Investigation of Secondary School Students' Metaphorical Perceptions for Physical Education Teachers[*]

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Abstract

In this study, it was aimed to investigate secondary school students' metaphorical perceptions about their physical education teachers (PETs). In this study, the phenomenology model from qualitative research methods and maximum variation sampling method from purposeful sampling methods were used. A total of 381 students, 2 state and 2 private schools, from Afyonkarahisar city center, participated in the research. The students participating in the study were asked to complete the sentence "PET is similar to " ….." because ....." and draw a picture portraying their thoughts on the concept of PET. Percentage values, frequency, and chi-square analysis were used in data analysis. While the students produced 23 metaphors from the pictures they drew, sentence completion created 22 categories according to common characteristics. The most frequently produced metaphors for PETs by the participants in the study were sportive and physical power factor (f = 122; 32.02%), being a source of information (f = 35; 9.18%), being a funny person (f = 30; 7.87%), and being a good person (f = 24; 29%). When the conceptual categories of the drawings were examined, it was seen that the students' PETs are mostly used as a sportive person (f=85; 22.65%) as an angry person (f=31; 7.89%), and as an element of love (f=30; %7.73). It was observed that the number of positive metaphors of students studying in private schools for PETs were higher than that of public schools (p<0.01). As a result of the research, it was determined that secondary school students produced positive metaphors for PETs and were defined as a sportive person and/or mostly element of sportive and physical power. As a result, we suggest that negative metaphors regarding PETs should be re-examined by PETs and translated into positive metaphors.
Keywords: Attitude, Metaphoric perception, Secondary school students, Physical education teacher.

Ortaokul Öğrencilerinin Beden Eğitimi Öğretmenlerine Yönelik Metaforlarının İncelenmesi

Öz

Bu araştırmada ortaokul öğrencilerinin Beden Eğitimi Öğretmeni (BEÖ)'ne ilişkin metaforik algılarının araştırılması amaçlanmıştır. Nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden olgu bilim modelinin kullanıldığı bu çalışmada, amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden, maksimum çeşitleme örneklemesi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmaya Afyonkarahisar il merkezinden 2 devlet ve 2 özel okul olmak üzere toplamda 381 öğrenci katılmıştır. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerden "Beden Eğitimi öğretmeni ..…'ya benzer çünkü .…" cümlesini tamamlamaları ve Beden Eğitimi öğretmeni kavramına ilişkin düşüncelerini yansıtan bir resim çizmeleri istenmiştir. Veri analizinde yüzde değerleri, frekans ve ki-kare analizleri kullanılmıştır. Öğrenciler çizdikleri resimlerden 23 metafor üretirken, cümle tamamlama da ortak özelliklere göre 22 kategori oluşturmuştur. Araştırmada BEÖ için üretilen metaforlarından en çok sportif ve fiziksel güç unsuru olarak (f = 122; %32.02), bilgi kaynağı olarak (f = 35; %9.18), eğlenceli bir insan olarak (f = 30; %7.87), ve iyi bir insan olarak (f= 24; %29) gördüklerini belirten metaforlar ürettikleri görülmüştür. Yapılan çizimler kategorilerisinde ise öğrencilerin BEÖ'lerini en çok sportif bir insan olarak (f = 85; %22,65) sinirli bir insan olarak (f = 31; % 7,89), sevgi unsuru olarak (f= 30, %7,73) kategorilerine ait çizimler yaptıkları görülmüştür. BEÖ için özel okullarda okuyan öğrencilerin olumlu metafor sayısı devlet okuluna göre daha yüksek olduğu görülmüştür (p<0.01). Araştırma sonucunda, ortaokul öğrencilerinin BEÖ'lerine karşı olumlu metaforlar ürettikleri, BEÖ'lerini çoğunlukla sportif ve fiziksel güç unsuru ile sportif bir insan olarak tanımlamışlardır. Sonuç olarak, BEÖ'lerine ilişkin olumsuz metaforların BEÖ'leri tarafından tekrar incelenerek, olumlu metaforlara çevrilmesi önermekteyiz.
Anahtar kelimeler: Tutum, Metaforik algı, Ortaokul öğrencileri, Beden eğitimi öğretmeni.

INTRODUCTION

Metaphors have always been useful means of education that help students make connections between situations and solve problems (Sanchez, Barreiro & Maojo, 2000). Metaphors set students' minds free and allow them to approach problems from a different point of view. Through metaphors, students can express themselves in a variety of ways and use a few words to convey a lot of information (Tompkins & Lawley, 2002).

Using metaphors in teaching can motivate students to explore the unknown, think critically, and achieve learning goals. Students use their prior knowledge and make connections between different concepts to learn new information (Marzano, Gaddy, Görücü, Köksal & Uslu, 2000). Physical education teachers (PETs) should provide high-quality education to turn their students into strong and independent learners because they significantly impact what kind of attitude students develop towards courses. Teachers are role models for students, and therefore, how the latter perceive, learn, and respond to class content depends on how good the former are at managing the classroom environment (Cerit, 2008).

Countries pay special attention to physical education because it turns students into motivated, confident, and capable people with desired skills and desired behaviors (Hekim, 2015). Physical education also allows them to get to know themselves better and see their own strengths and weaknesses. Physical activities help students cope with stress and anxiety, build up mental strength, and find practical solutions to their problems (Açak, 2005). Teachers are responsible for transforming students into people who know what is best for them and their communities. Teachers are expected to carry out teaching activities in line with learning goals. Therefore, they should have a sound knowledge of their specific fields of expertise and communicate new knowledge to students (Toprakçı, 2012). Metaphors are a way of identifying what teachers' roles are and what students expect of them (Ben-Peretz, Mendelson, & Kron, 2003).

Not only should physical education teachers encourage students to develop skills, but they should also become role models for them to become successful citizens in the future. They should share their knowledge and experience to guide their students towards success. Students are likely to think more highly of PETs with those qualities (Martens, 1997). Besides, students who engage in activities that meet their needs become more motivated (NASPE & American Heart Association, 2006). There is a large body of research on metaphors in different education fields, but few studies address metaphors in sports sciences (Saban, Koçbeker & Saban, 2006; Cerit, 2008; Özcan, 2010; Şengül, Katrancı & Cantımer, 2014; Kalyoncu, 2012; Görücü, Köksal & Uslu, 2016; Kurtipek and Sönmezoglu, 2018; Kurtipek, 2019). Metaphor studies allow us to determine what students think of teachers and what kind of attitudes teachers have. Therefore, this study investigated secondary school students' (aged 10-14 years) metaphorical perceptions for PETs.

METHOD

Research Model

This qualitative study employed phenomenology, which is used to investigate thoughts and behaviors which we cannot fully understand but to which we are not entirely alien (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Phenomenology was the design of choice for this study because it focused on secondary school students' metaphors and drawings to look into how they perceived PETs.

Participants

A total of 400 students, 2 state and 2 private schools, from Afyonkarahisar city center, participated in this research voluntarily. Nineteen responses that contain expressions that cannot be considered as metaphors, where a connection cannot be established between the metaphor and its explanation, or where there is no explanation about the produced metaphor were eliminated. For this reason, the research was completed with 381 participants.

Research Ethic

The study was approved by the ethics committee (Meeting Number: 2019/2; Committee code 2011-KAEK-2), and permission was obtained from the Clinical Research Ethics Committee of Afyonkarahisar Health Sciences University.

Data Collection Tools

Firstly, descriptive data (gender, age, etc.) were collected using a demographic characteristics questionnaire. Secondary, participants completed the sentence "PETs are like ...., because ...." and then drew pictures depicting PETs.

Statistical Analysis

The data were analyzed in six stages using content analysis on the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 20) at a significance level of 0.05. Chi-square, frequency, and percentiles were used for analysis. Content analysis is a systematic analysis of written and oral materials (Simon & Burstain, 1985). It is also used to encode and categorize written or verbal statements and convert them into numerical values for detailed analysis (Balcı, 2011). The researcher first coded the data and then developed themes out of them. Afterward, she identified shared features, which is also known as thematic coding. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013), if there are too many themes, they can be grouped under meta themes based on their shared features. Therefore, the researcher consulted with two other researchers to check to which categories the metaphors, and drawings belonged and whether they represented those categories. The researcher and two other researchers compared the categories and then calculated interrater reliability using the formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994):

[Reliability = (Number of Agreements) / (Number of Agreements + Number of Disagreements) *100]

The metaphors were analyzed in six stages (Özcan, 2010): (1) naming, (2) eliminating, (3) developing categories, (4) establishing validity and reliability, (5) calculating and interpreting metaphor frequency, and (6) evaluating the drawings.

1. Naming: The metaphors were listed in alphabetical order, and the frequency of each metaphor was identified.

2. Eliminating: Metaphors with no or irrelevant explanation and those that made no sense or had nothing to do with the research purpose were removed (n=19).

3. Developing Categories: The metaphors were grouped based on shared characteristics. Some of them were included in more than one category because participants provided different explanations to the same metaphors.

4. Establishing validity and reliability: One of the most important ways of ensuring validity in qualitative research is explaining the data collection process and reporting data in detail (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

Qualitative research assumes that individual and environmental factors affect phenomena, and different studies on similar groups yield the same results. The qualitative approach to internal reliability also assumes that the way the researcher understands and interprets facts can produce different results (Yıldırım & Şimsek, 2013). Therefore, the researcher consulted with two academics (one from the department of physical education and sports teaching and the other from the department of child and mental health) to determine whether participants' metaphors and drawings represented the conceptual categories. The academics checked 127randomly selected questionnaires. Interrater reliability was calculated using the formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) (Table 2).

5. Calculating and interpreting metaphor frequency: The frequency of metaphors and drawings was presented as percentages in Tables. All participants were assigned codes. For example, the code "132 PU5F" indicated that the participant was a female (F) fifth-grader (5) from a public school (PU) who completed questionnaire No 132. On the other hand, the code "378 PR8M" indicated that the participant was a male (M) eight-grader (8) from a private school (PR) who completed questionnaire No 378.

6. Evaluating the drawings: The drawings were assigned to relevant categories, while those that did not mean anything were eliminated (n = 19).

RESULTS

Table 1. Distribution of Metaphors by Gender

Metaphor Categories	Gender				χ2	p
	Female		Male			
	F	%	F	%		
Positive	158	85.86	165	83.75		
Negative	26	14.13	32	16.24	1.241	0.265
Total	184	100.00	197	100.00		

There was no significant difference in the frequency of positive and negative metaphors between male and female participants (p>0.05).

Table 2. Themes and Codes for Metaphors

Conceptual Themes	Codes	f	%
PETs as fair people	Lawyer (1), equal-arm balance (4), weighing scale (1), judge (3), ruler (1)	10	2.62
PETs as unfair people	Unfair (2)	2	0.52
PETs as family members	Mother (6), father (3), sister and brother (1), family (1)	11	2.88
PETs as trainers	Trainer (10), basketball coach (3)	13	3.41
PETs as friends	Friend (8), fellow (2)	10	2.62
PETs as sources of information	Book (9) , star (1), light (1), bright spark (1),dictionary (2), sun (4), tree (3), scholar (1), treasure (2), lamp (1), magic carpet (1), light-up shoes (1), owl (1), computer (1), streetlamp (1),	30	7.87
PETs as energetic people	Tea (1), light (1), rose (2), devil with angel wings (2), leaf (1), goat(1), hypocrite (2), teazel (1), chameleon (3), surprise box (1)	16	4.19
PETs as self-disciplined and hardworking people	Soldier (2), maestro (1), octopus (1), sultan (1),beehive (1), commander (5), machine (1), willpower(1), coffee (1), disciplinary paper (3), watch (1), gym manager (1), medal (1)	20	5.24
PETs as fun people	Color (1), playfield (3), play (3), rainbow(2), fairy-tale book (1), stand up show (1), video game (1), funny tool (1), Kemal Sunal (1), clown (3), chimpanzee (1), rabbit (1), juggler (1), sport (1), funfair (2), child (2), bike (1), TV (1), man(1), competitor (1), monkey (1)	30	7.87
PETs as authoritarian people	Commander (3), referee (1), king (2), whistle (2), traffic sign (1), colonel (1)	10	2.62
PETs as loving and friendly people	Sun (1), flower (3), smiling heart (1), rose (2), love flower (1), happiness (1), smiling emoji (1), ladybug (1), strawberry (1), candy (1), angel (2), heart (1) smiling face (1)	17	4.46
PETs as good people	Flower (3), diamond (1), queen (1), fairy godmother (2), sun (1), fire (1), eraser and pen (1), mirror (1), angel (5), like sign (1), cactus without thorns (1), cotton (1), papa smurf (1), curtain (1), heart (1), child (1), baby (1)	24	6.29

Table 2 (Continue). Themes and Codes for Metaphors

Conceptual Themes	Codes	f	%
PETs as rude people who put one to shame	Wood (2), putting one to shame (1)	3	0.78
PETs as heroes	Superman (2) Prince (1), savior (1) hero (2), king (1)	7	1.83
PETs as instructive people	Teacher (1) book (1), professor (1) sport book (2),	5	1.31
PETs as guides	Star (1), lion (1), psychologist (1), door (1), compass (2), light (1), traffic lamp (1)	8	2.09
PETs as calm and patient people	Patience stone (3), river (1)	4	1.04
PETs as short-tempered people	volcano (2), ice-mass (1), rock (2), lion (6), monster (1), tiger (2), dragon (1), dinosaur (1), volcano mountain (1), dog (1), devil (1), fireball (1) a bag of nerves (1)	21	5.51
PETs as athletic and physically strong people	Lion (5), steel (2), Hercules (4), model (2), treadmill (2), sportswear (2) stone (2), tiger (1), rubber (3), cheetah (11), sportsman (27), ball (5), someone fit (1), basketball player (6), basketball (2), plastic bottle (1), artist (1), branded car (1), football (2), school (1), basketball hoop (6), gymnast (1), tree (2), stick (1), pole (1), giraffe (3), rocket (3), iron (2), tennis racquet (3), sniper (1), door (1), athlete (2), barbell (1), rhino (1), cougar (1), Transformers movie character (1), football player (2), Lebron James- basketball player (2), camel (2), giant (1), goal (2), Stepher Curry – basketball player (1), octopus (1)	122	32.02
PETs as molders	Axe (1), saw (1)	2	0.52
PETs as lazy and indifferent peop	Sofa (1), cat (1), wooden skewer (1) cicada (1), panda (2)	6	1.57
PETs as helpful people	First aid kit (2), walking stick (1), doctor (2), skeleton (1), elevator (1)	7	1.83
PETs as sources of life	forest (1), tree (1), water (1)	3	0.78
Total		381	100

The most common metaphors were "PETs as athletic and physically strong people" (f=122; 32.02%), "PETs as sources of information" (f= 35; 9.18%), "PETs as fun people" (f=30; 7.87%), "PETs as good people" (f=24; 6.29%), and "PETs as short-tempered people" (f= 21; 5.51%). Most metaphors were positive (f=323; 84.77%). Some examples of metaphors are as follows:

PETs as athletic and physically strong people:

Student 1. "PETs are like **lions** because they are as strong and tough as them." (Student 15 PU5F2)

Student 2. "PETs are like **Hercules** because they have huge muscles just like he does." (Student 138 PU7M1)

Student 3. "PETs are like **cheetahs** because they are as fast and swift as them."(Student 112 PU7F1)

PETs as molders

Student 4. "PETs are like **saws** because they use their knowledge to shape us." (Student 165 PU8F2)

Student 5. "PETs are like **axes** because an ax shapes a tree by cutting it, and our PET shapes us, too." (Student 389 PU8F1)

PETs as helpful people:

Student 6. "PETs are like **first aid kits** because we sometimes fall and hurt ourselves, and they cure us right away" (Student 137 PU7F1)

Student 7. "PETs are like **doctors** because they help us without a second thought whenever something bad happens to us." (Student 182 PU8M1).

PETs as sources of life:

Student 8. "PETs are like **forest** because they use sports to help us breathe." (Student 197 PU8F2).

Table 3. Themes and Codes for Drawings

Category	f	%
PETs as fair people	6	1.54
PETs as unfair people	6	1.54
PETs as friends	3	0.77
PETs as family members	8	2.06
PETs as sources of information	20	5.15
PETs as dynamic people	24	6.18
PETs as self-disciplined and hardworking people	25	6.44
PETs as fun people	10	0.25
PETs as commanding people	14	3.60
PETs as loving and friendly people	23	5.92
PETs as good people	15	3.86
PETs as rude people who put one to shame	5	1.28
PETs as heroes	8	2.06
PETs as motivating people	4	1.03
PETs as playmates	25	6.44
PETs as instructive people	19	4.89
PETs as guides	15	3.86
PETs as beloved people	30	7.73
PETs as short-tempered people	31	7.98
PETs as athletic and physically strong people	88	22.68
PETs as molders	2	0.51
PETs as lazy and indifferent people	8	2.06
PETs as helpful people	12	3.09
Total	388	100.0

Participants portrayed PETs as "athletic and physically strong" (f=88; 22.68%), "short-tempered" (f=31; 7.98%), or "beloved" people (f=30; 7.73%). Only two participants depicted PETs as "molders" (f=2; 0.51%). Most drawings portrayed PETs in a positive fashion (f=323; 83.25%).

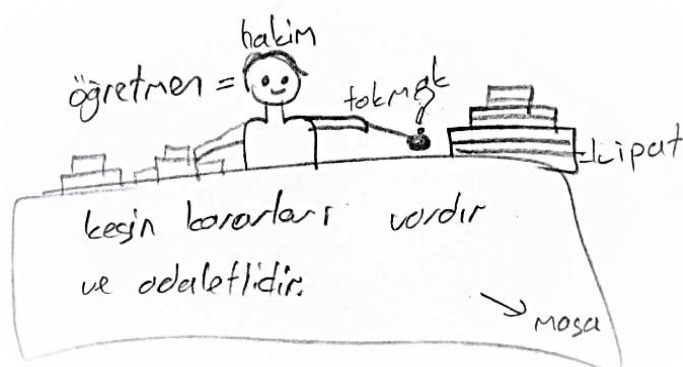### Sample Drawings

Student 9. PETs as fair people

Figure 1. Student 148 PU8M1
Turkish comment in the picture: There is a final decision of my PET and he / she is fair.
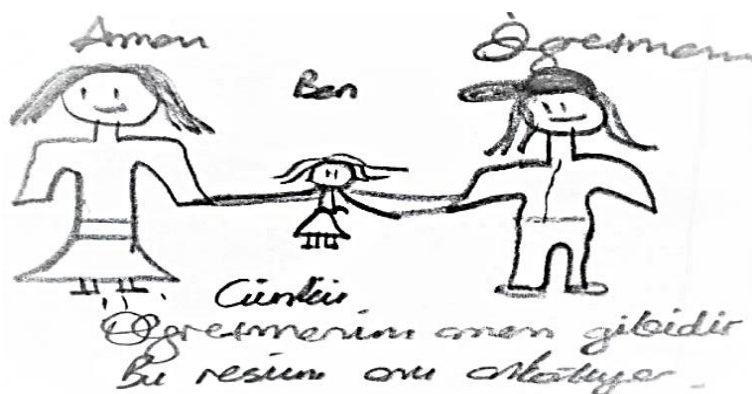
Student 10. PETs as family members

Figure 2. Student 376 PR8F1
Turkish comment in the picture: For Miss PET, my teacher is like my mother.

Table 4. Distribution of metaphors by school type

Metaphor Categories	Type of School				χ2	p
	Public		**Private**			
	f	%	f	%		
Positive	143	75.26	180	94.24	26.581	0.01**
Negative	47	24.73	11	5.75		
Total	190	100.00	191	100.00		

**p<0.01

Most participants generated the metaphor of "PETs as athletic and physically strong people." There was a significant difference in the frequency of positive and negative metaphors between private and public school students. The former (f=180; 94.24%) generated more positive metaphors than the latter (f=143; 75.26%) (p<0.01).

Table 5. Distribution of metaphors by grade level

Metaphor Categories	Grade Level								χ2	p
	5		6		7		8			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Positive	74	93.82	87	85.29	0	85.36	92	79.31	5.448	0.142
Negative	7	8.64	15	14.70	2	14.63	24	20.68		
Total	81	100.00	102	100.00	2	100.00	116	100.00		

The frequency of positive and negative metaphors did not significantly differ by grade level ($p > 0.05$).

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

There was no significant difference in the frequency of positive and negative metaphors between male and female participants (Table 1), which is consistent with the literature (Görücü, Köksal & Uslu, 2016; Karaşahinoğlu, 2015; Şengül, Katrancı & Cantımer, 2014). Sözen and Korur (2019) reported that female students generated more negative metaphors than males but that the difference was statistically insignificant. Köksal and Görücü (2015) also found no gender effect on seventh graders' (n = 393) metaphors for a physical education class, which is probably because seventh graders are in a developmental period where gender does not yet affect their perceptions.

Most metaphors were under the category of "PETs as athletic and physically strong people" (32.2%). In their explanations, most participants made an analogy between PETs and athletes. The second and third categories with the highest number of metaphors were "PETs as sources of information" (7.8%) and "PETs as fun people" (7.8%), respectively. Sözen and Korur (2019) also found that most secondary school students (n = 200) generated metaphors that portrayed PETs as athletic and physically strong (16%) and good people (12.5%) who guided them to the right path (9.5%). In general, research shows that students perceive teachers in a positive fashion (Kalyoncu, 2012). Ryan, Fleming, and Maina (2003) found that secondary school students (n = 611) had positive attitudes towards PETs. Görücü, Köksal and Uslu (2016) reported that sixth graders (n = 356) created 67 metaphors for PETs, mostly under the category of "PETs as someone needed." Most of our participants also generated positive metaphors for PETs. Koç et al. (2015) determined that most seventh graders (93.07%) used positive metaphors, while only 6.97% used negative metaphors to describe sports.

Our participants' negative metaphors were grouped under the category of "PETs as short-tempered people." Their explanations suggested that they saw their PETs as short-tempered people who were always shouting and yelling at them. Karaşahinoğlu (2015) also reported that teacher behavior caused fear and anxiety, resulting in student alienation. In general, research shows that students use a wide range of metaphors to express their thoughts about teachers (De Guerreo & Villamil, 2002; Saban, Koçbeker & Saban, 2006).

Most of our participants' drawings fell under the category of "PETs as athletic and physically strong people." Their drawings were consistent with their metaphors, suggesting that they had perceived PETs positively fashion. However, some participants used negative metaphors to describe PETs and made drawings depicting them negatively, which begs for a more in-depth analysis. Aykaç (2012) found that most secondary school students made very positive drawings to express what they thought about their teachers. Most of our participants also positively

portrayed PETs in their drawings, which is consistent with the results reported by Sözen and Korur (2019). Overall, most of our participants had a favorable perception of PETs as they regarded them as caring, funny, talented, hardworking, and strong mentors. This result is consistent with the literature (Yılmaz, Esenturk, Tekkursun Demir & Ilhan, 2017).

Private school students generated more metaphors than public school students (Table 2). However, Karaşahinoğlu (2015) found no difference in the number of metaphors between private and public school students. This may be due to differences in PET attitudes and physical conditions between the two types of schools. However, more research is warranted to better understand the effects of school type on students' perceptions of teachers.

Görücü, Köksal and Uslu (2016) determined that public school students (184 girls and 172 boys) generated 67 metaphors for their teachers, which were grouped under seven categories: "someone needed", "guides", "motivators", "bossy", "sources of fun" "intimate", and "rude". Although the researchers found no effect of grade level on the frequency of metaphors, they reported that the higher the grade level, the more negative the metaphors (fifth-graders =8.64%, sixth-graders = 14.70%, seventh-graders = 14.63%, eighth-graders =20.68%). Sözen and Korur (2019) and Karaşahinoğlu (2015) also found no effect of grade level on the frequency of metaphors generated by secondary school students for PETs.

Adolescence is a period of transition between childhood and adulthood. Secondary schools develop self-centered attitudes, exercise their new reasoning capabilities, and seek strong friendships and independence, which affects their relationships with adults. Secondary schools may not respond well to authority and tend to criticize and question adults' rules (Aydın, 2013). This may explain why students think less highly of PETs as they move up to the next grade level.

In conclusion, participants generated positive metaphors that depicted PETs as athletic, physically strong, funny, and good people, whereas few used negative metaphors, indicating that they saw PETs as short-tempered people who were always shouting and yelling. Participants also made drawings portraying PETs as athletic, physically strong, and beloved people, whereas some drawings illustrated PETs as short-tempered people. Private school students had more positive metaphors than public school students.

Although positive metaphors were prevalent, some participants still used negative metaphors to describe their PETs. Therefore, we recommend that PETs formulate and implement strategies to eliminate the negative perceptions that some students have of them.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions: Both authors contributed equally to the preparation of this article and approved it for publication.

Research Ethic
Ethics Committee : Clinical Research Ethics Committee of Afyonkarahisar Health Sciences University, Turkey
Date : Jan., 18, 2019
Decision / Protocol number : 2019/2-2011-KAEK-2

Cirit, B. & Gölünük Başpınar, S. (2021). Investigation of secondary school students' metaphorical perceptions for physical education teachers. *Journal of Sport Sciences Researches, 6*(1), 106-117.

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