Pre-Service Classroom Teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Anger Expression Styles

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Abstract

In this study in which the pre-service classroom teachers' emotional intelligence and the ways of their anger expression styles were examined, correlational survey model was used. In total 342 students, 189 of whom were females and 153 of whom were males, constituted the participants of the research. The students are the first year and the senior year students atteding the depart-ment of elementary School Teaching, at Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Faculty of Education. In the research, "Permanent Anger Expression Style Scale", and "Bar-On Emotional Intelligence Scale", were employed for the measurements. The relationship between the variables was studied via Pe-arson Correlation Coefficient, and then the data were analyzed with hierarchical regression analy-sis. In the research, negatively significant correlation was found between the all sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence, except for empathy and independence, and anger-in. It was discovered that emotional intelligence had negatively significant correlation between impulse control, stress tolerance, flexibility, authenticity, social responsibility and sub-dimensions of empathy and an-ger-out, and positively significant correlation between them (impulse control, stress tolerance, flexibility, authenticity, social responsibility and sub-dimensions of empathy) and independence and the sub-dimensions of self-confidence. It was observed that there was positively significant correlation between the sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence, except for self-confidence and independence, and anger control. As a consequence, it was found that the pre-service classroom school teachers with the skills of emotional intelligence were able to control their anger instead of suppressing it or reflecting it out.

Key Words

Emotional Intelligence, Anger, Anger Expression Styles, Pre-servive Clasroom Teacher.

Watson (1894) enumerated three "basic" feelings including anger, fear and love (as cited in Calhoun & Solomon, 1984). Anger, one of these basic feel-

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ings, is defined in quite a lot of different ways. According to Hollenhorst (1998), anger is a normal feeling which is frequently experienced, which exists at different processes and intensity from mi-nor disappointments to severe exasperation and to which physiological and biological changes accom-panied. Even if anger is perceived as negative, this feeling is neither good nor bad. What is important is how it is expressed and canalized (O'Rourke & Worzybyt, 1996).

Efron (1994) states that the way of person's per-ceives anger differs in accordance with their way of perceiving it. While some of the individuals en-countering an obstructive situation demonstrate their anger at that moment, some realize their anger after that situation ends, at this point some

can suppress this feeling (Geçtan, 1995). Forgays, Forgays and Spielberger (1997) conceptualized the anger, which has been experienced, is expressed much the same, and anger's reflection on attitudes as "anger-off", anger's being canalized and its being suppressed as "anger-inside" and the anger felt is expressed in a controlled manner, on the other hand, as "anger-control" (Baker, Özgülük, Turan, & Danışık, 2009). While the possibility of encountering psychological symptoms in the individuals who repress their anger do not reflect on it increased, it was observed that those expressing their anger had difficulty in producing constructive solutions against the irritating stimuli (Deffenbacher, Lynch, Oetting, & Kemper, 1996). There are plenty of experimental researches suggesting that anger control can be learned at very early ages (Glover & Ellen, 1999; Gwynn, 1998; Petit, 1998; Şahin, 2006; Wilson, 2000).

It is necessary that teachers should recognize the feelings and manage them in an appropriate way (Şirin, 2007; Taylı, 2010). The emotional qualifications such as expressing feelings, empathy, being independent, being able to orientate, being able to solve problem, benignity, courtesy, respect are the basic qualifications to be possessed in the way that will lead individuals to success, which can only be obtained thanks to high emotional intelligence (Girgin, 2009). Salovey and Pizzaro (2003) also dealt with the emotional intelligence as correctly comprehending feelings, taking into account the feelings when making reasoning, understanding feelings and person's ability to regulate both his/her and others' feelings. Goleman (2000) defines the emotional intelligence as person's ability to recognize self and others' feelings, to motivate self, to manage the feelings within oneself and in his relationships. Goleman's view of emotional intelligence grounds on Gardner's view of intelligence which is interpersonal and self-returned (Richburg & Fletcher, 2002). Bar-On (1997) defines emotional intelligence as the sequence of capabilities and skills to help individual in his/her coping successfully with the pressures and demands from the individual's environment. Bar-On, while keeping the cognitive skills out in the emotion control, frankly listed the cognitive skills such as the skills of testing the truth and problem solving as the elements of emotional intelligence (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004).

Emotional intelligence plays an important role in the increase of the qualification of teacher-student interaction in the classroom (Goldsworthy, 2000).

Coetzee and Jansen (2008) put forth that a teacher's behavioral profile in the classroom is related to his/her emotional intelligence. Therefore, they suggested that today's education programs take the effect of teacher's emotional intelligence on the students' learning as reference. According to Humphrey, Curran, Morris, Farrell, and Woods (2007) the role of emotional intelligence has gradually increased in both the students' academic success and in their adaptations at school in recent years.

Skills of emotional intelligence are the skills that can be taught and improved thanks to education (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso 2000; Shapiro, 1998; Yaşarsoy, 2006; Yeşilyaprak, 2001). Each individual possesses the qualification of developing the key qualifications of the emotional intelligence such as understanding emotions, developing empathy, developing sound relationships, solving the conflicts, self-esteem and emotion management (Walker, 2001).

The teachers must be aware of their own emotional intelligence skills to devolep students' emotional intelligene (Kaufhold & Johanson, 2002). The teachers who improved their emotional intelligence can emphasize the value of positive individual differences, can support students' learning the skills of cooperation and problem-solving and can enable them to acquire positive social skills. Thus, teachers can support students' enhancing communication skills, developing common sense of responsibility and learning in the classroom (Obiakor, 2001). In summary, the teachers are expected to be high levels of emotional intelligence for daily interactions with students, parents, administrators, and colleagues (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002).

Purpose

In this study, it has been aimed to reveal whether emotional intelligence of the pre-service classroom teachers and class levels are a significant predictor of their ways of expressing anger.

Method

In this study, through the relational screening model considering class variable in which whether sub-dimensions of pre-service teachers' emotional intelligence are significant predictors of intrinsic anger, extrinsic anger, and anger management, which are sub-dimensions of ways of expressing anger, were tested.

Participants

The sample of the investigation was composed of 342 first and fourth year students who study at Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Faculty of Education, in the department of Elementary School Teaching. Of the students taking part in the study group, 189 of them were female and 153 of them were male; and 134 of them were the first year students and 208 of them, on the other hand, were fourth year students.

Data Collection

In the research, the data were collected via "Permanent Anger Expression Style Scale", developed by Spielberger in the 1980s and adapted into Turkish by Özer (1994) and "Bar-On Emotional Intelligence Scale", adapted into Turkish by Acar (2001) and Mumcuoğlu (2002). In addition, "Personal Information Form", developed by the researchers aiming at determining demographic characteristics, was used.

Bar-On Emotional Intelligence Scale: Bar-On Emotional Intelligence Scale was developed by Reuven Bar-On in 1997. The scale, the Turkish adaptation of which was made by Mumcuoğlu (2002) and Acar (2001), was developed for the purpose of calculating the emotional intelligence scores of the people who are 18 years old and over 18 and also in order for it to be used in measuring the emotional intelligence scores. Scoring of the items of the assessment tool, which is in the type of 5 point likert scale, changes between "I certainly do not agree – (1)" and "I certainly agree –(5)".

Permanent Anger and Permanent Anger Expression Style Scale: "Permanent Anger Expression Style Scale", developed by Spielberger, was adapted to Turkish by Özer (1994). In the study, only "Anger Expression Style Scale" was used. "Anger Expression Style Sub-Scale" is made up of three sub-divisions, each of which includes eight items, and 24 items in total. These are the sub-scales of "Intrinsic Anger (IA)", "Extrinsic Anger (EA) and "Anger Management (AM). The items of Anger Expression Style Scale make measurement starting from the existence of anger. The following scores are given in the scale interval used in showing reactions: "Never-(1)", "Rarely-(2)", "Often-(3)", "Always -(4)" (Yılmaz, 2004).

Analysis of the Data

The survey, which was formed by adding the demographic variables to the above-defined scales, was applied by the researchers to the first and fourth year students of elementary school teaching. Bivariate correlations of the data obtained from the participants were calculated and they were analyzed with hierarchical regression analysis.

Findings

In this study, hierarchical regression analysis was used to test whether sub-dimensions of pre-service teachers' emotional intelligence are significant predictors of intrinsic anger, extrinsic anger and anger management, which are sub-dimensions of ways of expressing anger, considering class variable.

When the correlation coefficients between the anger management and emotional intelligence sub-factors are examined, it is seen that there is a negative correlation between intrinsic anger and all of the sub-factors of emotional intelligence. Of these, there is a significant relation between the emotional intelligence apart from empathy and independence, and intrinsic anger. There is a negative, significant correlation between the extrinsic anger and impulse control, stress tolerance, flexibility, reality, social responsibility and empathy. On the other hand, there is again a positive, significant correlation between independence and self-esteem, and extrinsic anger. It is observed that there is a positive correlation between anger management and the other emotional intelligence sub-factors apart from self-esteem. Of these, the correlation between the emotional intelligence outside of self-esteem and independence, and anger management is meaningful.

At the first step of the regression analysis carried out to test whether pre-service teachers' emotional intelligence sub-dimensions and class variable are a significant predictors of intrinsic anger, extrinsic anger and anger management, which are the sub-dimensions of anger expression style, class was taken to the models, and at the second step emotional intelligence sub-factors were taken to them. First of all, according to class variable, model explains 21% of the total variance in consequence of the hierarchical regression analysis performed to test the relationship of emotional intelligence sub-dimensions and intrinsic anger. The significant predictors of intrinsic anger according to order of importance are as follows: self-confidence (β =-.249, $p<0.001$), impulse control (β=-.215, $p<0.001$), sense of self (β

=-.155, $p<0.05$) and happiness (β =-.136, $p<0.05$). While class variable is a significant predictor when analyzed independently (β =-.119, $p<0.05$), it is observed that emotional intelligence variables are not a significant predictor when they are included in the model (β =-.087, $p<0.05$).

According to class variable, model explains 37% of the total variance as a result of the hierarchical regression analysis carried out to test the relationship of emotional intelligence sub-dimensions and extrinsic anger. The significant predictors of extrinsic anger according to order of importance are as follows: impulse control (β =-.399, $p<0.001$), interpersonal relationships (β =.168, $p<0.01$), confidence (β =.157, $p<0.01$), independence (β =.144, $p<0.01$), flexibility (β =-.138, $p<0.015$), and social responsibility (β =-.129, $p<0.05$). While class variable is a significant predictor when analyzed independently (β =-.153, $p<0.01$), it is seen that it is not a significant predictor when emotional intelligence variables are included in the model (β =.096, $p<0.05$).

According to class variable, the model explains 26% of the total variance in consequence of the hierarchical regression analysis performed to test the relationship of emotional intelligence sub-dimensions and anger management. The significant predictors of anger management according to order of importance are as follows: impulse control (β =.276, $p<0.001$), stress tolerance (β =.209, $p<0.01$), confidence (β =-.165, $p<0.01$) and social responsibility (β =-.124, $p<0.05$).

Discussion

In this study, in which the relationship between the pre-service teachers' anger expression style and emotional intelligence was examined considering the class variable, it was established that there is a negative, meaningful relationship between the intrinsic anger and all of the sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence apart from empathy and independence and that self-esteem, impulse control, sense of self and happiness are the most important predictors of intrinsic anger. In the literature, there are research findings as to the fact that as the class level increases, the skills of emotional intelligence increases (Tuğrul, 1999; Yılmaz & Şahin, 2004). Accordingly, whether the class levels predict the pre-service teachers' emotional intelligence and their anger expression style together was examined in the study. While class level is a significant predictor when analyzed independently, it was observed that it is not a significant predictor when emotional

intelligence variables are included in the model. The fact that the class level predicts anger expression styles alone can be clarified in a way that the received training affects anger expression style but when it is taken together with the emotional intelligence skills, cannot sustain to be a meaningful predictor and the emotional intelligence skills are more decisive over the anger expression styles.

Thanks to canalizing anger inside; there is a negative significant relationship between the scores of sense of emotional self, self-confidence, self-esteem and self-realization in the personal skills essential dimension of emotional intelligence; of social responsibility and interpersonal relations in the essential dimension of interpersonal skills; of problem-solving, reality and flexibility in the essential dimension of coherence; of stress tolerance and impulse control in coping with stress essential dimension; and of happiness and optimism scores in coping with stress essential dimension. Those possessing the interpersonal communication skills can cope effectively with anger (Lane & Hobfoll, 1992). The researches demonstrate that the individuals whose emotional intelligence is high can effectively cope with negative feelings and there is a positive significant relationship between the emotional intelligence and communication skills, problem-solving skills and empathy (Arlı, Altunay, & Yalçınkaya, 2011; Certel, Çatıkkaş, & Yalçınkaya, 2011; Gürşimsek, Vural, & Demirsöz, 2008; Kurt, 2007; Mikolajczak, Petrides, & Hurry, 2009; Yılmaz, 2009), and negative significant relationship between the emotional intelligence and anxiety level (Çelebi & Çelebi, 2009). Also, according to Acar (2001), the individuals possessing emotional intelligence personal skills can easily express their feelings. Emotional reactions of the individuals who can make realistic evaluations about the events and whose ability to adapt to the situations encountered in life is high and flexible are positive (Deniz & Yılmaz, 2004). Because, as Mayer et al. pointed out (2000), anger is suppressed and directed to inside when it is not controlled effectively. As seen, the individuals who possess emotional intelligence skills do not direct their anger inside because they recognize, understand and control their own feelings.

According to another discovery of the study; while there is negative significant relationship between the extrinsic anger and in coping with stress essential dimension of emotional intelligence; in impulse control, stress tolerance, coherence essential dimension; in flexibility, reality and interpersonal

essential dimension; in social responsibility and empathy essential dimension; in the personal skills essential dimension, there is a positive significant relationship between the independence and self-confidence dimensions. Self-confidence and pre-service teachers' directing their anger out can be explained through their personal characteristics. The people who are independent and self-confident can manage their feelings, thoughts and attitudes on their own. These people can make decisions independent of others, can stand on their own feet, can become self-sufficient and can act independently (Baltaş, 2006). The individuals possessing the view that they have individual control against environmental stimuli tend to externalize their anger (Tavris, 1982). Accordingly, it can be said that the pre-service teachers who are self-confident and independent may tend to externalize their anger.

Furthermore, it is observed that as the impulse control, stress tolerance, flexibility, reality, social responsibility and empathy increase, anger is not externalized. Similarly, Bar-On put forward that emotional intelligence are formed of the capabilities which will make it possible for the individual to understand oneself and the others, to establish relationships with others and at that moment to adapt to the environment in which person is, and to cope with that environment, thus oneself power of adaptation to the environment increase (Carney, 1999).

The individuals who can cope with stress can withstand the situations causing stress and intense feelings without coming to grief. The individuals who can control their impulses resist the things that attract themselves, control their instant feelings, do not be overwhelmed, even though extortive, and maintain his/her positive point of view (Baltaş, 2006). People who have high levels of emotional intelligence can manage their emotions more successfully and they can be successful stress management (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004).

Thanks to anger management, there is a positive significant relationship between the emotional intelligence and all of its sub-tests outside of self-confidence and independence. Accordingly, it can be said that the individuals who have impulse control, possess high stress tolerance, who are flexible, have sense of responsibility and empathy, who are successful in interpersonal relations and realize him/herself, whose self-esteem is high, have sense of self, have problem-solving skill, and who are happy and optimistic can control their anger. In other words, the pre-service teachers who pos-sess emotional intelligence skills are able to control their anger. Impulse control, stress tolerance, self-confidence and social responsibility are the most important predictors of anger management. These research findings support the previous research findings which suggest that there is a negative significant relationship between the emotional intelligence and negative feelings (Noguera & Díez, 2006; Mikolajczak et al., 2009), and which suggest that there is a positive significant relationship between the emotional intelligence and communication skills, empathy, problem-solving skill, life satisfaction and coping with stress (Acar, 2002; Arlı et al., 2011; Certel et al., 2011; Chan, 2008; Deniz & Yılmaz, 2004; Gürşimsek et al., 2008; İşmen, 2001; Justice & Espinoza, 2007; Nelson & Low 2003; Otacıoğlu, 2009; Salami, 2007; Şirin, 2007).

According to Salovey and Mayer (1990) one of the important components of emotional intelligence is the ability to manage the feelings (Goleman, 2000). The individuals whose level of emotional intelligence is high do possess the skills of coping with the solution of problems and re more successful in the emotional awareness and in the control of the feelings (Matthews & Zeidner, 2000). In other words, the individuals whose emotional intelligence is high can identify and understand their feelings and also can express them in appropriate ways. Yılmaz (2009) examined the effects of emotional intelligence education program and established that permanent anger levels of the students taking part in emotional intelligence program decreased. This discovery, which suggests that emotional intelligence skills decrease the level of anger, bears the quality that support the positive significant relationship determined between the anger management sub-dimension, which is one of the anger expression styles, and emotional intelligence.

As the result of this study, because it was observed that the pre-service teachers possessing emotional intelligence skills did not canalize their anger inside or out, rather, can control it, it is particularly recommended that elective courses aiming at improving emotional intelligence skills be included in the "Elementary School Teaching Undergraduate Education Curriculum". Besides, "emotional intelligence training programs" can organized by the Faculties' psychological counseling and guidance centers (or by medico social units) in order for the pre-service teachers to improve their emotional intelligence skills.

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