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The correlation between primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy and their student control ideologies[1]

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the correlation between primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy and their student control ideologies. For this purpose, "correlations survey method" was adopted in this study in order to find answers to the research questions. According to Pearson's moments correlation analysis carried out in the study, it was found out that there were significant negative correlations between primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy and their student control ideologies. On the other hand, according to the results of the multiple regression analysis, it was found out that primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy predicted their student control ideologies significantly.
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Keywords: Critical pedagogy, student control ideologies, primary teachers;

1. Introduction

Over the past some couple of years, there has been a strong response by critical theorists to traditional public school ideology (Kanpol, 1999). The criticism towards the traditional public schools has emerged the concept of critical pedagogy in the literature. In other words, critical pedagogy has emerged as a consequence of traditional views, applications and practices on the public school (Apple, 2002; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1986).

According to Giroux (2004), critical pedagogy is an educational movement, guided by passion and principle, to help students develop consciousness of freedom, recognise authoritarian tendencies, and connect knowledge to power and the ability to take constructive action. McLaren (1993, 1995) also defines critical pedagogy as a way of thinking about, negotiating, and transforming the relationship among classroom teaching, the production of knowledge, the institutional structures of the school, and the social and material relations of the wider community, society, and nation-state. As for Kincheloe (2005), critical pedagogy is concerned with transforming relations of power that are oppressive and lead to the oppression of people. Also, critical pedagogy handles education as a political action in order to remove inequality from society and to provide the oppressed with freedom (Kincheloe, 2004; McLaren, 1995, 1998).

Critical pedagogy has several strands and foundations (Kincheloe, 2004). The concept of critical pedagogy is often associated with the work of scholars such as Freire, Giroux, Luke, McLaren, Illich, and Simon in the field of education (Aliakbari & Allahmoradi, 2011; Yılmaz, 2009a; Yılmaz & Altınkurt, 2011). Critical pedagogy is not only a theory and a philosophy of education, but also praxis-oriented social movement (Giroux, 2004). Critical pedagogy as a field encompasses a diverse set of approaches in education that have alternately been called

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emancipatory, empowering transformative or trangressive education (Hovey, 2004). Hence, it can be stated that the main goal of the critical pedagogy is to create engaged, active and critically thinking citizens (Giroux, 1992).

Critical pedagogy can be defined as a revolt to traditional school. Critical pedagogy criticises all applications and practices that can be seen in the traditional school format. In this context, critical pedagogy sees teachers' and students roles in the classroom as well as the curriculum and the classroom instruction applications and practices. According to Freire (1970), the teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but the-one-who-is taught-in-dialogue-with-the-students, the one who while being taught also teaches. Critical pedagogues challenge teachers and students to rethink the purpose and meaning of schooling, and the role that they might play as cultural workers (Moreno-Lopez, 2005). In a school where the critical pedagogy is interested, the teacher is not the only authority in the classroom (Yılmaz & Altınkurt, 2011). Teachers and students share one another's knowledge. Teachers can use their authority to create relationships which, in turn, enhances an education relationship that challenges schooling notions of oppressive race, class, and gender stereotypes. Critical pedagogy requires a classroom environment that is democratic, where viewpoints of students are highlighted through discussion and debate and there is shared power and dialogue among teachers and students (Aliakbari & Allahmoradi, 2011). Also, according to the critical pedagogy every student must be educated so as to be an active member of the democratic society (Bercaw & Stooksberry, 2004). Critical pedagogy sees education as a tool to change and convert the society (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1993). Hence, it could be advocated that critical pedagogy materialises in problem-based curriculum design orientation (Baş, 2013). Besides, critical pedagogy involves a way of thinking, negotiating, and transforming the relationship amongst classroom instruction, the production of knowledge, the institutional structures of the school, and the societal relations in a wider community or society (McLaren, 1993). The critical understanding towards traditional school and its applications on education field revives the concept of student control ideology. Because student control ideology is an ideology or belief and value system that directs teachers on how they behave and approach to their instructional and classroom management practices.

Student control has been conceptualised along a continuum ranging from custodialism at one end to humanism at the other in the literature (Willower, Eidell & Hoy, 1973). The importance of student control in schools is not surprising since schools are people-developing or people-changing institutions (Street, Vinter & Perrow, 1970 as cited in Lunenburg, 1991). The rigidly traditional school serves as a model for the custodial orientation. This kind of school provides a highly controlled setting concerned primarily with the maintenance of order. Students are stereotyped in terms of their appearance, behaviour, and parents' social status (Hoy, 2001). Schools that adopt custodial control ideology exert high levels of control to maintain their rules. Students are considered as individuals who need to be controlled by sanctions based on restrictions, since they are irresponsible and undisciplined in terms of the way in which they behave, dress, appear, etc. (Willower, Eidell & Hoy, 1973; Hoy, 2001; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008). Teachers with custodial control ideology stress the maintenance of order, impersonality, one-way downward communication, distrust of students and a punitive, moralistic attitude towards student control (Lunenburg, 1991; Lunenburg & Cadavid, 1992; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008). They tend not to understand their students' behaviours and attitudes. Instead, they maintain a rigid student-teacher status hierarchy. Students must accept the decisions of these teachers without question. Student misbehaviour is viewed as a personal affront and students are perceived as irresponsible and undisciplined persons who must be controlled through punitive sanctions. Impersonality, pessimism and watchful mistrust characteristics characterise the atmosphere of the custodial school (Cadavid & Lunenburg, 1991; Lunenburg & Cadavid, 1992). Traditional classroom teacher control theory implies a kind of domination. Teachers who subscribe to the traditional classroom teacher control theory strive to become the ultimate authority and source of knowledge. They also tend to see students on the receiving end of the instructional process (Honey & Moeller, 1990).

On the other hand, the humanistic model conceives of the school as an educational community in which students learn through cooperative interaction and experience (Lunenburg & Cadavid, 1992). According to the humanistic control ideology, students' learning and behaviours are considered psychologically and sociologically rather than morally (Hoy, 1969; Johns, Karabinus & MacNaughton, 1989; Lunenburg & Cadavid, 1992). Indeed, teachers with humanistic control orientation emphasise the psychological and sociological bases of learning and behaviour, an accepting and trustful view of students and a confidence in students' ability to self-disciplining and responsible (Lunenburg, 1991). In humanistic control orientation, teachers believe that students can learn to be responsible and self-regulating individuals (Lunenburg, 1984). Moreover, the humanistic teacher is optimistic about students and has open and friendly relations with students. A humanistic orientation leads teachers to desire a democratic classroom climate with its attendant-flexibility in status and rules, open channels of two-way communication, and increased self-determination. Teachers and students are willing to act on their own volition and accept responsibility for their actions (Lunenburg & Schmidt, 1989). The climate of humanistic orientation seeks to meet the needs of every student and student individualism is emphasised (Hoy, 2001). A teacher with humanistic control ideology considers students as an educational group where they participate in their learning process through cooperative interaction and experiences (Lunenburg & Schmidt, 1989). In this regard, it can be stated that constructivist learning theory of classroom control translates effectively the educational and socialisation agendas into their student-centred practice (Keyser, 2000). In a more student-centred classroom control theory (humanistic control orientation), as in constructivist pedagogy, a teacher's authoritarian style of classroom management and instructional practices may yield to less controlling roles such as directing, facilitating, and assisting (Fosnot, 1996). Whereas, some teachers who adopt custodial control ideology resist constructivist pedagogy for some reasons such as commitment to their current instructional approach, concern about student learning, and concern more about classroom control (Brooks & Brooks, 1999).

1.1. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research can be stated as to investigate the correlation between primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy and their student control ideologies. In order to establish a correlation between primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy and their student control ideologies, the following questions were posed in the study:

1. 1. Is there a significant correlation between primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy and their student control ideologies?
2. 2. What is the predictive level of primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy for their student control ideologies?

It is hoped that the findings of this study would contribute to an understanding of the role of the views of teachers on critical pedagogy for student control ideologies. Also, the findings would be helpful for other researchers in policy discussions and efforts to improve classroom management and instructional practices.

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

The correlative investigation model was used in the research (Büyüköztürk et al., 2008). This model is one of the most commonly applied models in the related literature (Cohen et al., 2003). The correlative investigation model is

used to determine the correlation between different variables in educational and social research (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000) and aims to identify the existence or level of coordinated change between two or more variables (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

2.2. Participants

The participants of the study consisted of 132 teachers from six primary schools within the borders of Nigde, a Turkish province and its districts. In order to detect the sampling of the study, primary schools in cosmos were chosen according to three-layer group sampling method according to socio-economic structure (high-middle-low) of their region, volunteered to participate in the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). The participants were assured for the anonymity and confidentiality for their responses in the study. Of the 132 subjects participated in the research, 60 (45.45%) of them were males while 72 (54.54%) were females. 28 (21.21%) of the primary teachers had 1-5 years, 26 (19.69%) of them had 6-10 years, 46 (34.84%) of them had 11-15 years, and 32 (24.24%) of them had 16 and above years of occupational experience. 54 (40.90%) of the primary teachers worked in villages or towns, 78 (59.09%) of them worked in the city centre. In terms of education level variable, it can be said that 26 (19.69%) of the primary teachers were the graduates of the senior high school, 96 (72.72%) of them were the undergraduates and 10 (7.57%) of them had postgraduate level of education.

2.3. Data Collection Instruments

"The Principles of Critical Pedagogy Scale" (Yılmaz, 2009) and "the Student Control Ideology Scale" (Willower, Eidell & Hoy, 1973) were used in order to find answers to the questions of the research.

2.3.1. The Principles of Critical Pedagogy Scale
The Principles of Critical Pedagogy Scale, developed by Yılmaz (2009) was used in the study in order to get the data in regard of primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy. The scale is three sub-dimensional and consists of totally 31 items with five-point likert type [1= certainly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= moderately agree; 4= Agree; 5= certainly agree]. The names of the sub-dimensions in the scale are: *i.* Education System (15 items), *ii.* Functions of Schools (11 items), and *iii.* Emancipator School (5 items) sub-dimensions. The higher the total score on the scale, the higher the level of views on critical pedagogy of teachers. The Cronbach's Alpha level of the total scale was calculated as 0.75 in the study. The Cronbach's Alpha level for Education System sub-dimension was 0.88, for Functions of Schools sub-dimension was 0.78 and for Emancipator School sub-dimension was 0.61 (Yılmaz, 2009).

2.3.2. Student Control Ideology Scale
The Student Control Ideology Scale was developed by Willower, Eidell and Hoy (1973) and adapted and translated into Turkish by Yılmaz (2002). The scale was used in the study in order to get the data in regard of primary teachers' views on student control ideologies. The scale is one dimensional and consists of 20 items with five-point likert type [1= certainly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= moderately agree; 4= Agree; 5= certainly agree]. The higher the total score on the Scale, the higher the level of custodial student control ideology of the teacher. The Cronbach's Alpha level of the scale was calculated as 0.72 (Yılmaz, 2002).

2.4. Data Analysis

The Pearson moment's correlation coefficient analysis was used in order to determine the correlation between variables and the multiple regression analysis was used to determine the prediction level of teachers' views on critical pedagogy for their student control ideologies.

3. Findings

In this part of the research, the correlation between primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy and their student control ideologies was presented. For this purpose, the correlation between primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy and their student control ideologies is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Correlations Matrix of Views on Critical Pedagogy for Student Control Ideologies*

Critical Pedagogy	Education System	Functions of Schools	Emancipator School	Student Control Ideology
Education System	-	.415	.796	-.308
Functions of Schools	.415	-	.408	-.307
Emancipator School	.796	.408	-	-.369

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results obtained in the research in Table 1 indicate that there are significant and negative moderate correlations between primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy and their student control ideologies. According this result, there is a negative moderate correlation between education system [$r=-.308$, $p<.01$], functions of schools [$r=-.307$, $p<.01$] and emancipator school [$r=-.369$, $p<.01$] sub-dimensions of critical pedagogy and student control ideologies. As an increase in the total score on the critical pedagogy scale represents a more positive attitude towards humanistic student control ideology. So, it may be stated that an increase on the total score of the critical pedagogy affects teachers' student control ideologies significantly. In other words, it can be say that teachers adopt more humanistic views on education when they approach to education critically. On the other hand, multiple regression analysis was used in order to measure the prediction level of primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy for their student control ideologies and the result obtained in the study is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Prediction of Views on Critical Pedagogy for Student Control Ideologies*

	B	Sh_x	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	93.170	2.238		41.633	.000
Education System	.013	.202	.009	.066	.947
Functions of Schools	-.396	.188	-.188	-2.101	.038
Emancipator School	-.731	.328	-.300	-2.225	.028

R=.407, *R*²=.166, *F*(3.128)= 8.476, *p*=.000

Table 2 indicated that primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy are a significant predictor of their student control ideologies and approximately seventeen percent of the total variance for teachers' student control ideologies

is explained by their views on critical pedagogy [R=.407, R2=.166, p<.01]. When looked at the Beta values of the importance of rank of the sub-dimensions which explained student control ideologies, it is understood that they are as emancipator school (β=-.300), functions of schools (β=-.188) and education system (β=.009) sub-dimensions of the critical pedagogy scale. Besides, as looked at t values in Table 2 it is seen that all sub-dimensions of the critical pedagogy scale, except education system sub-dimension explained teachers' student control ideologies significantly. In light of the data gathered, it can be stated that primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy appear to be a significant predictor of their student control ideologies in the study.

4. Conclusions and Discussion

The purpose of this research was to investigate the correlation between primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy and their student control ideologies. According to the results obtained in the study, it can be said that there were significant and negative moderate correlations between primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy and their student control ideologies. According this result, there was a negative moderate correlation between education system, functions of schools and emancipator school sub-dimensions of critical pedagogy scale and student control ideologies. As an increase in the total score on the critical pedagogy scale represents a more positive attitude towards humanistic student control ideology. So, it may be stated that an increase on the total score of the critical pedagogy affects teachers' student control ideologies significantly. In other words, it can be say that teachers adopt more humanistic views on education when they have a critical view on education. It can also be stated that teachers adopt more custodial views on education when they have not a critical view on education.

On the other hand, as for the results of the multiple regression analysis performed in the study, it was found out that primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy were a significant predictor of their student control ideologies and approximately 17% of the total variance for primary teachers' student control ideologies was explained by their views on critical pedagogy. Also, it was understood that all sub-dimensions of the critical pedagogy scale, except education system sub-dimension explained teachers' student control ideologies significantly. Hence, it could be stated that primary teachers' views on critical pedagogy appear to be a significant predictor of their student control ideologies in the study.

In light of the data obtained in the study, the following suggestions can be put forward: primary teachers should be educated as they have a critical point of view to education itself. It is believed that if teachers are educated as they will have a critical point of view to education, they will tend to more humanistic classroom orientation at school.

Otherwise, it is not seen that teachers, not have a critical point of view to education tend to apply humanistic student control orientations in the classroom. In this context, educational philosophy can be seen as a tool to make both pre- and in-service teachers think critically on education. On the other hand, in order to raise primary teachers' humanistic control ideology more, in-service and pre-service educational opportunities should be sustained. From the beginning of pre-service education at the faculties of education, teacher candidates should be educated to have necessary qualifications of humanistic control ideology. Primary teachers should be motivated in order to better apply humanistic control orientation in the classroom. If teachers have no critical point of view on education, their students are believed not to have a critical point of view on their society and in result of that a democratic understanding cannot be sustained at school and/or in the society.

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