An Analysis of High School Students' Interest Levels Physical Education Course and Teacher Attitudes

Ortaöğretim Öğrencilerinin Algıladıkları Öğretmen Tutumlarının Öğretmen Tutumlarının Öğrencilerin Beden Eğitimi Dersine Yönelik İlgilerine Etkisi

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between high school students' interest levels in physical education courses and teacher attitudes, and to analyze the differences in these variables in the context of gender, grade level, hometown, and physical activity status. The study group consisted of 771 randomly selected students attending high schools. In the study, the Course Interest Scale were used to determine the students' level of interest in the course. Independent samples t-test for two different independent variables and One-Way ANOVA and Tukey HSD test for more than two independent variables were used to analyze the data. At the end of the study, it was found that there were differences between genders in the perception of teacher attitudes on students. It was found that male students evaluated their teachers' democratic and general teacher attitudes more positively. It was also found that teacher attitudes were perceived differently according to students' grade level, but students' interest in the course did not change according to grade level. In addition, as students' interest in the course increases, their attitudes towards teachers also increase. As a result, teachers' attitudes can significantly influence students' interest in the course and these relationships are important for understanding the impact of teaching methods on students' motivation and interest.

Keywords: Attitude, High school, Interest in the course, Physical education, Teacher

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı, lise öğrencilerinin beden eğitimi dersine yönelik ilgi düzeyleri ile öğretmen tutumları arasındaki ilişkileri incelemek ve bu değişkenlerin cinsiyet, sınıf, memleket ve fiziksel aktivite durumu bağlamındaki farklılıklarını incelemektir. Çalışma grubunu ortaöğretim okullarına devam eden, tesadüfî yöntem ile seçilmiş 771 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmada öğrencilerin derse ilgi düzeyini belirlemek amacıyla Derse İlgi Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde iki farklı bağımsız değişken için Independent samples t-test ve ikiden fazla bağımsız değişken için One-way ANOVA ve Tukey HSD testi kullanılmıştır. Çalışma sonunda öğretmen tutumlarının öğrenciler üzerindeki algısında cinsiyetler arasında farklılıklar olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Erkek öğrencilerin öğretmenlerinin demokratik ve genel öğretmen tutumlarını daha olumlu değerlendirdikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Yine öğretmen tutumlarının öğrencilerin sınıf seviyesine göre farklı algılandığı, ancak öğrencilerin derse olan ilgilerinin sınıf seviyesine göre değişmediği ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrıca öğrencilerin derse olan ilgisi arttıkça, öğretmenlere karşı tutumları da artmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Beden eğitimi, Derse ilgi, Lise, Öğretmen, Tutum

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INTRODUCTION

Physical education and sport courses, in addition to providing students with the habit of regular physical activity (Warburton et al. 2006), support students' cognitive abilities such as attention, concentration, problem solving skills and cognitive flexibility (Hillman et al, 2008). Students' interest in physical education courses may vary depending on different factors. Since each student is unique, their level of interest may also differ from person to person. However, in general, student interest in physical education can vary depending on individual interests and abilities, activity diversity, classroom environment, peer influence, and most importantly, teacher attitude. Although each student's interest level is different, teachers can increase students' interest in physical education by making the lesson interesting, participatory and student-oriented. Teachers' behaviors significantly affect the interactions between teachers and students as well as the interactions between students themselves and determine the academic and social development of the student group in the classroom (Ratcliff et al. 2011). A positive teacher attitude can ensure that the physical education course has a more positive effect on students. Because in the classrooms of teachers who perform effective teaching and learning, students are less likely to exhibit undesirable behaviors in the classroom because they are interested in what they are doing, whereas in classrooms where the teaching is unqualified and the teacher's expectations are low, students get bored and exhibit undesirable behaviors (Ataman, 2000). Ryan et al. (2003), while associating the importance of students' attitudes with physical education, states that "The development of attitudes is important because teachers, coaches and others must consider attitudes every day when evaluating and judging the potential of others".

Students' interest levels and teacher attitudes are of great importance in order to deliver the lesson effectively to the students and to increase the participation of the students. Maintaining the student's interest in the school and the teacher will provide a productive learning environment for the student throughout his/her educational life. Students' attitudes toward physical education courses are not solely influenced by their personal tendencies but are also directly related to teachers' attitudes and approaches. The way teachers conduct their courses, their attitudes toward students, their motivational support, and their in-class communication can either increase or decrease students' interest in the subject. In the literature, teacher attitude is emphasized as one of the most significant factors affecting students' interest in physical education courses (Kılıç & Çimen, 2018). Particularly, gender stands out as a key variable in determining students' attitudes toward physical education. Research indicates that male students tend to show greater interest in physical education courses, whereas female students may have lower levels of interest due to

various reasons (Zengin et al., 2016). Additionally, in the context of the hometown variable, research suggests that there may be differences in students' interest in physical education between those living in urban and rural areas. Supporting studies suggest that students exhibit different attitudes toward physical education due to demographic differences (Erden & Özmutlu, 2017).

In this context, the aim of this study is to examine the relationship between high school students' interest levels in physical education courses and teacher attitudes, and to analyze the differences in these variables in the context of gender, grade level, hometown, and physical activity status. Students' attitudes towards this course can affect their motivation and participation levels in physical education. Research suggests that teachers' attitudes that they adopt in order to make students like this course and support their learning play a determining role on student success. The findings can contribute to pedagogical practices to design the physical education course effectively and increase students' motivation.

METHOD

Participants

The study group comprises a total of 771 students attending randomly selected secondary schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education in the city center of Trabzon. The students were selected using a simple random sampling method, with 56.7% female and 43.3% male participants.

Instrument and Procedures

Firstly, a form consisting of questions related to the determination of demographic characteristics and the Course Interest Scale developed by Mazer (2013) and adapted into Turkish by Akın et al. (2015) were used to determine the students' level of interest in the course. The scale comprises 16 items in 5-point Likert type and divided into two subscales: affective interest and cognitive interest. Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the subscales are .90 for affective interest subscale and .89 for cognitive interest subscale. The content of the subscales of the Course Interest Scale can be explained as follows:

Affective interest: The high score obtained from this subscale indicates that the participant students are interested in the lesson in an affective sense, feel energetic in the lesson, find the lesson fun and are happy in the lesson.

Cognitive interest: The high score obtained from this subscale indicates that the participant students understand the topics, find the topics useful and know what is expected of them.

In the study, "Teacher Attitudes Student Form (TAF)" developed by Sarmusak (2011) was also employed. "TAF" is a scale consisting of 19 items with three sub-dimensions (democratic attitude, authoritarian attitude and liberal attitude). The scoring of the items of the " TAF" is in the form of "always" (4), "most of the time" (3), "very rarely" (2), and "never" (1) in four-point Likert type. For negative statements, the scoring was in the opposite direction. The minimum score to be obtained from the scale is 19 and the maximum score is 76. There are 10 items in the "Democratic Attitude" sub-dimension. The minimum score to be obtained from the "Democratic Attitude" sub-dimension is 10 and the maximum score is 40. There are 4 items in the "Authoritarian Attitude" sub-dimension. The lowest score that can be obtained from the "Authoritarian Attitude" sub-dimension is 4 and the highest score is 16. There are 5 items in the "Free Attitude" sub-dimension. The lowest score that can be obtained from the "Free Attitude" sub-dimension is 5 and the highest score is 20. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the scale is .83 for "Democratic Attitude" sub-dimension, .71 for "Authoritarian Attitude" sub-dimension, .72 for "Free Attitude" sub-dimension, and .8766 for the total scale.

For the measurement tools used in this study, permission was obtained from the researchers who conducted the validity and reliability studies of the scales via email. In addition, the Ethics Committee approval (dated 06.01.2023 and numbered E-69268593-050-16983) was obtained and research permission was obtained from Provincial Directorate of National Education, to which the high education institutions where the research was conducted are affiliated and publication ethics was not compromised during the study process.

During the second semester of the 2022–2023 academic year, the research data were collected from students studying in four schools in the Ortahisar district of Trabzon province by using two different measurement tools. These tools, which took approximately 15 minutes each to answer, were distributed to participants on a voluntary basis and the necessary instructions were given to the participants.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using appropriate statistical software. Before making comparisons between variables, normality analysis was performed. Since skewness and kurtosis (skewness and kurtosis) values take values between -2 and +2, it is assumed that the variables show normal distribution (George & Mallery, 2010). For this reason, parametric test techniques were applied. Independent samples t-test was used for two different independent variables and One-Way ANOVA and Tukey HSD test were used for more than two independent variables. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency reliability coefficient of the Course Interest Scale was 0.818 for the

"Affective" sub-dimension, 0.914 for the "Cognitive" sub-dimension and 0.815 for the total scale. Teacher Attitudes Student Form Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability coefficient is 0.895 for "Democratic Attitude" sub-dimension, 0.590 for "Authoritarian Attitude" sub-dimension, 0.744 for "Free Attitude" sub-dimension, and 0.885 for the total scale. Although the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the "Authoritarian Attitude" sub-dimension (.590) is below the general reliability threshold of the scale, this issue has been considered a limited concern in the validity studies of the dimension.

The findings of the research will be presented as percentage (%), mean and standard deviation, and the significance level was set at 0.05. The gathered data is analyzed via SPSS 22.0 package programme.

RESULTS

Table 1. Students' Interest in the Course and Teacher Attitudes by Gender

Scales and Sub-dimensions	Gender	n	Mean	Sd	t	*p*
Course interest scale **Affective** sub-dimension	Female	437	26.77	9.12	-1.466	0.143
	Male	334	27.77	9.91		
Course interest scale **Cognitive** sub-dimension	Female	437	20.26	6.81	-1.783	0.075
	Male	334	21.19	7.67		
Course interest scale **Total**	Female	437	47.01	14.45	-1.729	0.084
	Male	334	48.95	16.67		
Teacher Attitudes **Democratic** sub-dimension	Female	437	24.47	7.32	-2.431	**0.015**
	Male	334	25.80	7.76		
Teacher Attitudes **Authoritarian** sub-dimension	Female	437	9.77	3.03	-1.599	0.110
	Male	334	10.13	3.21		
Teacher Attitudes **Liberal** sub-dimension	Female	437	12.66	4.13	-1.499	0.134
	Male	334	13.12	4.36		
Teacher Attitudes **Total**	Female	437	46.90	9.24	-3.089	**0.002**
	Male	334	49.05	10.00		

In Table 1, a significant difference was found between male and female students in the democratic sub-dimension of teacher attitudes and this difference was in favor of males ($p<0,05$). Similarly, male students had higher scores than female students in the total mean scores of teacher attitudes ($p<0.05$).

Table 2. Students' Interest in the Course and Teachers' Attitudes According to the Classes They Attended

Scales and Sub-dimensions	Class	n	Mean	Sd	F	*p*	*Difference*
Course interest scale **Affective** sub-dimension	9th grade	304	27.55	9.63	1.315	0.268	-
	10th grade	232	27.37	9.58			
	11th grade	133	27.41	8.98			
	12th grade	102	25.47	9.38			
Course interest scale **Cognitive** sub-dimension	9th grade	304	20.32	7.44	0.442	0.723	-
	10th grade	232	20.87	6.71			
	11th grade	133	20.68	7.29			
	12th grade	102	21.15	7.52			
Course interest scale **Total**	9th grade	304	47.87	15.98	0.275	0.844	-
	10th grade	232	48.24	15.09			
	11th grade	133	48.08	14.71			
	12th grade	102	46.62	15.47			

Teacher Attitudes **Democratic** sub-dimension	9th grade	304	25.47	7.45	0.795	0.497	-
	10th grade	232	24.85	7.45			
	11th grade	133	24.31	7.57			
	12th grade	102	25.18	7.94			
Teacher Attitudes **Authoritarian** sub-dimension	9th grade	304	10.46	3.07	16.584	**0.001**	Between 9 and 11, 9 and 12, 10 and 11, 10 and 12
	10th grade	232	10.34	3.06			
	11th grade	133	8.44	2.52			
	12th grade	102	9.36	3.35			
Teacher Attitudes **Liberal** sub-dimension	9th grade	304	13.84	4.14	18.785	**0.001**	Between 9 and 11, 9 and 12, 10 and 11, 10 and 12
	10th grade	232	13.22	4.19			
	11th grade	133	11.26	3.63			
	12th grade	102	11.20	4.32			
Teacher Attitudes **Total**	9th grade	304	49.77	8.29	13.612	**0.001**	Between 9 and 11, 9 and 12, 10 and 11
	10th grade	232	48.41	10.50			
	11th grade	133	44.01	9.23			
	12th grade	102	45.73	10.05			

While no significant difference was observed in the scores of students' interest in the lesson according to the grades they studied, a statistically significant difference was found in the scores of authoritarian, liberal and total teacher attitudes ($p<0.05$). It can be said that authoritarian, liberal and total teacher attitudes are perceived higher at the 9th grade level (Table 2).

Table 3. Students' Interest in the Course and Teacher Attitudes According to Hometown Status

Scales and Sub-dimensions	Hometown	n	Mean	Sd	t	*p*
Course interest scale **Affective** sub-dimension	Trabzon	663	26.95	9.29	-1.694	0.091
	Others	107	28.63	10.52		
Course interest scale **Cognitive** sub-dimension	Trabzon	663	20.35	7.12	-2.853	**0.004**
	Others	107	22.49	7.51		
Course interest scale **Total**	Trabzon	663	47.31	15.19	-2.366	**0.018**
	Others	107	51.11	16.84		
Teacher Attitudes **Democratic** sub-dimension	Trabzon	663	24.75	7.51	-2.617	**0.009**
	Others	107	26.80	7.51		
Teacher Attitudes **Authoritarian** sub-dimension	Trabzon	663	10.00	3.13	1.759	0.079
	Others	107	9.44	2.99		
Teacher Attitudes **Liberal** sub-dimension	Trabzon	663	12.95	4.16	1.443	0.149
	Others	107	12.32	4.65		
Teacher Attitudes **Total**	Trabzon	663	47.72	9.68	-.838	0.402
	Others	107	48.56	9.35		

According to Table 3, both cognitive and total interest scores of the students towards physical education course showed a significant difference in favor of the students who were not from Trabzon ($p<0.05$). Among the teacher attitude scores, a significant difference was found only in the democratic sub-dimension ($p<0.05$).

Table 4. Students' Interest in the Course and Teacher Attitudes According to Physical Activity Status

Scales and Sub-dimensions	Physical activity status	n	Mean	SD	t	*p*
Course interest scale **Affective** sub-dimension	Yes	367	27.10	10.20	-.300	0.764
	No	401	27.31	8.77		
Course interest scale **Cognitive** sub-dimension	Yes	367	20.83	7.92	0.563	0.574
	No	401	20.54	6.46		
Course interest scale **Total**	Yes	367	47.93	17.03	0.078	0.938
	No	401	47.85	13.87		
Teacher Attitudes **Democratic** sub-dimension	Yes	367	25.41	7.73	1.277	0.202
	No	401	24.72	7.37		

Teacher Attitudes **Authoritarian** sub-dimension	Yes	367	9.85	3.12	-.634	0.526
	No	401	9.99	3.11		
Teacher Attitudes **Liberal** sub-dimension	Yes	367	12.87	4.28	0.104	0.917
	No	401	12.84	4.21		
Teacher Attitudes **Total**	Yes	367	48.14	9.75	0.840	0.401
	No	401	47.55	9.55		

In Table 4, no significant difference was found between the physical activity status of the students and their interest in the course and teacher attitudes (p>0.05).

Table 5. Relationships Between Course Interest and Teacher Attitude

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
1. Course interest **Affective**	-	.714**	.945**	.428**	-.017	-.033	.315**
2. Course interest **Cognitive**		-	.903**	.479**	-.055	-.137**	.297**
3. Course interest **Total**			-	.485**	-.036	-.084*	.331**
4. Teacher Attitudes **Democratic**				-	-.047	-.051	.745**
5. Teacher Attitudes **Authoritarian** sub-dimension					-	.521**	.516**
6. Teacher Attitudes **Liberal**						-	.568**
7. Teacher Attitudes **Total**							-

***p < 0.05. **p < 0.01.**

Table 5 demonstrates significant relationships between course interest and teacher attitudes. A strong positive correlation was found between affective and cognitive interest (r = .714, p<0.01) as well as between cognitive and total interest (r = .903, p<0.01). Additionally, a moderate positive relationship was identified between total course interest and democratic teacher attitudes (r = .485, p<0.01), while a positive correlation was observed between total course interest and overall teacher attitudes (r = .331, p<0.01). On the other hand, a negative relationship was found between cognitive course interest and liberal teacher attitudes (r = -.137, p<0.01), and a weak negative correlation was observed between total course interest and liberal teacher attitudes (r = -.084, p<0.05). Among the teacher attitude sub-dimensions, a strong positive relationship was found between democratic attitudes and overall teacher attitudes (r = .745, p<0.01), while a positive correlation was observed between authoritarian and liberal teacher attitudes (r = .521, p<0.01). Finally, a moderate positive correlation was identified between liberal and overall teacher attitudes (r = .568, p<0.01).

DISCUSSION

It was concluded that the total mean scores of male students' perceived democratic and teacher attitudes were higher than the mean scores of female students' perceived attitudes and this difference was statistically significant. In society, boys are given more education to develop self-confidence and to be active in decision-making processes. Since democratic environments encourage participation and expressing opinions, male students may perceive these settings as more natural and suitable for themselves. In the study conducted by Özcan et al. (2023), it was also concluded that the mean of total teacher attitudes perceived by female students was lower than the mean of total teacher attitudes perceived by male students. In the literature, it has been argued that the physical education environment is adjusted only for boys due to the predominantly male team sports curriculum, and it has been stated that this situation will cause girls' perception of physical education to be more negative than boys (Carroll & Loumidis, 2001; Pellett, 1994; Goudas & Biddle, 1993). Therefore, male students think that their teachers are more democratic and supportive or react more positively to their teachers' attitudes. In this case, it can be thought that educational policies and practices should be reviewed in terms of gender equality. Although it was determined that the level of interest in the lesson did not cause a significant difference between genders, it was revealed that male students' interest in physical education course was higher than female students. In the study of Yaman et al. (2004), it was also stated that interest in physical education course was higher in male students than female students.

It was found that authoritarian, liberal and total teacher attitudes, which are the sub-dimensions of teacher attitudes perceived by the students, were perceived higher at the 9th grade level (Table 2). Accordingly, it can be said that 9th grade students perceive their teachers' attitudes as more authoritarian than students in other grades. Authoritarian teachers closely direct the activities of students by making strict practices a control center. They make planning for their classes and issue their orders (Kaya, 2006). The fact that the students who have just entered the high education level want to be kept under control by the teachers from the very beginning and that they are warned more often to be disciplined may have led to this result. In addition, 9th grade students may perceive authoritarian attitudes more clearly because they are younger and this may increase the attitudes perceived by students.

The sub-dimensions of teacher attitudes—authoritarian, liberal, and total—are perceived as higher at the 9th-grade level of high education compared to other grade levels. This can be

interpreted as a tendency among 9th-grade students to view the attitudes and behaviors of authority figures, such as parents and teachers, as interventions in their freedom. Due to their developmental stage, individualization becomes more prominent, leading them to perceive these attitudes in more extreme ways. In addition, it can be interpreted that 9th grade students internalize the attitudes shown by the teacher more because they are different in terms of their developmental periods, awareness levels, maturity levels, perception styles and they tend to identify with the teacher more. Therefore, 9th grade students, in whom the characteristics of adolescence period are seen more intensely, perceive teacher attitudes more as authoritarian or liberal teacher attitudes (Özcan et al, 2023). This indicates that students are more aware of their interactions with their teachers and their teachers' attitudes and evaluate these attitudes more distinctly in the 9th grade compared to higher grade levels. Since 9th grade students are at the beginning of high school education, they may be faced with a new school, new teachers and a new learning environment. Therefore, they may be more sensitive to teachers' attitudes and perceive these attitudes more intensely. Moreover, depending on the age and developmental level of the students, they may react differently to their teachers' attitudes.

In the study, it was revealed that cognitive and total interest scores for physical education course showed a significant difference in favor of students who were not from Trabzon. This result suggests that students' interest in physical education course may vary depending on their geographical location. Students who are not from Trabzon may have a higher academic interest and motivation due to the educational culture and social dynamics of the region they come from. Again, in the democratic sub-dimension of teacher attitudes, it was determined that the scores of students who were not from Trabzon were significantly higher than those of students from Trabzon. Since Trabzon is a city that does not receive labour migration due to its weak industrial infrastructure, but where relatively highly educated public employees migrate, these families can increase their interest in their children's academic achievements by giving more importance to their children's academic achievements, which can contribute to raising the level of education.

No significant difference was found between the physical activity levels of the students and their interest levels in the courses and the attitudes of the teachers. This result suggests that physical activity does not have a direct effect on students' interest in courses and teachers' attitudes. In a study, it was stated that students' negative attitudes toward physical education courses led them to avoid physical activities outside of school (Sıral, 2020). Factors such as the environment in which physical activity is performed, socio-economic status of the students, their educational

level, and various personal characteristics may affect this relationship. In addition, factors such as the timing, frequency and intensity of physical activity may also need to be considered.

The literature suggests that more individualized physical activity, as opposed to the traditional team sport model, can have a direct impact on students' general interest in physical education (Hatten, 2004). Factors such as the environment in which the physical activity takes place, students' socio-economic status, educational level and various personal characteristics may affect this relationship. In addition, factors such as the timing, frequency and intensity of physical activity may also need to be considered. Considering the interest in sports, especially football, in Trabzon region, it may indicate that students can participate in physical activities other than physical education and sports courses, which reduces the interest in physical education and sports courses. It is thought that children who grow up in a geography and family where there is a sports culture from a young age spend more time for physical activities outside of school compared to other children.

The study revealed that students' emotional attachment to the course (affective interest) was positively related to their interest in the content of the course (cognitive interest), their general course interest (total interest) and their teachers' democratic and general attitudes. The fact that students' affective attachment to the course is positively related to their interest in the content of the course and their general course interest is also supported in the literature. Wentzel (1997) found that when students have positive relationships with their teachers, their academic achievement increases and their interest in courses increases. When students see democratic attitudes from their teachers, they feel more valuable and motivated (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This shows that students' emotional attachment to the course increases their interest in the content of the course and the course in general, and that teachers' democratic attitudes positively affect students' emotional interest.

It was also found that students' cognitive interest was positively related to their general course interest (total interest) and their teachers' democratic and general attitudes. Therefore, as the students' interest in the content of the course increases, their general interest in the course and their teachers' more democratic and positive general attitudes also increase. However, as teachers' liberal attitudes increase, students' cognitive interest decreases. The finding that students' cognitive interest is negatively related to teachers' free attitude supports the literature that free teaching methods sometimes do not meet students' need for guidance. Baumeister, Heatherton, and Tice (1994) stated that students need a certain structure and guidance and in the absence of

this structure, their cognitive interest may decrease. Liberal attitudes may make it difficult for students to focus on the course content by giving them too much freedom. This may indicate that free teaching methods may negatively affect students' cognitive interest.

According to the study, as students' general interest in the course increases, teachers' democratic and general attitudes also increase. The fact that students' general course interest is positively related to their teachers' democratic and general attitudes shows the effectiveness of student-centered teaching approaches. Cornelius-White (2007) stated that student-centered and democratic teaching approaches increase students' academic achievement and course interest. Democratic attitudes create a more positive learning environment by increasing students' participation and interest. However, the study revealed that students' general interest in the course was negatively related to teachers' liberal attitudes. In other words, as teachers' liberal attitudes increase, students' general interest in the course decreases. It was also found that teachers' democratic attitudes were positively related to general teacher attitudes. This result shows that as teachers' democratic attitudes increase, general teacher attitudes also increase. It was also determined that teachers' authoritarian attitudes were positively related to their independent attitudes and general teacher attitudes. As teachers' authoritarian attitudes increase, their independent and general attitudes also increase. The fact that authoritarian teacher attitudes are positively correlated with permissive attitudes and general teacher attitudes indicates that teachers may exhibit different attitudes in different situations. This finding indicates that teachers can have a flexible teaching approach and authoritarian attitudes can be balanced with permissive attitudes in certain situations. This indicates that teachers can apply different strategies according to student needs (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Finally, it was observed that as the freer teacher attitude increased, the total teacher attitude also increased. The fact that freewheeling teacher attitudes are positively correlated with total teacher attitudes indicates that freewheeling attitudes are an important component of overall teacher behaviors. This implies that teachers' adoption of flexible and student-centered approaches can positively affect overall teacher attitudes. Hattie (2009) stated that flexible and student-centered teaching approaches increase students' motivation to learn and improve the overall quality of teaching.

CONCLUSIONS

As a result, teachers' attitudes can significantly influence students' interest in the course and these relationships are important for understanding the impact of teaching methods on students' motivation and interest. Democratic and general positive attitudes were observed to increase

students' emotional and cognitive interest in the course. It is noteworthy that liberal attitudes can negatively affect students' cognitive and general interest. This emphasizes the importance of providing balance in teaching strategies and attracting students' interest. The fact that authoritarian attitudes are positively related to liberal and general teacher attitudes shows how teachers' authoritarian behaviors can coexist with other attitudes. These findings, in line with other studies in the literature, show that teachers' democratic and flexible attitudes can increase students' interest in courses, but liberal attitudes can sometimes have negative effects. Teachers' attitudes and teaching strategies have significant effects on students' affective and cognitive interests. Therefore, it is important for teachers to use different teaching approaches in a balanced way and to develop strategies appropriate to students' needs.

In addition, no significant difference was found in students' interest in physical education course according to grade level. However, it was determined that teacher attitudes were perceived differently according to grade level. Ninth grade students perceived their teachers' attitudes as more authoritarian and liberal. In the context of the hometown variable, it was found that students from outside Trabzon had higher cognitive and total course interest. This result shows that students may be affected by the educational culture and social dynamics of the region they come from. In addition, it was found that students from outside Trabzon perceived teachers' democratic attitudes more highly than students from Trabzon. It can be suggested that teachers should create a more balanced and inclusive educational environment by taking into account the differences in perceptions between genders. In addition, this environment can help educators and school administrators to understand attitudes by gender and adjust their behaviors accordingly. In light of these findings, in-service training programs can be provided to teachers on democratic teaching methods, sports programs promoting gender equality in education can be designed, and more suitable teaching strategies can be developed for students based on their grade levels.

Ethical Statement

This study was conducted by the principles stated in the Declaration of Helsinki and was approved by the Avrasya University Ethics Committee with the decision numbered E-6926-8593-050-16983 and dated 06.01.2023.

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