



PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' OPINIONS ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF HARMFUL HABITS, DRUG USE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES ON HUMAN HEALTH

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the pre-service teachers' opinions regarding the effects of harmful habits, drug use and physical activities on human health. To this end, quantitative survey method has been utilized. The population of the study consists of all the pre-service teachers who are in elementary education, science education and social science education programs at Dokuz Eylül and Celal Bayar University. 756 pre-service teachers participated in the study. A questionnaire, which assesses the effects of harmful habits, using drugs, and physical activities on human health, was developed to determine the views of pre-service teachers regarding the factors that affect human health. The result of the data analysis of the questionnaire revealed that in terms of harmful habits, a majority of pre-service teachers think that it is necessary to ban smoking in closed areas, alcohol is harmful to human health, cigarettes can be addictive even when smoked occasionally, and that it is essential to make presentations regarding harmful habits at schools. In terms of drug use, pre-service teachers think that before drugs are taken their prospectus should be read, it is harmful to suggest drugs to each other, and drug interaction can cause series health problems. In terms of physical activities, majority of pre-service teachers think that doing sport not only effects physically healthy but also mental health. The results of this study is believed to make contribution to the field in terms of revealing the pre-service teachers' opinions regarding the effects of harmful habits, drug use and physical activities on human health.

Keywords: Pre-service teachers opinions, human health, harmful habits.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers have great roles on students' learning concepts in relation with their learning fields and the usage of these concepts in their daily lives. In addition to this, because teachers are role models to students both in the learning environment and in the schools, due to their teaching as a professional job, being a teacher needs a high level of emotional qualifications (Pehlivan, 2010). Students, who spend most of their time with their teachers, observe the daily behaviour of the their teachers and through social learning they learn these roles and apply them in their lives. Health behaviour is also learnt by the students through their teachers, friends and families and is included in behaviour that is learnt socially. According to İlhan, Batmaz and Akan (2007), healthy life style can be defined as individuals' ability to control whole attitudes that affect their health and the ability to determine the appropriate daily behaviour that protect their health. In relation with that health behaviour is composed of the conscious efforts of the individuals that successfully protect both their health and the health of others (Sayan, Tan, Uğurlu and Çevirme, 2001). Due to that health behaviour encompasses the attitudes that aim to protect and promote health (Alicı and Sarıkaya, 2009). Because especially there is a close relationship between health and education, teachers who are successfully educated have great importance on bringing up healthy individuals (Erarslan, 2010).

Schools, in which the interaction between the students and the teachers is on the greatest level, is the place where the students acquire healthy life style (Kılıç and Acat, 2007). Because students being healthy is more than an individual problem, for it is important for the future of the nation, schools are viewed as important places for giving health education (Seffrin, 2008; Gerçek, 2009). According to Kann, Telljohan and Wooley, (2007) health education in schools highly reduces the rate of the expansion of the attitudes among the students. In this process, teachers directs the students and help them to acquire the right views. Many countries builds up health education programmes in order to help students to acquire accurate health behaviour.

It can be assumed that the efficiency of the health education given in schools depends upon the education that is given to pre-service teachers (Myers-Clark and Christopher, 2001). Due to that health education that is given to the pre-service teachers has great importance (Jourdan, Samdal, Dianage and Carvalho, 2008; Smith, Potts-Datema and Note, 2005). In our country, courses that focus on human health is given to the teachers who are the milestones of the schools. Pre-service teachers comments on the knowledge is much more important than theoretical knowledge. In addition, in order to bring in new behaviour to the individual, it is also important for the individual to know how he/she perceives his or her own health behaviour and he/she controls (Tuğut and Bekar, 2008: 18). In the health researches for young people, it is significant to build up projects that promote finding out the prevalence of attitudes that cause risk, their causas and the ways to change them (Alicı and Sarıkaya, 2009:96). For this reason, this study aims to investigate the views of pre-service teachers, who will be science and technology, social sciences and

classroom teachers, about the effects of harmful habits, drug use and physical activities on human health.

Problem Situation

The problem sentence of the research is expressed in the form;" What are the views of the pre-service teachers about the effects of harmful habits, drug use and physical activity on human health?"

The Method of Research

In this study, one of the non-experimental quantitative research methods, the survey model is used (Muijs, 2004). In this model, the characteristics of the individuals' are determined, then the universe is accepted that individuals with similar characteristics (Kothari, 2004). In the research that is in question, it is aimed to uncover the views of pre-service teachers about the effects of harmful habits, drug use, and physical activities on human health.

Population and Sampling

The population of this research is composed of pre-service teachers who are studying at Dokuz Eylul University and Celal Bayar University, including social sciences, classroom teaching and science teaching areas. 756 pre-service teachers compose the sampling of the research that is made through stratified and random sampling method. 49 % of pre-service teachers who take part in the reaserch are from Dokuz Eylül University and 50,9 % are from Celal Bayar University, 36,4 % studies at Department of Science Teaching, 31,1 % studies at Department of Social Sciences Teaching, 32,5 % Department of Classroom Teaching. 23 % of the students are in the first grade, 26,9 % are in the second grade, 24,6 % are in the third grade and 25,4 % are in the fourth grade.

Data Collection Tool

In this research, the survey is developed to determine pre-service teachers ' views on factors that effect human healt, consists of dangereous habits, drug use, and the dimensions of physical activity. During developing the 5-point Likert-type survey, first the related literature is examined and then the points that are related with the dimensions in question are written. Finally, the survey was presented to the views of the academics who are experts in their areas.In accordance with the suggestions and opinions from experts on the matter, the necessary corrections are made on the items. While adding the materials that are recommended by the experts, items that are not appropriate to the purpose of the survey are wiped out. The final version of the survey that was given to pre-service teachers ' is aimed to research their views on the effects of harmful habits, drug use, physical activity on human health.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The problem of the research is determined as "What are the views of the teachers about the effects of harmful habits, drug use and physical activity on human health?" The percentage and frequencies of the answers that the pre-service teachers have given, in relation with the problem in question, the effects of harmful habits, drug use and physical activity on human health were given at the below .

1) Harmful habits; According to the responses that the pre-service teachers have given; a large majority of the teachers think that it is necessary to ban smoking in closed areas (f = 466, 61.6%), even it is drunk a small amount cigarette will make dependence (f = 466, 61.6%), and in the schools presentations on harmful habits should be done (f = 481, 63.6%). In addition, vast majority of the pre-service teachers consider that the use of alcohol reduces human life (f=392, %51,9), the use of alcohol will cause addiction (f=389, %51,5) and smoking is a major problem that affects people's mental health (f = 369, 48.8%). In this part of the survey, as opposed to the other parts, pre-service teachers do not focus on a specific thought about individual's quitting smoking when they want. Instead, the pre-service teachers display different point of view and it draws attention.

2) Using drugs; As a result of the answers that the pre-service teachers have given in relation with the effects of using drug on human health, the survey reaches the conclusion that a large majority of the teachers think that prospectus should be read carefully before using drugs (f=548, %72,5), it is dangerous for individuals to suggest drug to each other (f=393, %52), drug interactions can cause significant problems for human health, (f = 293, 38%, 8). In addition, a large majority of the teachers think that the chemicals in the medicines may be harmful to human health (f = 258, 34.1%), medicine should be consumed while taking into account the after effects (f=411, %54,4) and herbal products should be preferred instead of using drugs (f = 256, 33.9%).

3) Effects of physical activities; In the survey, according to the responses that the pre-service teachers have given, in relation with the effects of physical activities on human health; it is found out that they think that doing sports do not only provide physical health (f = 326, 43.1%), but also it is effective on mental health (f = 433, 57.3%), it is also necessary for thin people to do sports (f = 395, 52.2%), it is necessary to do sports for a healthy life (f = 341, 45.1%), it is compulsory to do sport for a healthy life. In addition, the vast majority of the pre-service teachers think that they associate physical health with mental health (f = 498, 65.9%), doing physical activities reduce the risk of catching a disease (f = 410, 54.2%), and for a healthy life doing sports is necessary for all people (f = 366, 48.4%).

DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

As a result of the survey that was given to the pre-service teachers, the survey reaches the conclusion that in relation with the harmful habits, a vast majority of the pre-service teachers

incorporate with the ideas that using materials such as alcohol products can cause addiction and have negative effects on human health, in the schools presentations about harmful habits should be organized. However, as a result of their studies that focused on university students, Altındağ, Yanık, Yengil and Karazeybek (2005) underlines that students consume large amount of alcohol products and they smoke a lot.

As a result of the answers that the pre-service teachers have given, in relation with the effects of using drug on human health, the survey reaches the conclusion that a large majority of the teachers think that prospectus should be read carefully before using drug, it is dangerous for individuals to suggest drug to each other, drug interactions can cause significant problems for human health. In addition, a large majority of teachers think that the chemicals in the medicines may be harmful to human health, medicine should be consumed while taking into account the after effects, and herbal products should be preferred instead of using drug. A similar result was also be found out by Karakurt, Hacıhasanoğlu, Yıldırım and Sağlam (2010), their study also indicates that a vast majority of the students read the prospectus of the drug they use and use medicine according to the suggestion of the doctor.

As a result of the survey that is applied on the pre-service teachers, according to the responses it is found out that the teachers incorporate with the idea that in relation with the effects of physical activities on human health; it is found out that they think that doing sports do not only provide physical health but also it is effective on mental health. There is an international agreement on the significance of regular physical activity on condition that it is not exaggerated (Arslan, Koz, Gür and Mendes, 2003). It is thought that when pre-service teachers gain regular sport habits they will be beter role models to their students.

For suggestion, it is thought that programmes that aim teachers' gaining regular sport habits should be planned and applied in education faculties.

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