



Examining Teaching Styles of Academicians Employed in Faculties of Sports Sciences

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine teaching styles of faculty members employed in several universities in Turkey. To that end, 105 faculty members employed in Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University, Atatürk University, Erzurum Technical University, Bartın University, Sakarya University, Adıyaman University, Karamanoğlu Mehmet Bey University and Gazi University participated in the study. In this study, Grasha's Teaching Styles Inventory was used as the data collection tool. In the analysis of data, t-test, One-Way ANOVA and correlation analysis were utilized as well as mean and standard deviation values. Results of the study revealed that teaching styles of the faculty members did not differ by gender. In the analyses conducted with respect to academic title, a statistically significant difference was found between those with title of lecturer and associate professor and those with title of professor in terms of expert style and personal style sub-dimensions. Considering teaching styles, expert, authoritarian and personal styles were found to be high; facilitator and delegator styles were found to be moderate among faculty members.

Keywords: Academician, Teaching style, Sports sciences, Grasha, Physical education, Sport.

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Contribution of this paper to the literature

This study contributes to the existing literature by determining teaching styles of academicians in universities and to the development of teaching methods and techniques.

1. Introduction

People can make out of any event, situation, subject or object. The experiences of people and the things they have seen, heard or interacted with are the primary driving force to make out different meanings towards an object, situation or event. In addition, personal traits, age, race, intelligence, and gender have an impact on this case. The protagonists of the learning process are those who teach and learn. These two fundamental characters have inevitably individual differences. Recognizing that individual characteristics and learning styles differ in the learning process means that different teaching styles should be recognized in the teaching process. Considering such differences of learners, a teacher shapes the learning process by including his/her own individual characteristics.

Physical characteristics of a learning environment inevitably have a place in the learning process, but physical conditions have never been sufficient alone. However, in parallel with technological improvements, the settings of teaching process have improved considerably. However, the order of importance of physical conditions among other factors is still lacking in the upper ranks.

Academic optimism, including the concepts of academic emphasis, common self-efficacy and trust and referring to teachers' beliefs that their students can achieve success, facilitates the development of scientific knowledge and helps students and their families overcome challenging situations that they can confront through collaboration (Hoy *et al.*, 2006).

The characteristics that a good teacher should have are its way of presenting the subject, guiding students, emotional and social bond established during the learning process, and individual characteristics (Özabacı and Acat, 2005). Grasha (2002) states that teachers' continuous and consistent behaviors in their interaction with students in the learning process constitute the basics of teaching style (Grasha, 1996). Teaching style emerges as presenting the course, advising the students, guiding the process, and taking individual characteristics into account.

There are many complementary definitions of teaching style literature. In these definitions, Dunn and Dunn (1979) drew attention to method, teaching environment, and materials used; Fischer and Fischer (1979) and Conti (1985) emphasized consistent and continuous behavior; Cross (1981) focused on collection, organization, transfer of information and making it meaningful; Heimlich and Norland (2002) emphasized the importance of beliefs and values.

Teaching style, which is associated with learning styles that differ according to individual characteristics, leads teachers to adopt different schools. Teachers should try to be effective with additional methods, recognizing that a single style may not be suitable for all learners (Dunn and Dunn, 1979).

Heimlich and Norland considered their evaluation of their own teaching styles as a starting point. Accordingly, any teaching style cannot be bad, but the teacher may have misused the methods of the style or in-class practices remain weak (Heimlich and Norland, 2002).

Teaching style is a reflection tool of teacher's personality traits and value judgments about teaching. It also includes feelings, motivations, values and beliefs of the teacher about the subject matter. Thus, teachers' academic knowledge and skills, as well as their perceptions, form their behaviors within a specific teaching style (Üredi and Üredi, 2007).

Although there are many different classifications regarding teaching styles, the model based on teacher behaviors has revealed that there are five categories of teaching styles: expert, authoritarian, personal, facilitator and delegator (Grasha, 1994).

Expert model: Teachers in this model have the required level of knowledge and professional field expertise. They usually apply the traditional style of teaching practices, namely the teacher-centered teaching process. Providing detailed information to their students, they encourage students to develop themselves. In some cases, excessive information may discourage students who have no knowledge of the subject.

Authoritarian model: Teachers in this model are rule-oriented. They explain the rules that must be obeyed by students and guide them by expressing the expected behaviors.

Personal model: In this model, teachers' task is to be a role model for students. They provide guidance for students to determine their behaviors and to follow the behavioral patterns they exhibit. They think that the teaching process is merely personal. Therefore, they emphasize that it is important to observe and follow a model.

Facilitator model: Teachers in this model are sensitive to individual needs of their students. They construct teaching styles in accordance with characteristics of their students. They work with students and guide, support and facilitate their learning. They have a flexible style according to the aims of students.

Delegator model: Teachers within this model aim to enable students to act freely and to work on their own will and thus, to increase their capacity. In this model, it is important that students take responsibility and have an entrepreneurial spirit (Bilgin and Bahar, 2008).

1.1. Aim of the Study

Every stage of a good education, which is an indicator of a developed society, must be carefully prepared and implemented. Among these stages, university education constitutes a separate place among the other levels as it prepares students for their potential professions. Education mediates preparation of students to a profession and thus, to life. The role of university instructors in the training of individuals who will be a driving force to the economy is considerable. It is among the duties of academicians to educate students with the necessary knowledge and to prepare them fully for the profession and therefore, for life. Considering all these issues, teaching style and approach adopted by academicians as well as learning styles have an effect on students' learning.

In this study, it was aimed to examine teaching styles of academicians employed in faculties of sports sciences by different variables. While variables were being identified, it was observed academicians in faculties of sports sciences in Turkey are generally alumni of four departments and attend classes in such departments. Titles of

academicians who are entitled to lecture are Teaching Assistant, Research Assistant PhD, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor. The variables were determined according to such criteria by reviewing the relevant literature. The number of Research Assistants, PhD reached was too low to include them in the study.

Therefore, research questions of the study are following:

Do teaching styles of academicians differ by gender?

1. Do teaching styles of academicians differ according to their major?
2. Do teaching styles of academicians differ by seniority?
3. Do teaching styles of academicians differ by their titles?

2. Method

2.1. Design of the Study

This study adopted the survey method within descriptive research models. It is a method that examines the existing situation and describes the situations of the events, assets, groups and institutions and presents them with all their features. By means of this method, it is tried to describe and present the current conditions and situations through a sample taken from the universe or the whole universe to reach a general result in large groups (Cohen *et al.*, 1997; Karasar, 2009).

2.2. Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study are summarized in four items:

1. The data collected about the study is limited to teaching style and teaching approaches scales.
2. The data were collected from eight universities in convenience sampling method.
3. Only survey technique was used as the data collection tool in the study.
4. The results of the study are limited to the size and characteristics of the sample.

2.3. Study Group

The study group is composed of academicians employed in faculties of sports sciences of Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University, Atatürk University, Erzurum Teknik University, Bartın University, Sakarya University, Adıyaman University, Karamanoğlu Mehmet Bey University and Gazi University. The study was limited to academicians who are entitled to work and to lecture in faculties of sports sciences. Because of the small number of Research Assistants, PhD, they were not included in the analyses.

Table-1. Demographic characteristics of participants.

Demographic characteristic		N	(%)
Gender	Female	36	34,3
	Male	69	65,7
Graduation	Physical edu. teaching	50	38,2
	Coaching training	21	2,7
	Sports management	11	38,2
	Recreation	23	20,9
Academic Title	Lecturer	36	34,3
	Assistant professor	35	33,3
	Associate professor	23	21,9
	Professor	11	10,5
Seniority	1-5 years	23	21,9
	6-10 years	43	41,0
	11-15 years	13	12,3
	16-20 years	11	10,5
	21 years and over	15	14,3
Total		105	100

Table 1 indicates that a total of 105 academicians, 36 (%34.3) females and 69 (%65.7) males, participated in the study. The participants are alumni of the departments of Physical Education Teaching (n=50, %38.2), Coaching Training (n=21, %2.7), Sports Management (n=11, %38.2), and Recreation (n=23, %20.9).

2.4. Data Collection Tools

In the study, Grasha's Teaching Style Inventory (TSI) which was adapted into Turkish by Sarıtaş and Süral (2010) was used as the data collection tool. The scale consists of five sub-dimensions and consists of 40 items. The sub-dimensions of the scale were "Expert", "Authoritarian", "Personal", "Facilitator" and "Delegator" teaching styles. In the adaptation study for the Turkish version of the TSI, the author found the reliability coefficient of the scale as .875. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be .78. Scoring was determined as "low", "moderate" and "high" for each sub-dimension of the scale. Rating information is given in Table 2.

Table-2. Scoring of sub-dimensions of the TSI.

Teaching styles	Degrees of teaching styles		
	Low	Moderate	High
Expert	[1.0-2.8]	[2.9-3.8]	[3.9-5.0]
Authoritarian	[1.0-1.8]	[1.9-3.0]	[3.1-5.0]
Personal	[1.0-2.8]	[2.9-3.4]	[3.5-5.0]
Facilitator	[1.0-2.9]	[3.0-4.0]	[4.1-5.0]
Delegator	[1.0-1.8]	[1.9-2.8]	[2.9-5.0]

Source: <http://www.iats.com/publications/GLSI.html>

2.5. Data Analysis

Normality was examined once before the analysis of the data. Accordingly, it was determined that the data distributed normally. Therefore, it was decided to use parametric tests. In addition to descriptive statistics, independent group t-test, One-Way ANOVA and Pearson Correlation techniques were used for data analysis. Significance value was taken as 0.05.

3. Findings

This section contains the results of the relevant analyses. The results of the analysis for Grasha's TSI by the gender variable are shown in Table 3.

Table-3. Analysis results for the TSI by the gender variable.

Teaching styles	Gender	N	x	SS	SD	t	p
Expert	Female	36	31.9722	5.29952	103	1.13	.261
	Male	69	30.9275	4.01951			
Authoritarian	Female	34	31.1176	5.67165	103	0.178	.588
	Male	69	30.9275	4.78760			
Personal	Female	36	32.6667	4.83440	103	0.675	.501
	Male	69	32.0145	4.62885			
Facilitator	Female	36	34.0833	5.38981	103	0.94	.94
	Male	69	32.3913	4.58969			
Delegator	Female	36	29.9167	4.36463	103	1.155	.251
	Male	69	28.9710	3.77286			

*p < 0.05.

In Table 3, no statistically significant difference was found in each sub-dimension of the TSI by the gender variable. It is observed that female participants have higher mean scores than male participants in all teaching style dimensions.

The findings related to the TSI by the major variable are given below.

Table-4. Analysis results for the TSI by the major variable.

Teaching styles	Major	N	x	SS	SD	F	p	Difference
Expert	Teaching	50	31.9400	2.68336	101	2.693	.05	Teaching and recreation
	Coaching	21	32.0952	4.45987				
	Management	11	31.5455	5.27946				
	Recreation	23	29.0000	6.47372				
Authoritarian	Teaching	50	31.9800	3.32271	101	1.156	.33	
	Coaching	21	30.4762	4.96608				
	Management	11	31.3636	5.31550				
	Recreation	23	29.7391	7.71785				
Personal	Teaching	50	32.4600	2.77165	101	.34	.796	
	Coaching	21	32.3333	4.96320				
	Management	11	32.8182	5.75879				
	Recreation	23	31.3913	6.94615				
Facilitator	Teaching	50	33.7400	2.85579	101	.829	.481	
	Coaching	21	32.1429	6.38189				
	Management	11	32.8182	6.06330				
	Recreation	23	32.1304	6.30515				
Delegator	Teaching	50	29.7400	2.84863	101	1.357	.26	
	Coaching	21	29.5714	5.05541				
	Management	11	29.8182	5.32575				
	Recreation	23	27.8261	4.26030				

*p < 0.05.

In Table 4, a statistically significant difference was found between the alumni of teaching and recreation departments in the expert style sub-dimension in favor of the alumni of teaching departments (F_(3,101): 2.693; p < 0.05).

There was no significant difference in Authoritarian (F_(3,101): 1.156; p > 0.05), Personal (F_(3,101): .34; p > 0.05), Facilitator (F_(3,101): .829; p > 0.05) and Delegator (F_(3,101): 1.357; p > 0.05) styles sub-dimensions by the major variable. The findings related to the TSI by the seniority variable are given below.

Table-5. Analysis results for the TSI by the seniority variable.

Variable	Analyzes	Expert	Authoritarian	Personal	Facilitator	Delegator
Seniority	Correlation	-.208*	-.094	-.165	-.045	-.068
	p	.033*	.347	.092	.652	-.490
	N	105	105	105	105	105

*p < 0.05.

In Table 5, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between the expert style sub-dimension of the TSI and the seniority variable. No significant relationship was found between the other sub-dimensions of the scale.

The findings related to the TSI by the academic title variable are given below.

Table-6. Analysis results for the TSI by the academic title variable.

Teaching styles	Academic title	N	x	SS	SD	F	p	Difference
Expert	Lecturer	36	32.8889	2.954	101	4.073	.009	Lecturer and Assoc. Prof., Professor
	Assist. Prof.	35	31.5429	3.837				
	Assoc. Prof.	23	29.4783	5.451				
	Professor	11	29.0000	6.48				
Authoritarian	Lecturer	36	32.1389	3.015	101	2.087	.107	
	Assist. Prof.	35	31.4857	3.98				
	Assoc. Prof.	23	30.4783	6.947				
	Professor	11	28.0000	8.00				
Personal	Lecturer	36	34.1111	3.087	101	5.983	.001	Lecturer and Assoc. Prof., Professor
	Assist. Prof.	35	32.6000	3.574				
	Assoc. Prof.	23	30.4783	5.203				
	Professor	11	28.6364	7.593				
Facilitator	Lecturer	36	34.2778	3.203	101	2.168	.096	
	Assist. Prof.	35	33.1143	4.027				
	Assoc. Prof.	23	31.8261	5.466				
	Professor	11	30.6364	8.924				
Delegator	Lecturer	36	30.3333	3.224	101	1.442	.235	
	Assist. Prof.	35	29.0286	3.501				
	Assoc. Prof.	23	28.6957	4.16				
	Professor	11	28.0000	6.526				

*p<0.05.

In Table 6, there was a statistically significant difference between those with titles of "lecturer", "associate professor" and those with title of "professor" in the expert style sub-dimension in favor of lecturers ($F_{(3,101)}: 4.073$; $p<0.05$).

Moreover, a statistically significant difference was found between those with titles of "lecturer", "associate professor" and those with title of "professor" in the personal style sub-dimension in favor of lecturers ($F_{(3,101)}: 5.983$; $p<0.05$).

There was no significant difference in Authoritarian ($F_{(3,101)}: 2.087$; $p>0.05$), Facilitator ($F_{(3,101)}: 2.168$; $p>0.05$) and Delegator ($F_{(3,101)}: 1.442$; $p>0.05$) styles sub-dimensions by the academic title variable ($F_{(3,101)}: 2.087$; $p>0.05$).

4. Result and Recommendations

Today, parallel to the research on learning styles of students, studies being conducted on teaching styles of teachers are becoming more and more important. It is, therefore, critical to determine teaching styles of academicians as teachers.

The study, which aimed to determine which teaching style of the academicians employed in the faculties of sports sciences according to Grasha's TSI, was participated by a total of 105 academicians, 36 females and 69 males, voluntarily. In the study, no statistically significant difference was found in each sub-dimension of the scale by the gender variable. Female participants have higher mean scores than male participants in all teaching styles. In his study conducted in 2002 to determine teaching styles of faculty members, Grasha found that female and male faculty members differed on the basis of teaching styles. He found that females had lower scores in expert, authoritarian and personal styles sub-dimensions but, higher scores in facilitator and delegator sub-dimensions than male participants. In their study to determine teaching styles of female and male teachers, Saracaloğlu (2011). Reported that the choice of teaching style did not differ by the gender variable except facilitator teaching style.

The faculties of sports sciences, which we included in the study group, consist of four departments. These include physical education and sports teaching, coaching, sports management and recreation. Only students of physical education and sports teaching department can attend formation courses. For this reason, it was examined whether there was a difference between the academicians who are alumni of these departments in terms of teaching styles. Results revealed a statistically significant difference between the alumni of teaching and recreation departments in the expert style sub-dimension by the major variable in favor of the alumni of teaching departments. Such difference is thought to be due to the effect of formation courses taken by the alumni of teaching departments.

For another sub-problem of the study, results revealed a statistically significant negative correlation between the expert style sub-dimension and the seniority variable. It can be said that having less term of office puts the expert style sub-dimension forward. No significant relationship was found between other sub-dimensions of the scale related to seniority. Maden (2012), Kılıç and Dilbaz (2013) did not find any difference between seniority and teaching style dimensions in their studies. Arpacı (2013), Saracaloglu *et al.* (2017) stated that there was only a difference between seniority and expert teaching style.

There was a statistically significant difference between those with titles of "lecturer", "associate professor" and those with title of "professor" in the expert and personal styles sub-dimensions in favor of lecturers. We believe that weekly attendance period of the lecturers is the primary reason for such a result.

Overall, in terms of teaching styles or the academicians in the study, it was observed that the expert, authoritarian and personal teaching styles were found to be high and facilitator and delegator styles were found to be moderate.

4.1. Recommendations

This study was limited to 105 academicians from eight universities. It is recommended by researchers to study larger study groups for more generalizable results and to conduct studies that measure students' learning styles, too.

There are different scales in the literature on teaching styles. It is also among the recommendations of the researchers to contribute to the literature by administering a few of these scales to the same study group.

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