Full Length Research Paper

Analyzing state and private school students' achievement goal orientation levels in terms of some variables

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the state and private school students' achievement goal orientation levels in terms of some variables. Quantitative survey method was used in this study. Study group in this research consists of 201 students who are studying at state and private school in Kahramanmaraş during the 2014-2015 academic year. The data were collected using "Personal Information Forms", developed by the researcher and the Inventory of Achievement Goal Orientation developed by Elliot and McGregor (2001) and adapted into Turkish by Akın. Research findings reveal that depending on the gender variable there is no significant differences between the students' achievement goal orientation scores; depending on the doing sports variable, in terms of sub dimensions of achievement goal orientation such as mastery approach there is a significant difference in favor of students who said yes; and for performance AVOIDANCE, there is a significant difference in favor of students who said no; depending on the types of the school variable there is a significant difference in favor of state school students; depending on class level variable there is a significant difference in favor of first graders, and depending on the socio economic level of families there is a significant difference in favor of students who have low socio economic level.

Key words: Achievement goal orientation, orientation, education.

INTRODUCTION

When analyzed, it can be seen that the concept of achievement goal orientation consists of success and orientation. For this reason, the concepts of success and orientation must be defined before achieving goal orientation. In Turkish Language Association (TDK) Methodology Glossary of Terms success is defined as "the positive product of people's talents and mental or operational activity, which depends on the growth", and in

Current Turkish Dictionary it is defined as 'to achieve job, obtain useful results from a job, successes' (TDK).

Goal orientation focused on what the students think about themselves, their duties and performances rather than classifying them with respect to their goals regarding achievements which was developed in the socio-scientific structure, and whether they possess the motivation that is necessary. The goals that the students set for themselves

regarding academic success and their trials to achieve these goals are very important in the teaching and learning process (Akın, 2006a; Eryenen, 2008). Goal orientation with a general approach can be defined as the measures and standards consisting of the scientific, dynamic and perceptional behaviors that the students are using to measure their performances and the faith they have regarding successfully achieving their goals (Midgley et al., 1998; Midgley and Urdan, 2001; Anderman et al., 2003; Wilkins, 2004; Wolters, 2004; Svinicki, 2005; Rabideau, 2006; Özgüngör, 2006; Akın and Çetin, 2007).

Cüceloğlu (1994) describes it as 'reaching the standards of excellence, aiming to exceed these standards. In Turkish Language Association (TDK) Education Science Glossary of Terms orientation is defined as "in complicated and problematic situations, individuals' determining of their own direction and attitude and choosing the places and time in any relationship, to act consciously in terms of evaluating the conditions". In Current Turkish Dictionary, orientation is defined as determining individuals own statue or the status of the place where they are in, compared to other places and the individual's attitudes determined by complex and problematic situations (TDK).

Achievement goal orientation focusing on student achievement of the objectives and orientations improved in social-cognitive structures and instead of classifying the students according to their having motivation or lacking of motivation, it classifies the students focusing on what they think about their own tasks and performances. Academic achievement of students, the goals that they set for themselves and the attempts to fulfil this goal are crucial for teaching-learning process (Akın, 2006a; Eryenen, 2008). It is found that to let students gain the intended qualifications in the teaching-learning process, it is important to determine their achievement goal orientation and taking this into account while doing educational activities. Despite the achievement goal orientation literature which emphasizes the importance of achievement goal orientation in teaching-learning process, when the research done in this field is examined, it is found that works addressing nursing students are limited number abroad and in Turkey. Those studies cover faculty of education students rather than nursing students (Midgley et al., 1998; Midgley and Urdan, 2001; Anderman et al., 2003; Akın, 2006a; Akın, 2006b; Eryenen, 2008).Research in the field of education and psychology in recent years reveals the importance of achievement goal orientations for an effective and efficient teaching-learning process. In the relevant literature; achievement goal orientation is briefly defined as; the belief that students have to achieve success and criteria and standards they use to evaluate their performance and it is reported to contain cognitive, affective and kinetic behavior. Moreover, in the relevant literature, there are two types of achievement goal orientation including mastery orientation and performance orientation. The mastery orientation is divided into mastery approach and mastery AVOIDANCE; the performance orientation is divided into two sub-dimensions; performance approach and performance AVOIDANCE (Midgley et al., 1998; Midgley and Urdan, 2001; Anderman et al., 2003; Wolters, 2004; Svinicki, 2005; Özgüngör, 2006; Wilkins, 2006; Akın and Çetin, 2007).

In light of this information, this research was conducted to determine the achievement goal orientation of students in public and private schools. The data obtained from this study are thought to contribute to the organization of training programs by taking into account of achievement goal orientation of secondary school students and to be a source for studies related to achieve the intended goals.

METHOD

Research design

This research paper is a descriptive study which aims to determine the achievement goal orientation level of students in public and private schools. Methodology of this research is survey research method. Survey research methods, which were conducted on a sample group chosen from a cross section of the population, are the research approaches aiming at describing a situation, which formerly existed, or still exists, in the way it is. The individual or object mentioned in the research tries to describe as in its own conditions (Karasar, 1994).

Participants

The population of the research comprised 92 male and 109 female students who are studying at Ministry of Education state school and private school during the 2014-2015 academic year in Kahramanmaraş Province. Since reaching out to all the students in Kahramanmaras is very difficult and time consuming, this study group was limited to one public and one private school only.

Instrument

The data were collected by using the "Personal Information Forms", developed by the researcher to determine demographic features of the participants. This form was constructed to gather information about gender, doing sports, the school, grade, socio-economic level and the primary factor questions to direct people to be successful. Also to determine the participants' levels achievement goal orientation, the "Achievement Goal Orientation Inventory", which was developed by Elliot and McGregor (2001), and adapted into Turkish by Akın, was used. There are four sub-dimensions of this inventory; mastery approach refers to students who view learning material as an opportunity to improve their skills and to master the learning topic. Mastery AVOIDANCE orientation refers to students who avoid the task for fear of losing their existing knowledge and skills and it includes students' beliefs that they cannot learn enough. Performance approach orientation refers to students who are motivated seem to be more successful and skillful than others. Performance AVOIDANCE orientation refers to students who avoid the performance for fear of seeming more unsuccessful and talentless than others. The scale's factor loadings are from .41 to .98, and the total item correlations ranged from .56 to .73. The

Table 1. Results of gender variable (T test).

	Gender	n	Mean	SD	t	p
Mastery approach	Female	109	3,79	,65	-,945	,346
	Male	92	3,87	,56		
Mastery avoidance	Female	109	3,41	,71	,044	,965
	Male	92	3,40	,74		
Performance approach	Female	109	2,66	,87	-1,148	,252
	Male	92	2,81	,85		
Performance avoidance	Female	109	2,98	,94	,986	,325

Table 2. Results of the doing sports variable (T-test).

	Doing sports	n	Mean	SD	t	p
Mastery approach	Yes	120	3,94	,59	3,250	,001*
	No	81	3,66	,60		
Mastery avoidance	Yes	120	3,42	,73	,342	,733
	No	81	3,38	,71		
Performance approach	Yes	120	2,72	,86	-,135	,893
	No	81	2,74	,86		
Performance avoidance	Yes	120	2,79	,80	-2,589	,010*
	No	81	3,11	,90		

*p<0.05.

inventory's Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients of sub-dimensions ranged from .92 to .97 and test-retest reliability coefficients ranged from .77 to .86. In this study, Cronbach alpha coefficients of the scale were calculated for mastery approach orientation subscale is .69; for mastery AVOIDANCE orientation subscale is .71; for performance approach orientation is .80; for performance AVOIDANCE orientation is . 65. 2x2 Achievement orientation scale developed to determine students' achievement orientation was considered valid and reliable and it is planned to be used in this research (Şenocak, 1998; Erefe, 2002; Altunışık et al., 2004). There are 26 items on the scale. There are no reversing entries. In this study, 5-point Likert-type scale ((1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) undecided, (4) I agree and (5) strongly agree) was used. The highest score taken from the subscales shows the individual's achievement goals: Mastery Approach: (items 1, 2, 5, 7, 11, 12, 17 and 22), Mastery Avoidance: (items 3, 10, 15, 20 and 23), Performance_Approach: (items 4, 13, 14, 18, 21, 24 and 26), Performance Avoidance: (items 6, 8, 9, 16, 19 and 25) (Akın, 2006).

Data analysis

To provide descriptive information about individuals participating in the study and to understand if there is a demographic difference in between the tests' tables or not, various inferential analyses such as T test, ANOVA, LSD and Scheffe were used.

RESULTS

According to Table 1, depending on the gender variable, it was observed that there is no statistically significant difference in the sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores of the participants.

According to Table 2, depending on doing sports variable, it was observed that there is a statistically significant difference in the mastery approach orientation sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores in favor of the participants who said yes (t=3,250; p<0.05) and in the performance avoidance orientation sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores in favor of the participants who said no (t=-2,589; p<0.05).

According to Table 3, depending on school variable, it was observed that there is a statistically significant difference in the mastery approach orientation (t=-2,725; p<0.05) and performance approach orientation (t=-2,322; p<0.05) sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores in favor of the state Schoolers.

According to Table 4, depending on grade variable, it

Table 3. Results of the school variable (T-test).

	School	n	Mean	SD	t	p
Mastery approach	Private School	99	3,71	,64	-2,725	,007*
	State School	102	3,94	,55		
Mastery avoidance	Private School	99	3,33	,72	-1,502	,135
	State School	102	3,48	,71		
Performance approach	Private School	99	2,59	,70	-2,322	,021*
	State School	102	2,87	,98		
Performance avoidance	Private School	99	2,90	,71	-,402	,688
	State School	102	2,94	,97		

*p<0.05.

Table 4. Results of the grade variable (ANOVA).

	Grade	n	Mean	SD	F	p	Difference Scheffe
Mastery approach	1.Grade	53	4,02	,54	6,001	,001*	1>2,3,4
	2.Grade	51	3,97	,50			
	3.Grade	47	3,60	,58			
	4.Grade	50	3,69	,70			
Mastery avoidance	1.Grade	53	3,50	,73	,479	,697	
	2.Grade	51	3,39	,65			
	3.Grade	47	3,37	,71			
	4.Grade	50	3,35	,80			
Performance approach	1.Grade	53	2,94	,99	3,166	,026*	1>4
	2.Grade	51	2,75	,85			
	3.Grade	47	2,79	,82			
	4.Grade	50	2,43	,69			
Performance avoidance	1.Grade	53	3,16	1,20	2,458	,064	
	2.Grade	51	2,94	,73			
	3.Grade	47	2,80	,60			
	4.Grade	50	2,75	,67			

*p<0.05.

was observed that there is a statistically significant difference in the mastery approach orientation $(F(3,237)=6,001; p<0.05)$ and performance approach orientation $(F(3,237=3,166; P<0.05)$ sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores of the groups. In other sub dimensions there is no statistically significant difference. Scheffe test made to find the source of the difference in the sub scales, in the mastery approach orientation, it is found that this difference is due to 1st grades, and this difference is also due to 1st grades in the performance approach orientation.

According to table 5, depending on socio economic level variable, it was observed that there is a statistically significant difference in the mastery avoidance orientation $(X^2=7,969; P<0.05)$ sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores of the groups. In other sub dimensions there is no statistically significant difference. U test made to find the source of the difference in the sub-scales showed that this difference is due to low socio economic levels.

According to Table 6, depending on the primary factors leading to success variable, it was observed that there is

Table 5. Results of the socio economic level variable (Kruscal Wallis).

	Socio economic level	n	Mean	SD	X²	p	Difference U test
Mastery approach	Low	5	3,57	1,29			
	Middle	115	3,78	,57	2,111	,224	
	High	81	3,91	,60			
Mastery avoidance	Low	5	2,68	,60			
	Middle	115	3,49	,64	7,969	,022*	1<2,3
	High	81	3,33	,80			
Performance approach	Low	5	2,14	,65			
	Middle	115	2,77	,86	2,002	,259	
	High	81	2,70	,87			
Performance avoidance	Low	5	2,43	,67			
	Middle	115	2,98	,65	2,031	,259	
	High	81	2,86	1,08			

*p<0.05.

Table 6. Results of the primary factor leading to success variable (Kruscal Wallis).

	Primary factor	n	Mean	SD	X²	p
Mastery approach	Myself	99	3,86	,56		
	Family	73	3,85	,57		
	Friend	10	3,37	,86	2,101	,203
	School	6	3,87	1,08		
	Society	13	3,83	,60		
Mastery avoidance	Myself	99	3,37	,71		
	Family	73	3,45	,71		
	Friend	10	3,52	,96	1,324	,905
	School	6	3,26	,87		
	Society	13	3,36	,71		
Performance approach	Myself	99	2,68	,89		
	Family	73	2,84	,81		
	Friend	10	2,52	,89	2,789	,085
	School	6	3,42	,59		
	Society	13	2,37	,86		
Performance avoidance	Myself	99	2,88	,96	1,765	,898

no statistically significant difference in the sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores of the groups.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this research, depending on the gender variable, it is observed that there is no statistically significant difference in the sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores of the participants. Toğluk (2009) found that depending on the gender variable, there is a statistically significant difference in the sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores of the participants and female students have mainly mastery approach orientation compared to male students.

Likewise, the research findings by Eryenen (2008) and Akın (2006b) correlate with the findings of this study.

Depending on doing sports variable, it was observed that there is a statistically significant difference in the mastery approach orientation sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores in favor of the participants who said yes and in the performance avoidance orientation sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores in favor of the participants who said no. Depending on school variable, it was observed that there is a statistically significant difference in the mastery approach orientation (t=-2,725; p<0.05) and performance approach orientation (t=-2,322; p<0.05) sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores in favor of the state Schoolers. Depending on grade variable, it was observed that there is a statistically significant difference in the mastery approach orientation and performance approach orientation sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores of the groups. In other sub dimensions there is no statistically significant difference. In his research Toğluk (2009) found that depending on grade variable, there is a statistically significant difference in the mastery avoidance orientation sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores of the groups and this difference is due to 4th grades. These results shows parallelism with Eryenen's study with students of education faculty and Lieberman's and Remendios's work with nursing students which result that the higher is the grade the lower is the mastery avoidance orientation and performance avoidance orientation. In the literature, these results may be evaluated as positive as mastery avoidance orientation and performance avoidance orientation are considered less desirable in education achievement compared to other achievement goal orientation dimensions (Lieberman and Remendios, 2007; Eryenen, 2008).

In this research, depending on socio economic level variable, it was observed that there is a statistically significant difference in the mastery avoidance orientation sub dimensions of achievement goals between the average scores of the groups. In other sub dimensions there is no statistically significant difference.

In this study, depending on the primary factors leading to success variable, it was observed that there is no statistically significant difference in the sub dimensions of achievement goals between the average scores of the students. However, Toğluk (2009) found that there is a statistically significant difference between the students' achievement orientation and the primary factors leading them to be successful. According to Kösterelioglu and Kösterelioglu (2015), all the variables of quality of school life predicted academic motivation and its subscales (exploration, self-actualization and using data). The most powerful quality of school life perception variables was found to be negative effects towards school and teachers and the least effective variable was social activity.

Finally, it is found that depending on the gender variable, there is no statistically significant difference in the sub dimensions of achievement goals on the average scores of the students; depending on doing sports variable, there is a statistically significant difference in the mastery approach orientation in favor of the participants who said yes and in the performance avoidance orientation in favor of the participants who said no; depending on school variable, there is a statistically significant difference in the mastery approach orientation and performance approach orientation in favor of the state Schoolers; depending on grade variable, there is a statistically significant difference in of achievement goals in favor of the 1th graders; and depending on socio economic level variable, it was observed that there is a statistically significant difference in favor of low socio economic level students. In accordance with these results, it is considered to be useful for educators to design the teaching-learning process with the idea of students' achievement goal orientations; to work with the students in larger group to determine their achievement goal orientation; and to make comparative studies with other college students.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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