

Teachers' Disfunctional Attitudes

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Abstract:In this study it was aimed to analyze dysfunctional attitudes of teachers from the aspect of variables of gender, marital status, institution they teach or work for, service period, status of receiving inservice training, the settlement they've taught or worked for the longest period, sports playing, artiness, styles of communication. Subjects were 215 randomly chosen teachers teaching at primary and secondary educational institutions in province center of Erzurum-Turkey within the 2008-2009 academic (school) year. Data regarding dysfunctional attitudes of teachers was obtained through Dysfunctional Attitude Scale (DAS-A) which was originally designed by Weissman ve Beck (1978) and adapted to turkish by Şahin and Şahin (1992). Dysfunctional Attitude Scale (DAS-A) is a 40-item with 1-7 score margin likert type scale which aims to measure patterns of maladaptive thoughts of depressed individuals. Personal and professional data about participant teachers obtained through personal information form which was developed by the researchers. For statistical analysis of data obtained. t-test, one way variance analysis (ANOVA) and multiple regression analysis tests were applied. It can be affirmed that assumed precursor variables of gender, marital status, type of institution, service period, status of receiving inservice training, sports playing, artiness and perceived communication styles couldn't predict dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers at a significant level whereas gender ($\beta=-.138$) is the only and the strongest variable to predict dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers at a certain level ($t=-1.984$, $p=.049$).

Introduction

Schoolteaching has the foremost place among the professions requiring one to one interaction and sharing. Along with transferring contemporary knowledge and culture to the next generations, teachers play effective roles in personality development of individuals and in fitting them for future in, especially primary and secondary education institutions. Teachers are the role models with personality attributes, attitudes and behaviors they exhibited in addition to cognitive gainings the students are provided with. It can be said in the light of the issues being discussed that teachers have significantly positive effects on students' recognizing themselves and the environment as well as their understanding and attaching meanings to the things happening around-especially in primary education level-.

Dysfunctional beliefs that are used to express desires of individuals, are happened to come forward more often when people change their desires and choices pertaining themselves and events into compulsory desires and

demands (Jones, 1982; Corey, 2001). People's thoughts and behaviors are important sources of power (Eisen, Kearney, 1995). According to cognitive approach, changes in opinions play important role in forming emotions and behaviors. Therefore, changing opinions are important in order to correct negative behaviors. Cognitive theories are being perceived important from the aspect of conceptualizing personality and personality disorders in these days. Those theories have helped to explain perceptions, opinions and attitudes in defining personality (Sperry 1999). Cognitive concepts and psycho-social effects play more important role in personality disorder when compared to biological structure (APA 1994, DSM-IV-TR 2008).

According to Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT) theory, individuals inherit most of the opinion/belief structures leading their lives in their childhood period, imitating the persons they've perceived to be respectful (Corey, 2001). Considering the issue within the scope of these facts, the importance of teachers' being role model from the aspect of personality, cognitive and emotional development of children within the primary education period becomes self-evident. Corey (2001) has emphasized that teachers' being perfectionist against some cases or having strict attitudes and beliefs towards some events as well as having wrong thoughts such as "*I must be the best in everything*" or "*there has to be no sound in the class to be heard at all*" cause students to develop similar behavior patterns.

Ellis (1962) defined eleven irrational beliefs or opinions, some of which are :

- Past experiences are the determinants of today's behaviors of an individual. Things/events having strong effects on our past lives will definitely have similar effects in future life.
- Some people are evil-minded and baleful and that's why they deserve to be blamed and punished.
- Unhappiness is caused by external factors which individuals have little control of.
- I must be liked and approved by everyone in society.
- I must be perfectly successful, efficient and competent to consider myself as a "gem".
- There are the definite and perfect solutions to human problems. If they cannot be found, the result is disaster (Ellis, 1962; Ellis, 1973; Jones, 1982; Dryden ve Ellis, 1988).

In one of his studies, Özgüven (1999) revealed that frequency of automatic thoughts and dysfunctional attitudes observed in crisis are significantly higher than other cases. He also suggested that cognitive limitations are effective on crisis emergence and thus, cognitive therapy approaches embracing automatic thoughts and dysfunctional attitudes be more beneficial from this aspect. Psychological problems emerge when individuals consistently have negative opinions (Franklin, 2002). It was also revealed that people having dysfunctional attitudes tend to be more depressive and anxious (Azizoğlu 1993; Palabrykoğlu ve ark 1995; ve Tschacher 1996).

Frequency level of automatic thoughts and dysfunctional attitudes of an individual in crisis is observed to be significantly higher when compared to other individuals. Dysfunctional attitude scale (DAS-A) was designed to measure long lasting thoughts and attitudes rather than immediate behaviors. For this reason, it can be suggested that improper automatic thoughts and dysfunctional attitudes be accepted as a risk factor for crisis rather than be considered as the result of crisis which is an instant action (Abramson ve ark 1978; Peterson ve Seligman 1984).

According to a study conducted by Gündoğdu, Çelikkaleli and Çapri (2003) with the students studying at different faculties, it was found that irrational belief scores of educational faculty students were significantly higher than irrational belief scores of students of other faculties.

Hamamcı and Duy (2007) revealed a positive relation at significant level between *loneliness* and "*perfectionistic attitudes*" which is one of the subdimension of dysfunctional attitude scale (SDAS-A). Furthermore, it was also revealed that cognitive behavioral approach based social skills training significantly lessened dysfunctional attitudes of university students who had received it and a further monitoring analysis proved the persistency of the attainments.

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to analyze dysfunctional attitudes of teachers from the aspect of different variables. The following question is tried to be answered in parallel with this purpose.

"Do the dysfunctional attitudes of teachers differentiate in accordance with the variables of gender, marital status, institution they teach or work for, service period, status of receiving inservice training, the settlement they've taught or worked for the longest period, sports playing, artiness, styles of communication?"

Method

Population and Sampling

Population of this study consist of the teachers teaching at primary and secondary educational institutions in province center of Erzurum-Turkey within the 2008-2009 academic (school) year. 215 teachers were chosen randomly out of the population as the sample of the study.

Data Collection

Dysfunctional Attitude Scale (DAS-A)

Data regarding dysfunctional attitudes of teachers was obtained through *Dysfunctional Attitude Scale (DAS-A)* which was originally designed by Weissman ve Beck (1978) and adapted to turkish by Şahin and Şahin (1992). Moreover, data on personal, institutional and social variables concerning teachers was obtained through *Personal Information Form* that was developed by the researchers. Dysfunctional Attitude Scale (DAS-A) is a 40-item with 1-7 score margin likert type scale which aims to measure patterns of maladaptive thoughts of depressed individuals and specifically to bring along occurrence frequency of dysfunctional attitudes of those patients. It was developed by Weissman and Beck (1978) and adapted to turkish with reliability and validity by Şahin and Şahin (1992). Answers to each item is scored by a range of 1 to 7 points. Items numbered 2, 6, 12, 17, 24, 29, 30, 35, 37 and 40 were graded inversely with the assumption of their pointing out functional attitudes.

Overall score margin is 40-280. The higher the score obtained from the scale, the more often dysfunctional attitudes are likely to be observed for an individual.

After studies on students chosen as the sample, cronbach alfa reliability coefficient of the scale was found between .87 and .92 and the total score correlation coefficient was found between .20 and .50. Re-test test reliability coefficients of the scale vary between .54 and .84.

In criterion connected validity study of the instrument, range of the correlation of this study with Beck Depression Inventory varied between .30 and .64.

Personal Information Form

Teachers of the sample group were given Personal Information Forms developed by the researchers concerning information about the variables of gender, marital status, institution they teach or work for, service period, status of receiving inservice training, the settlement they've taught or worked for the longest period, sports playing, artiness, styles of communication. Personal and professional data about participant teachers obtained through this form.

Data Analysis

SPSS 16.0 packaged software was used for statistical analysis of data obtained. t-test, one way variance analysis (ANOVA) and multiple regression analysis tests were applied.

Findings

Findings Regarding Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Their Genders

t-value, standard deviation and mean values of dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with their gender were given in table 1 below :

Gender	n	\bar{X}	sd	t	p
Female	100	184.05	34.63	1.935	.050
Male	115	175.59	29.45		

sd: 213 p<.05

Table 1. t-Value, Standard Deviation And Mean Values of Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Their Gender

As is seen in table 1 above, there was found a significant difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of male and female teachers in favor of female teachers ($t_{213}= 1.935$, $p=.050$). In other words, dysfunctional attitude level of female teachers are significantly higher than that of the male teachers.

Findings Regarding Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Their Marital Status

t-value, standard deviation and mean values of dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with their marital status were given in table 2 below :

Marital Status	n	\bar{X}	sd	t	p
Single	65	180.07	36.49	0.165	.869
Married	150	179.28	30.23		

sd: 213 $p>0.05$

Table 2. t-Value, Standard Deviation And Mean Values of Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Their Marital Status

As is observed from table 2, there was found no significant difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with their marital status ($t_{213}=0.165$, $p=.869$).

Findings Regarding Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With The Type Institution They Teach At

Standard deviation and mean values of dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with the type of institution they teach at were given in table 3 below :

Institutions Teachers Teach At		n	\bar{X}	sd
Dysfunctional Attitudes	Primary Education	92	180.05	30.96
	Secondary Education	106	180.41	31.84
	Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü	17	171.11	40.70
	Total	215	179.52	32.17

Table 3. Standard Deviation And Mean Values of Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With The Type Institution They Teach At

The results of variance analysis (ANOVA) applied in order to determine significance of the difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers regarding the type of institution they teach at are shown in table 4 below :

Source of The Variance		Sum of Squares	s d.	Mean of Squares	F	p
Dysfunctional Attitudes	Inter-groups	1311.380	2	655.690	0.631	.533
	In-groups	220210.229	212	1038.727		
	Total	221521.609	214			

Table 4. Variance Analysis (ANOVA) Applied In Order To Determine Significance of The Difference Between Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers Regarding The Type Institution They Teach At

As seen in table 4, there was found no significant difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with the type institution they teach in or they work for ($F_{(2,212)} = 0.631, p = .533$).

Findings Regarding Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Their Service Period

Standard deviation and mean values of dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with their service period were given in table 5 below :

	Service Period	n	\bar{X}	Sd
Dysfunctional Attitudes	1-10 years	122	181.95	32.63
	11-20 years	81	175.17	31.15
	21-30 years	12	184.16	33.68
	Total	215	179.52	32.17

Table 5. Standard Deviation And Mean Values of Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Their Service Period

The results of variance analysis (ANOVA) applied in order to determine significance of the difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers regarding their service period are shown in table 6 below :

Dysfunctional Attitudes	Source of The Variance	Sum of Squares	s d.	Mean of Squares	F	p
	Inter-groups	2515.567	2	1257.784	1.218	.298
	In-groups	219006.042	212	1033.047		
	Total	221521.609	214			

Table 6. The Results of Variance Analysis (ANOVA) Applied In Order To Determine Significance of The Difference Between Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers Regarding Their Service Period

As seen in table 6, there was found no significant difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with their service period ($F_{(2,212)} = 1.218, p = .298$).

Findings Regarding Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With The Status of Receiving Inservice Training

Standard deviation and mean values of dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with the status of receiving inservice training were given in table 7 below :

	n	\bar{X}	sd
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Status of Receiving Inservice Training

Dysfunctional Attitudes	Never received	215	46,30	13,96
	Received only once	32	181,53	28,37
	Received twice	67	181,01	31,05
	Received three times and more	18	178,50	26,89
	Total	98	178,04	35,18

Table 7. Standard Deviation And Mean Values of Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With The Status of Receiving Inservice Training

The results of variance analysis (ANOVA) applied in order to determine significance of the difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers regarding the status of receiving inservice training are shown in table 8 below :

Dysfunctional Attitudes	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	s d.	Mean of Squares	F	p
	Inter-gropus	512.319	3	170.773	.163	.921
	In-groups	221009.291	211	1047.437		
	Total	221521.609	214			

Table 8. The Results of Variance Analysis (ANOVA) Applied In Order To Determine Significance of The Difference Between Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers Regarding The Status of Receiving Inservice Training

As seen in table 8, there was found no significant difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with the status of receiving inservice training ($F_{(3,211)} = 0.163$, $p = .921$). In other words inservice training plays almost no role in terms of changing dysfunctional attitudes. As Ellis (1962) stated, children learn negative opininons from the individuals around by imitating them. However, it can be considered that way the individual is brought up may have certain effect on developing dysfunctional attitudes.

Findings Regarding Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With The Settlement They've Taught For The Longest Period

Standard deviation and mean values of dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with the settlement they've taught for the longest period were given in table 9 below :

	The Settlement They've Taught For The Longest Period	n	\bar{X}	sd
Dysfunctional attitudes	Village	19	175.47	32.94
	Town	29	180.44	28.65
	City	60	176.03	35.77
	Metropolis	107	181.95	30.98
	Total	215	179.52	32.17

Table 9. Standard Deviation And Mean Values Of Dysfunctional Attitude Scores Of Teachers In Accordance With The Settlement They've Taught For The Longest Period

The results of variance analysis (ANOVA) applied in order to determine significance of the difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers regarding the settlement they've taught for the longest period are shown in table 10 below :

Dysfunctional Attitudes	Source of The Variance	Sum of Squares	s d.	Mean of Squares	F	p
	Inter-groups	1699.000	3	566.333	0.544	.653
	In-groups	219822.609	211	1041.813		
	Total	221521.609	214			

Table 10. The Results of Variance Analysis (ANOVA) Applied In Order To Determine Significance of The Difference Between Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers Regarding The Settlement They've Taught For The Longest Period

As is seen in table 10 above, there was found no significant difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with the settlement they've taught for the longest period ($F_{(3,211)} = 0.544$, $p = .653$). Shortly, the settlement they've taught for the longest period plays almost no role in terms of changing dysfunctional attitudes.

Findings Regarding Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Sports Playing

t-value, standard deviation and mean values of dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with sports playing are given in table 11 below :

Sports Playing	n	\bar{X}	sd	t	p
Playing Sports	91	176.03	34.63	-1.366	.173
Not Playing Sports	124	182.08	30.12		

sd: 213 $p > 0.05$

Table 11. t-Value, Standard Deviation And Mean Values of Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Sports Playing

As is seen in table 11 above, there was found no significant difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with sports playing ($t_{213} = -1.366$, $p = .173$).

Findings Regarding Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Artiness

t-value, standard deviation and mean values of dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with artiness are given in table 12 below :

Artiness	n	\bar{X}	sd	t	p
Yes, Iam interested in arts	168	177.89	32.15	-1.410	.160
No, I am not that much interested in arts	47	185.36	31.89		

sd: 213 $p > 0.05$

Table 12. t-Value, Standard Deviation And Mean Values of Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Artiness

As seen in table 12, there was found no significant difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with artiness ($t_{213} = -1.410$, $p = .160$).

Findings Regarding Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Their Style of Communication

t-value, standard deviation and mean values of dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with their style of communication are given in table 13 below

Perceived Style of Communication	n	\bar{X}	sd	t	p
Positive Perceivers (humanitarian, constructive and emphatic)	179	179.94	32.36	0.430	.667
Negative Perceivers (critical, judging and apathetic)	36	177.41	31.55		

sd: 213 p>0.05

Table 13. t-Value, Standard Deviation And Mean Values of Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers In Accordance With Their Style of Communication

As seen in table 13, there was found no significant difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers in accordance with their style of communication ($t_{213} = -1.101, p = .272$).

Findings Regarding Precursor Variables of Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers

The results of multiple regression analysis applied to determine the dysfunctional attitude score predictive strength of the variables of gender, marital status, type of institution they teach at or work for, service period, status of receiving inservice training, sports playing, artiness and perceived type of communication are given at table 14 below :

Precursor Variables	Predictive				
	B	Error	β	t	p
Gender	-8.871	4.471	-.138	-1.984	.049
Marital Status	.823	2.661	.024	0.309	.758
Type of institution they teach at or work for	-2.960	3.737	-.057	-0.792	.429
Service Period	-3.580	3.967	-.067	-0.903	.368
Status of receiving inservice training	-1.615	2.030	-.058	-0.796	.427
The settlement they've taught for the longest period	1.705	2.362	.052	0.722	.471
Sports playing	5.220	4.754	.080	1.098	.274
Artiness	5.956	5.538	.077	1.076	.283
Perceived Communication Style	-.143	6.078	-.002	-0.024	.981
	R=.212	R ² =.045	F _(9,205) =1.071		p=.385

Table 14. The Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Regarding Precursor Variables of Dysfunctional Attitude Scores of Teachers

Considering the results of multiple regression analysis seen at table 14, it can be affirmed that assumed precursor variables of gender, marital status, type of institution, service period, status of receiving inservice training, sports playing, artiness and perceived communication styles couldn't predict dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers at a significant level ($R = .212, R^2 = .045, F_{(9,205)} = 1.071, p = .385$). This finding demonstrates that all those assumed precursor variables could only explain 4,5% of variance of the dysfunctional attitude scores of the teachers. Results of independent t-test applied have confirmed that gender ($\beta = -.138$) is the strongest variable to predict dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers at a certain level ($t = -1.984, p = .049$) whereas other variables couldn't predict dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers at a significant level.

Discussion

There was found a significant difference between dysfunctional attitude scores of male and female teachers in favor of female teachers ($t_{213} = 1.935, p = .050$). In other words, dysfunctional attitude level of female teachers are significantly higher than that of the male teachers. It was also revealed that people having dysfunctional attitudes

tend to be more depressive and anxious (Azizoğlu 1993; Palabıykoğlu ve ark 1995; ve Tschacher 1996). In one of his studies, Özgüven (1999) revealed that frequency of automatic thoughts and dysfunctional attitudes observed in crisis are significantly more often than other cases. This aspect, however, can be explained by effectiveness of cognitive limit in crisis emergence. According to another prospect, cognitive concepts and psycho-social effects play more important role in personality disorder rather than biological structure (APA 1994, DSM-IV-TR 2008). Considering those results, it can be affirmed that cognitive limitations of female teachers are more than that of the male teachers and thus, they are more inclined to experience crisis and can be more depressive and anxious.

The result that dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers do not differ at a significant level in accordance with variables of gender, marital status, type of institution, service period, status of receiving inservice training, sports playing, artiness and their communication styles perceived as being authoritative or democratic. This result have demonstrated that gender is the only variable, dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers differs accordingly at a significant level. As Ellis (1962) stated, children learn negative opinions from the individuals around by imitating them. Considering this prospect, it can be said that dysfunctional attitudes are mostly developed in personal development period.

Considering the results of multiple regression analysis seen at table 14, it can be affirmed that assumed precursor variables of gender, marital status, type of institution, service period, status of receiving inservice training, sports playing, artiness and perceived communication styles couldn't predict dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers at a significant level ($R=.212$, $R^2=.045$, $F_{(9-205)}=1.071$, $p=.385$). This finding demonstrates that all those assumed precursor variables could only explain 4,5% of variance of the dysfunctional attitude scores of the teachers. Results of independent t-test applied have confirmed that gender ($\beta=-.138$) is the strongest variable to predict dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers at a significant level ($t=-1.984$, $p=.049$) whereas other variables couldn't predict dysfunctional attitude scores of teachers at a significant level. This result demonstrated that only gender out of nine assumably precursor variables could be predictive on developing dysfunctional attitudes. According to Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT) theory, individuals inherit most of the opinion/belief structures leading their lives in their childhood period, imitating the persons they've perceived to be respectful (Corey, 2001). This assumption makes the reserchers to think that participative teachers developed dysfunctional attitudes in their childhood period and that marital status, type of institution, service period, status of receiving inservice training, sports playing, artiness and their communication styles have had no effect on developing or changing dysfunctional attitudes in their adulthood period. It can also be inferred that, except for gender, no other variable have any effect on predicting dysfunctional attitudes.

Considering the total score margin of dysfunctional attitude scale, which is 40-280; there are dysfunctional attitudes of teachers at a certain level (yet not significant) despite its not varying in accordance with above mentioned variables. Karahan, Sardoğan and Özkamalı (2006) revealed in their study that individuals with poor social competence expectancy and with dysfunctional attitudes and negative automatic thoughts, needs more psycho-social support than the others. It was also revealed that people having dysfunctional attitudes and negative automatic thoughts tend to be more depressive and anxious (Azizoğlu 1993; Palabıykoğlu ve ark 1995; ve Tschacher 1996). Considering the scores obtained pertaining automatic thoughts together with the results obtained from the study, it can be inferred that teachers may need psycho-social support to a certain extent and that they might experience some problems with social competence expectancy and tend to experience crisis as well as their becoming depressed and anxious to a certain extent.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In this study, it is achieved as result that participative teachers have certain dysfunctional attitudes and they do not vary in accordance with above mentioned variables except for gender. In addition, it is also attained that gender variable could predict dysfunctional attitudes. Going through literature review, it has been ascertained that dysfunctional attitudes results from erroneous cognitive schemas formed within the childhood period and that it may cause some certain psychological problems afterwards. Considering those assignments, following recommendations could be suggested :

Recommendations

1. Particular inservice training programs should be arranged in order to raise teachers' awareness on dysfunctional attitudes, their sources and their effects. Different effective authorities such as Guidance Research Centers (GRC) and guidance counselors in schools should be made use of.

2. Studies on dysfunctional attitudes of teachers can be conducted in educational faculties as one dimension within the scope of psychological counseling and guidance services and thus, necessary proactive interferences could be made for the prospective teachers.
3. Informative education pertaining dysfunctional attitudes should be given to families.
4. Confirming teachers with dysfunctional attitudes, necessary therapeutic studies could be conducted.

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