who studied at the Faculty of Education ($P<0.05$).

Table 1: The comparisons of the communication skills of the participants in terms of gender, faculty, playing sports as registered players and sports branch variables

Also, the sample group revealed that there was statistically significant difference between the communication skill scores of candidate teachers in terms of playing sports as registered players ($P<0.05$). This comparison demonstrated that the communication skill scores of those who played sports as registered players were statistically significantly higher than those

who played sports as non registered players ($P<0.05$). When candidate teachers of the sample group were compared in terms of playing individual sports and team sports, candidate teachers who played team sports had significantly higher communication skill scores than those who played individual sports ($P<0.05$).

Discussion and conclusion

According to the findings obtained from the research, it was seen that there was not any statistically significant difference between communication skill scores of the participant sample group in terms of gender (female-male) ($P>0.05$). When other researches about the same subject (Baykara Pehlivan 2005; Bozkurt Bulut 2004; Ersoy 2006; İlaslan 2001; Tulunay Ateş, 2005; Razi 2009; Tessier, et al 2010). were analyzed, there was not any significant difference between females and males according to the findings obtained after the comparison of the communication skill levels in terms of gender variable; which concurred with our findings.

The fact that there was not any significant difference in terms of gender variable may be attributed to the fact that the attitudes of mothers, fathers and social environments (that have been changing) towards girls are becoming a more democratic and understanding behavior style in our society and thus they develop a healthier communication with the girls. According to Nazlı (2000), it is possible for parents to educate responsible, collaborative, self-disciplined, constructive and creative individuals only when they develop a healthy communication environment with them.

Other researches that investigated communication skill levels in terms of gender variable found communication skill scores of women significantly higher compared to men (Tessier et al. 2010; Alkaya 2004; Black, 2000; Korkut, 1996(b), 1997, 2005; Reed, McLeod & McAllister, 1999; Tepeköylü, 2007). Also, it is reported that women teachers behave more positively than men teachers when they communicate with students (Bedur 2007).

We can say that there are different findings about women and men in the researches that compared communication skill in terms of gender variable and some support women and some do not show any difference in terms of gender variable as in our research. These different findings may be resulting from the differences of demographic characteristics of the sample groups.

Another finding of the research yielded a statistically significant difference between communication skill scores in terms of faculty and department where the students studied ($P<0.05$). It was found out in this comparison that the communication skill scores of candidate teachers who studied at Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching were higher compared to those who studied at the Faculty of Education ($P<0.05$).



This significant difference is an important finding for the aim of the research. In fact, the aim of the present research was to determine whether the levels of communication skills of the candidate teachers changed according to teaching departments or not and to explore what type of variables caused this change if any. The finding that the communication skill scores of candidate teachers who studied at Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching were higher compared to those who studied at the Faculty of Education (Primary School Teaching Program, Turkish Language Teaching Program, Science Teaching Program, Foreign Languages Teaching Program, Fine Arts Teaching Program, Computer and Instructional Technologies Teaching Program, Special Education) made us conclude that it was due to the general feature of physical education and sports.

Humans want to have behaviors that enable them interaction with others and are socially acceptable. These behaviors are generally called social skills. Social skills play an important role in the life of individual because it is an important characteristic that facilitate communication with others (Yüksek, 2001). Physical education and sports play a key role in socialization of the individuals and helps them find their personality and proceed on the correct path (Aracı, 1998) and contribute to the communication with their environment through sports culture (Özдің, 2005). Sports help numerous social values to be established and to be continued. These values include hard work, sacrifice, justice, loyalty, responsibility, reliability, tolerance and self discipline (Küçük and Koç, 2003).

When we think about the course syllabus of the department of physical education and sports teaching and special ability examination used for the student selection; it is known that some courses include individual sports trainings and team sports trainings and are taught through applied courses, candidate teachers participate in inter-university sports competitions and most of the candidate teachers of the departments of physical education and sports teaching have a sportive CV; which improve communication skills of these students in the educational settings through physical education and sports and their participation in sportive competitions enable them to enter different social environments. These positive environments offer more advantages in order to improve their communication skills compared to other candidate teachers.

It was discovered in the study of Pepe et al. (2005): Alkan and Erdem (2011) Evaluation of Contribution Levels of the courses studied at the Departments of Physical Education and Sports Teaching for the Students- that the courses taught at Departments of Physical Education and Sports Teaching improved communication skills. This finding supported ours.

It was found out in the study of Özerbaş et al. (2007): Yuksel Sahin, (2008) –Evaluation of the

Communication Skill Levels as Perceived by the Candidate Teachers- that there was not any statistically significant difference between the communication skills of the candidate teachers in terms of departments where they studied. The sample group of this research was consisted of such different disciplines as English Language Teaching Department, Social Sciences Teaching Department, Science Teaching Department and Mathematics Teaching of Primary School and it was not found any significant difference in the levels of communication skills. Candidate teachers of our sample was partly similar to the sample group of the above mentioned research and the fact that communication skill levels of the candidate teachers who studied at the Faculty of Education were not significantly different supported the finding of our research.

Actually, considering our findings although communication skill levels of intra group (candidate teachers who studied at the Faculty of Education) were not significantly different; communication skill levels of the candidate teachers who studied at the Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching were found significantly to be higher; which was the cause of the difference of the research findings. However, it was said in the conclusion of the study of Hergüner et al. (1997) that “sports did not affect communication skill levels of the university students”; which may have resulted from uncommon and unpopular mass media and sportive university activities of the time unlike today.

According to another finding of the research, there was statistically significant difference between communication skills of the candidate teachers of the sample group in terms of playing sports as a registered player ($P < 0.05$). It was found out in this comparison that candidate teachers who played sports as registered players had significantly higher communication skill scores than those who played sports as non-registered players ($P < 0.05$); which may be resulting from the fact that registered players are competitors and meet different communication environments due to the participation in sportive competitions in different cities.

When communication skills of the participants were compared in terms of playing individual sports and team sports, it was found out that communication skill scores of the team sports players were higher than those of individual sports players ($P < 0.05$); which supported both the thesis of the present research –that physical education and sports contributes positively to communication skills- and other findings proving that participation in physical activity improves communication skills.

According to Sunay et al. (2004), those who are engaged with team sports are more motivated in terms of socialization and reaching team success with the group; which both supports our research findings and demonstrates that those who are engaged with team sports have better communication skills because



communication is much more widespread and collaboration need is greater in team sports. Again; according to the findings of the research [titled as "Evaluation of The Level of Physical Activity Participation on Academic Success, Communication Skills and Life Satisfaction of University Students" and conducted with a total of 694 university students (347 females and 347 males) who studied at the central Campus of Cumhuriyet University]; it was found out that the lowest mean communication skill scores were drawn from "sedentary" students (those not playing sports) ($X=3.90$) and the highest mean communication scores were obtained from "highly active" students ($X=4.18$); which suggested that the hypothesis that there is a difference between communication skills depending on the level of the physical activities among the university students is accepted. It was found out that there was moderately positive and significant correlation between physical activity levels and communication skills of the students. Thus, it was concluded that as levels of physical activity increase so do communication skill scores (Fişne, 2009). This finding supported our findings.

CONCLUSIONS

As a result, as long as the candidate teachers of the present research were concerned, it was found out that;

- The comparison of communication skill scores revealed that there was not any statistically significant difference between females and men in terms of gender variable ($P>0.05$),

- Communication skill scores of the candidate teachers who studied at the Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching were significantly higher than those who studied at Faculty of Education ($p<0.05$),

- Communication skill scores of the candidate teachers who played as registered players were significantly higher than those who did not ($p<0.05$) and

- Communication skill scores of the candidate teachers who played team sports were significantly higher than those who played individual sports ($p<0.05$).

In light of these results, we may suggest that physical education and sports affect positively the improvement of communication skills of the candidate teachers.

Thus, increasing the class time of "Physical Education and Sports", increasing the number of the sportive activities and making "Physical Education and Sports" course compulsory (which is now an optional course in university education) may have a positive effect on improving communication skills of candidate teachers at the Faculty of Education.

Table 1: The comparisons of the communication skills of the participants in terms of gender, faculty, playing sports as registered players and sports branch variables

VARIABLES		Mean	SS	T	P
Gender	Male	67	102,57	11,168	1,747 0,081
	Female	77	103,85	10,155	
School / Faculty	Physical Education	75	105,63	8,957	3,699 0,000*
	Faculty Of Education	69	102,68	10,937	
Are You a Registered Player?	Yes	24	105,74	8,941	3,183 0,002*
	No	20	102,87	10,833	
Sport Branch	Individual Sports	0	103,28	9,753	2,085 0,041*
	Team Sports	4	107,00	8,365	

* $P<0.05$

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