International Journal of Progressive Education, Volume 15 Number 4, 2019

Secondary School Students' Academic Risk-Taking Levels In Turkish Lesson

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to find out academic risk-taking levels among secondary school students in Turkish lesson and determine if there is a relationship between their success in that lesson and risk levels. The study was carried out with blended method which combines qualitative and quantitative research patterns. Study data were collected from 450 secondary schoolers with convenience sampling. Data were collected by using the Risk of Academic Risk and Personal Information Form. Study data were analysed with descriptive and relational analysis techniques.As a result, a statistically significant relationship was found between academic risk-taking and achievement levels of students in the context of Turkish lesson. As their success level increases, their level of risk-taking also increases; and as success level decreases, the other decreases, too. It was found out that students' academic risk-taking is at medium level in Turkish lessons. This finding is supported by the rate of those hesitating to take academic risk and the rate of the positive views regarding Turkish lesson. Yet, no significant relationship was found between gender and academic risk-taking levels of students. However, the relationship between risk-taking behaviour and grade level was found to be significant.

Keywords: Academic risk, Turkish lesson, academic success.

DOI: 10.29329/ijpe.2019.203.18

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INTRODUCTION

One of the human-related concepts related to human as well as the cognitive domain in the learning-teaching process is the affective domain, which is related to the value that the individual carries/attaches on the cognitive learning process. One of the notions of affective domain, which have an impact on the learning process of individuals and entail taking responsibility and making efforts, is academic risk-taking behaviour.

Academic risk-taking behaviour, though described in various forms of in the literature, is often defined as the responsibility taken by students and their desire to learn something new in uncertain situations that can lead to success or failure. Strum (1971: 6-8) defines academic risk-taking as a tendency to make predictions and take chances, even in the presence of a penalty/failure in the classroom environment. Students' risk taking is also a measure of their creativity. Clifford (1991) sees risk-taking as a means of increasing students' learning and motivation and thinks that risk-taking is the choice of different academic tasks depending on their success or failure expectancy. According to Cliffordet al. (1990), it is the choice of varying academic tasks depending on success possibility anddifficulty level. Young defines risk-taking as "feeling the desire to go into the unknown, to try new and different things without focusing on success or failure. Learning is the reward of risk-taking behaviour" (1991, p. 8). According to Farley (1991), risk-taking is the basis of human creativity and creative productive risk-taking is one of the greatest lessons that education and the family should give to the child (as cited by Baş, 2012: 37). Arnett (1992: 340) argues that risk can be used for actions that cause serious potential consequences, as well as volunteering to try new things.

Academic risk-taking refers to decision-making by students in cases such as harder or easier assignments, known or unknown tasks, or sharing or not sharing their ideas in academic settings, and it occurs when students choose one of several possible options (Tan et al., 2016: 1). While choosing any of the options, students do not know what the result will be. Neihart (1999: 289) describes risk-taking as "the chance of doing something also when the consequences are not clear and trying dangerous things from children's point ofview." He believes that people who do not take risks can prevent pain, disdain, fear and sadness, but they can not learn, change, love, grow up, or live. All children benefit from learning to take risks and risk-taking is an important skill in the learning of talented children because they can seriously compromise their high success and strong leadership potential if they do not take risks. Robinson (2012: 1) discusses risk-taking from this point of view and states that risk-taking implies "students' evaluating both known and unknown consequences of a learning activity and making choices about their participations based on possible benefits and outcomes."Richards and Schmidt (2002: 460) argue that risk-taking has a significant influence in learning a foreign language and learners are willing to take risks to experience the new language, and risk-taking can be defined as the willingness to take risky actions. In particular context of learning a second language, risk-taking is one of the most important phenomena that affect success.

Academic risk-taking, which "could have an impact on the ability of individuals to question and think about their views and decisions", (Freeman and Rossignol, 2010) can also be defined as students' assessment of the known or unknown learning aspects of a learning activity or those that may result in success or failure. As can be seen, academic risk-taking behaviour includes "a complex process involving the willingness of a student to take an academic step with an uncertain outcome" (House, 2002: 6). Apart from the foregoing, it "describes the students' courage and willingness/unwillingness in quarrelling against difficulties in their learning situations" (Korkmaz, 2002: 82), "refers to the individuals' predicting or reacting in situations where they cannot foresee the consequences, they have never performed on, or they are not aware of the alternatives" (Çakır and Yaman, 2015: 166), or "in general, feeling the desire to make mistakes, defend cases contrary to the traditions or popular items, or deal with problems for which definite solutions are not available" (Çiftçi, 2006: 81).

Looking at the definitions above, it is seen that risk-taking behaviour is generally associated with the concept of success. Clifford (1991) also discusses academic risk-taking as preference of tasks

by students according to their expectations of success or failure. “Risk-taking behaviour, while giving a chance to receive awards, involves the potential to cause danger or damage. Fear of failure, others' thoughts, fear of rejection by others, and fear of uncertainty all play an important role in demonstrating the behaviour of risk-taking” (Yselande, 2015: 2). According to Atkinson's (1957) Theory of Success Motivation, success affects motivation or avoidance from failure affects risk-taking behaviour. While individuals who focus on success tend to directly prefer risk-taking behaviours, those motivated to avoid failure are expected to prefer easier tasks. Atkinson (1957) points out that individuals find it more valuable to succeed in difficult tasks than easier tasks. Kogan and Wallach (1967), who emphasize success and high motivation and risk-taking behaviours, argue that those who have high motivation to achieve take moderate rather than extremerisks and they avoid situations where they can not win (as cited by Majidifard et al, 2014: 1086). According to motivational theorists, prudent risk taking behaviour helps to ensure satisfaction and have knowledge about skills, increases intrinsic motivation, brings cognitive development progress, and helps to give constructive responses to failure (House, 2002: 13). “The student takes on the responsibility of her/his success or failure by demonstrating academic risk-taking behaviour” (Tay et al., 2009: 1104). Thus, academic risk-taking behaviour is also performed in case of “possible gains despite involving possible losses” (Parker and Stanworth, 2005: 319) and “future adverse outcomes are reduced” (Hill and Thomson Ross, 1997: 288).

Young (1991: 8-10) discusses risk-taking at five levels. Risk-taking behaviour varies with levels; nevertheless, a developmental process can not be mentioned in which one starts at the lowest level and proceeds through subsequent levels until the highest level is reached. The levels are not assigned age-appropriateness; rather, the levels indicate the varying degrees of risk-taking behaviour. The first level is *theuninhibited risk-taker*. The risk-taker displays the highest level of risk-taking behaviour. This behaviour is very common in the first stages of early childhood and it may not be sustained unless an emotionally healthy learning environment is provided. For example, pressures to comply toschool and peer norms and inappropriate educational practices may contribute to the decrease in uninhibited risk-taking behaviour. The second highest level of risk-taking behaviour is *the analytical risk-taker*. The risk-taker is eager to experience new things and takes this as a reward for her/himself. It is the most tempting level of risk taking behaviour. The third level of risk taking behaviour is *the cautious risk-taker*. The individual shows unwillingness to take more risks in the learning process but is willing to observe others take risks. This learner takes more into consideration the importance of success and failure and cares how others perceive her/his performances. The fourth level is *the inhibited risk-taker*.This type of risk-taking is common during late childhood. The inhibited risk-taker wants guarantees regarding the result of the risk-taking behaviour. As long as s/he receives enough encouragement, the student may exhibit this behaviour in entering a new learning experience. The fifth and the lowest level is *the non-risk taker*. At this level, new learning experiences are avoided. The attitude ‘You can't make me do anything’is evident. Like at the previous level, it is very difficult to change the non-risk taker's learning behaviour.

In the learning process; since behaviours such as asking questions, sharing each other's ideas and trying new things could lead to unintended consequences, they are considered to be risky behaviours (Beghetto, 2009). Academic risk-taking behaviours that students can exhibit have been identified as generally expressing an opinion that is different from peers' or the teachers' related to the topic taught in the classroom, asking questions to teachers or friends, showing tendency to answer questions they do not know the answer, participating in various discussions, willingness to take responsibility for situations with uncertain consequences, solving a problem through different paths, lack of avoidance from making mistakes, and trying new things (Clifford et al., 1990; Beghetto, 2009, Çakır and Yaman, 2015; Korkmaz, 2002; HenriksenandMishra, 2013; House, 2002).

Exhibition of the risk taking behaviours in the literature also depends on the classroom environment the teacher creates. Teachers should encourage their students to take risks because academic risk-taking behaviour is also a phenomenon related to classroom participation which is "one of the important variables in increasing the quality of teaching services" within classroom (Demirel, 2007, p. 134). It goes without saying that the teacher has an important role on risk-taking behaviour

when the student participates in the class. It is easier for students to "take risks, experiment and try out unusual things" in a classroom setting prepared by the teacher (Budge and Clarke, 2012: 64) so students can "demonstrate risk-taking behaviour if they gain/develop self-confidence in the classroom environment" (Yselande, 2015). Teachers can encourage students to take risks by using appropriate teaching techniques. If they avoid taking risks, they will hamper criticisms to be made by other students in the class or students' self-criticism (Majidifard et al., 2014: 1091). For example, storytelling in Turkish lessons is a technique that encourages both teachers and students to take risks. Students are nervous about this activity as it requires an unrestricted narration. However, the teacher gives a valuable and exciting learning experience for the students by making storytelling but also becomes a good role model for risk taking behaviour. At the same time, the activities such as drama, games, creative writing, poetry writing activities, critical thinking activities, etc. may pose examples for risk-taking behaviour (Young, 1991, s. 56).

In the literature, studies are available which deals with academic risk taking behaviours from several aspects. Most of those studies are seen to develop instruments to measure academic risk-taking behaviours of students in a certain field (Gezer et al., 2014; İlhan and Çetin, 2013), to examine the relationship between risk taking behaviours and academic achievement in any school subject (Bozpolat and Koç, 2016; Erricker, 2014; Gündoğdu et al., 2005; İlhan et al., 2013), to investigate the effect of certain situations (cognitive development levels of learners, grade level, age, gender, peer relationship, competitiveness, parental education and income level etc.) on academic risk-taking behaviour (Beghetto, 2009; Byrnes et al., 1999; Clifford et al., 1989; Daşçı and Yaman, 2014; Majidifard et al., 2014; Miller andByrnes, 1997; Panno et al., 2013; RamosandLambating, 1996), the effect of instructional approaches on academic risk-taking behaviours (Çiftçi, 2006; Korkmaz, 2002), to examine the relationship betweenstudents' creative skills / abilities, self-efficacy and self-belief perceptions, excellence properties, meta cognitive awareness levels, motivation, and problem solving skills, etc. and academic risk-taking (Baş, 2012; Beghetto, 2009; Çakır and Yaman, 2015; Erbaş and Baş, 2015; Goodwin et al., 2015; Gullone ve Moore, 2000; Öner Sünkür et al., 2013; Strum, 1971; Tay et al., 2009), and activities are arranged which promote academic risk-taking by students (Devonshire et al, 2014).

Also the samples studying the relationship between language learning and risk-taking behaviour grab attention. For example, Ely (1986) suggests that students who are willing to take risk-taking behaviour in the classroom environment are better at participating in the class. FarahaniandHivechi (2013) investigated the relationship between risk-taking and self-assessment skills of learners of English as a foreign language in the context of writing skills. Liuand Jackson (2008: 73-81) reported that students who showed more risk-taking behaviours while learning the target language were more likely to communicate with others in the classroom. TavakoliandGhoorchaei (2009) examined the relationship between self-evaluation and risk-taking behaviours in speaking ability. It was found out that there is no significant relationship between students' risk taking behaviours and self-assessment in speaking skills; yet, high-risk students are more likely to assess their speaking abilities than those at medium and low level of risk-taking. In a study researching the relationship between risk-taking behaviour and vocabulary learning strategies (MaftoonandAfroukhteh, 2013), no significant relationship was found between participants' vocabulary learning strategies and levels of risk taking. Only there is a negative relationship between risk taking behaviour and coding as a vocabulary learning activity. It is accounted for by the fact that low risk takers are cautious in learning a language and thus they prefer to memorize new words by coding rather than taking the risk of using other strategies.

It is seen that existing studies in general examinethe relationship between any of the language skills and academic risk-taking in the context of foreign language learning or language courses. The Turkish examples provide no research studying the relationship between Turkish or language skills with academic risk behaviour. While there are studies examining the academic achievement and academic risk taking levels of students in Mathematics, Social Sciences and Natural Science courses, no such study has been found in Turkish language. Therefore, the present study is thought to be unique. Our study aims at finding out the academic risk-taking level of middle school students' in

Turkish language course and whether there is a relationship between their academic achievement levels and risk taking behaviours. For this purpose, the following research questions were asked:

1. What is the academic risk-taking level of secondary school students?

2. Is there a significant relationship between academic risk-taking levels of secondary school students and their gender, grade level, family's educational status, and emotional and social perceptions of students?

3. Is there a significant relationship between academic achievement levels and risk taking behaviours of secondary school students' in Turkish lessons?

4. What are the opinions of secondary school students about taking academic risk in Turkish lesson?

METHOD

Research Design

This study was implemented with mixed method of qualitative and quantitative research models. Mixed method surveys are a type of research that handles quantitative and qualitative data sources together and provides a multidimensional evaluation of acquired data (Johnson and Onwuegbuzi, 2004). In this study, mixed method was preferred because quantitative data were supported with student opinions.

Study Group

The study group consists of 450 secondary school students covering all years, grades 5, 6, 7, and 8, during the 2015-2016 academic year. The participants were selected from secondary schools located in central and peripheral districts of Gaziantep, Rize, Erzurum and Şanlıurfa provinces situated in different geographical regions of Turkey. Convenience sampling was used because this sampling technique is known to be facilitating for researchers in terms of time, cost and labour.

Data Collection Tools

The data were collected by using the Personal Information Form prepared by the researchers and the Scale of Academic Risk-Taking developed by Clifford (1991) and translated into Turkish by Korkmaz (2002). The Scale of Academic Risk-Taking is a 5-point Likert-type rating scale consisting of 36 items. Although the original scale comprises of 3 sub-dimensions, the Turkish adaptation includes 4 sub-dimensions as a result of an extra sub-dimension. In the version of Korkmaz, the reliability coefficient was found to be 0,90as a result of the application with students.

In this study, the items falling under the scale sub-dimensions in the original version included in the application and overall reliability coefficient was calculated as 0,81.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the quantitative data was performed with the aid of descriptive (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and relational (chi square $\chi 2$) statistical techniques. The data were analysed with SPSS 20 and then presented in tables. For analysis of the qualitative data, content analysis technique was used. The topics were classified on the basis of content and grouped with similar characteristics, then each group was named accordingly.

RESULTS

In this study, which investigates the level of academic risk-taking by secondary school students in Turkish lessons, the quantitative and qualitative findings answering the research questions are given in order.

Results related to the level of academic risk-taking

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores of academic risk-taking levels of students

Behaviours of academic risk-taking	Mean	S.D.	Low	Medium	High
			1-2,3	2,4-3,6	3,7-5
I enjoy doing homework for a lesson that I find difficult.	2,57	,843			
I feel bad when I make a mistake at school.	3,51	1,252			
I like asking questions at school because I learn by asking questions.	4,04	1,451			
If I fail in my studies at school, I do not let anyone know it.	3,84	1,269			
When I encounter problems that require thinking about more, I prefer the problems that I can do quickly.	3,15	1,505			
If I can not succeed in a new task at school, I give up immediately.	3,39	1,556			
A low grade on school assignments upsets me a lot.	2,34	1,573			
Even if I make some mistakes, I enjoy working hard.	4,07	1,421			
The first thing I think when I start something new at school is that I will fail.	3,66	1,416			
I do almost nothing to get rid of a problem at school.	2,38	1,513			
When I make mistakes in schoolwork, I keep trying to find out the truth.	2,48	1,506			
I am concerned about making mistakes in schoolwork.	3,95	1,397			
Whenever I get a bad grade at school, I need to hide.	3,45	1,416			
The school work that I do by really thinking, is fun.	2,82	1,561			
I do not like setting goals for my studies at school because I can not reach them and then I feel bad.	4,10	1,327			
If I make a lot of mistakes in school, I feel very pessimistic or angry.	2,66	1,533			
Difficult tasks are more fun than easy ones.	3,26	1,530			
I do not enjoy working with my classmates because if I do not know something, they might think I'm stupid.	3,42	1,552			
I prefer studying a hard lesson to studying an easy lesson.	2,31	1,534			
When I fail at school, I do not enjoy eating, playing games, talking or doing anything else.	3,20	1,496			
When I have a chance to choose assignments, I choose the hard ones.	3,16	1,571			
If my school assignment is hard, I try to pass without doing it.	3,16	1,377			
If I do not understand a topic, I ask my teacher.	2,38	1,532			
If I make a mistake in a topic I try to learn, I feel downhearted.	3,93	1,389			
I would rather make mistakes and estimates on any topic than asking a ridiculous question.	2,78	1,453			
I always learn something from mistakes I make at school.	3,19	1,553			
If I get a low grade, I reflect on my mistakes and re-examine them.	3,87	1,394			
It is fun to try to answer difficult and challenging questions.	3,91	1,364			

Even if I have to, I usually try to correct my mistakes in lessons.	3,76	1,389
The easier the assignments are for me, the more I enjoy doing them.	3,85	1,328
I usually do not like lessons for which I make mistakes in homework.	3,50	1,487
I enjoy studying with my friends who like to study hard lessons.	2,58	1,412
I do not like setting goals for homework; I just do my homework and forget about it.	3,77	1,436
I feel bad if I give wrong answer for the teacher's question.	2,42	1,541
I prefer making mistakes on a difficult assignment to getting an excellent grade from an easy but boring assignment.	3,23	1,518
If I get a low grade, I usually take it seriously, collect my thoughts, and study harder.	3,01	1,588
Negative feelings following failure	2,80	,803
Tendency to prefer difficultoperations	3,34	,671
Resilience after failure	3,48	,697
Overall scale	3,33	,590

It is seen in Table 1 that mean and standard deviation values for the overall scale are 3,33 and ,590, respectively. For the sub-scales, the mean and standard deviation values were found as following: 2,80 and ,803for *negative feelings following failure*; 3,34 and ,671 for *tendency to prefer difficult operations*; and lastly, 3,48 and ,697 in *resilience after failure*. It was found out that students' levels of academic risk-taking are moderate in both all over the scale and sub-scales. When the scale items are examined one by one, low and high-value items are found; still, they do not affect the overallmean of the scale and sub-scales.

Findings related to the relationship between academic risk-taking levels of students and their gender, grade level, family' educational status, and emotional and social perceptions

Table 2: The relationship between academic risk-taking levels of students and their gender, grade level, family' educational status, and emotional and social perceptions

Independent Variables		Academic risk-taking behaviour and sub-dimensions							
		Overall scale		Negative feelings following failure		Tendency to prefer difficult operations		Resilience after failure	
		χ^2	p<0,05	χ^2	p<0,05	χ^2	p<0,05	χ^2	p<0,05
Gender		6,403	0,171	5,763	0,218	7,285	0,122	6,797	0,147
Grade level		15,104	0,057	15,954	0,043	14,766	0,064	14,323	0,074
Family's education	Mother	13,234	0,656	13,317	0,649	10,054	0,864	10,837	0,819
	Father	67,293	0,000	69,090	0,000	47,391	0,000	70,168	0,000
Emotional perception about knowledge	Trust the other sex	9,953	0,041	9,169	0,057	8,132	0,087	10,128	0,038
	Trust friends	10,525	0,032	5,646	0,227	14,062	0,007	5,463	0,243
	Being loved	3,082	0,544	2,143	0,710	1,191	0,880	2,215	0,696
	Being envied	0,227	0,994	0,394	0,983	0,520	0,972	0,103	0,999
Social perception about knowledge	Relationship	10,636	0,031	9,730	0,045	6,710	0,152	12,487	0,014
	Communication	4,886	0,299	0,363	0,363	2,532	0,639	5,936	0,204
	Supervision	1,871	0,759	2,891	0,576	1,624	0,804	2,228	0,694
	Sharing	2,364	0,669	2,328	0,676	2,229	0,694	2,339	0,674
	Support	9,690	0,046	8,679	0,070	5,648	0,227	11,388	0,023
	Freedom	16,442	0,002	15,310	0,004	7,844	0,097	17,080	0,002
	Ban	11,521	0,021	10,714	0,030	6,565	0,161	10,530	0,032

The findings in Table 2 reveal no significant relationship between academic risk-taking behaviours and gender, grade level, mother's educational status, and perceived love or envy by majority in class,good communication with classmates,constant supervision by parents, and perceptions regarding sharing everything or not with parents in the entire scale. However, a significant relationship was found between the sub-scale negative feelings following failure and grade level.

Apart from that, a significant relationship was found between *father's educational status* and academic risk-taking behaviour of students as χ^2 =67,293 at significance level of $p_{(,000)}$<0,05;

a significant relationship was found between *perceived trust for the other sex about lesson, exams, and knowledge* andacademic risk-taking behaviour of students as χ^2 =9,953 at significance level of $p_{(,041)}$<0,05;

a significant relationship was found between *perceived trust for close friends about lesson, exams, and knowledge about lesson, exams, and knowledge* and academic risk-taking behaviour of students as χ^2 =10,525 at significance level of $p_{(,032)}$<0,05;

a significant relationship was found between *perceived excellent communication with those in class* and academic risk-taking behaviour of students as χ^2 =10,636 at significance level of $p_{(,031)}$<0,05;

a significant relationship was found between *perceived support received from parents in all conditions* and academic risk-taking behaviour of students as χ^2 =9,690 atsignificance level of $p_{(,046)}$<0,05;

a significant relationship was found between *perceived freedom by parents in all conditions* and academic risk-taking behaviour of students as χ^2 =16,442at significance level of $p_{(,002)}$<0,05;

a significant relationship was found between *perceived ban by parents* and academic risk-taking behaviour of students as χ^2 =11,521 at significance level of $p_{(,021)}$<0,05.

Findings related to the relationship between academic achievement and risk taking behaviours in Turkish lesson

Table 3: Relationship between students' academic risk taking behaviours and achievement in Turkish lesson

Academic risk level	Grade in Turkish lesson (1)unsuccessful	(2)passed	(3)medium	(4)good	(5)very good	Total
(1)never	1	7	0	2	3	13
(2)rarely	7	12	6	11	10	46
(3) not sure	14	49	86	59	28	236
(4) often	5	18	29	35	55	142
(5) always	1	3	0	3	6	13
Total	28	89	121	110	102	450
	χ^2	df	p<0,05			
Overall scale	53,285	16	,000			
Sub-scale 1	44,355	16	,000			
Sub-scale 2	40,105	16	,001			
Sub-scale 3	47,028	16	,000			

It is understood from Table 3 that there is a significant relationship between *grades obtained from Turkish lesson* and academic risk taking behaviours of students in the whole scale (χ2 = 53,285

and $p_{(,000)}$<0,05 significance level) and also in all of the sub-scales. It can be said that students' success level in the lesson is parallel with their academic risk-taking levels.

Frequency values also show that success in the lesson seems parallel with risk-taking behaviour. The number of those who are *not sure* about taking academic risk (f = 236) is higher than the others. It can be inferred that academic risk-taking is at moderate level in Turkish lesson.

Findings related to students' views regarding academic risk-taking in Turkish lesson

Table 4: Students' perception of 'a good lesson'

1. What do you think a good lesson should be like?	**f**	***Examples***
Should listen to the teacher quietly, should do not talk in during lesson	63	*Ö30. I think a good lesson is that when the teacher is fully productive and teaching, the people in the class are listening to the lesson with no contact with each other.* *Ö37. A good lesson begins with being silent. Because all our teachers complain.* *Ö254. A lesson which is quiet, calm and full until the last minute.*
Should be fun and amusing	28	*Ö2. I want it to be a fun, open-minded, exciting and beautiful lesson.* *Ö431. It should be a lesson that does not overwhelm or bore the student, is fun when required and is engaging, and everyone attends.*
Teacher should teach topics in a clear and beautiful way	23	*Ö389. It is beautifully taught lesson enjoyed by students, so we feel curious to learn.* *Ö75. It should be taught well so that it can be understood, occasional activities would make it a good lesson.*
Activities should be organized for everyone to participate in lesson	12	*Ö25. I think a good lesson should be quiet and especially a lesson that I participate a lot.*
It should not be boring	11	*Ö92. It must be humorous, laughable, fun and relaxing. It certainly should not be advising.* *Ö6. It should not be too boring. We should not write too much and be bored.*
Should be exciting and engaging	7	*Ö22. Quiet, impressive, gripping, cheerful.* *Ö38. It should be interesting with activities, everyone should be given the right to say, regularly.*
Students should comply with rules	6	*Ö44. Listening to the teacher and obeying the rules.* *Ö150. Shuld not talk without permission, should be careful.*
Lesson should be completed in time	5	*Ö426. A good lesson should be timely and well detailed.*
Topics should be exemplified	4	*Ö192. I think a good lesson would be fun and exemplified.*
It should be intriguing	2	*Ö7. It should be fun and intriguing.*
The class should be peaceful	1	*Ö10. It should be a lsson listened without anyone disturbing the class peace.*
Teacher should not be angry when you make a mistake	1	*Ö19. They should not be angry when we do wrong. It needs to be listened to well and taught well. It should be taught in a quiet environment, we should participate in the lesson.*
Classroom size should be small	1	*Ö27. First, classroom size needs to be small*
Teacher should be disciplined/fair	1	*Ö11. I think a good lesson should be fun, nice, disciplined.* *Ö51. The teacher is in good communication with the students and the student is responsible and the teacher is fair.*
Teacher should manage time well	1	*Ö103. (...) the teacher should not speak fast.*
Teacher should not make us write too much	1	*Ö6. It should not be too boring. We should not write too much and be bored.*
Teacher should make us write what s/he has taught	1	*Ö112. Teacher should make us write what s/he has taught. In addition, it should not contain extracurricular subjects (life philosophy).*
Teacher should be a good teacher	1	*Ö8. There should be a good teacher to have a good lesson.*
Visual presentation should be made	1	*Ö13. I think visual expression should be made after the topic is explained. Then there should be an activity.*
Assignments should be given by level	1	*Ö123. (...)Homework should be done according to level*
Should be difficult	1	*Ö214. A good lesson should challenge and take time.*
It should be in a setting with no computer or technology	1	*Ö428. Studying in a setting where computersor technology doesn't exist.*
Class should be nice, clean and tidy	1	*Ö401. The class setting should be nice and clean There should not be conversation. If both of these exist, it is a good lesson.*
Teacher should make eye contact with the student	1	*Ö145. (...) we should come eye to eye while out teacher is telling*

Teacher should communicate well with the student	1	*Ö339. The teacher should see everyone in the class and have good communication*
Should not be advising	1	*Ö236. When we are naughty, our teacher always gives advice. Very boring.*
S/he should not be a trainee teacher	1	*Ö18 (...)it shouldn't be a trainee teacher.*

The data in Table 4 were collected as a response to the question "What do you think a good lesson should be like?" addressed to the students. The collected data were subjected to content analysis and grouped accordingly. It is seen that studentsbelieve *it is necessary to listen to the teacher quietly and not to talk during the lesson* (f = 63). It is followed by the idea that *the lesson should be fun and amusing* (f = 28) and that *teacher should teach topics in a clear and beautiful way* (f=23).

On the other hand, frequency values were found to be low for the items underlining student participation such as *activities should be organized for everyone to participate in lesson* (f=12), *it should be intriguing* (f=2), and*teacher should make eye contact with the student*(f=1).

Table 5: Students' perceptions of "achievement in the lesson"

2. What should be done to achieve in lessons?	f	Examples
Studying in a regular and planned way	104	Ö10. We should revise our lessons, have a regular studying system.
Answering tests	97	Ö202. (…) we can be successful in lesson by answering tests.
Revising topics	31	Ö7. Revising topics.
Listening to the teacher well in lesson	27	Ö29. First, we should listening to the lesson well.
Doing homework	25	Ö377. It is necessary to do the homework.
Reading books	6	Ö167. We need to read a lot of books.
Communicating well with the teacher	4	Ö170. (…) to communicate nicely and well.
Asking to the teacher things that are not understood	2	Ö35. (…) we need to ask the teacher what we do not understand.
Attending paid evening classes	1	Ö8. Studying harder and attending a paid evening class.
Making efforts	1	Ö5. It is necessary to study lessons, listen to lessons and make efforts
Choosing a good opponent	1	Ö21. We can be more successful in lessons by choosing an opponent and trying to be better than her/him in every area.
Cooperating	1	Ö428. We can study with our hard-working friends.
Getting help from the family	1	Ö295. We can ask our mothers and elders while studying.
Studying on time	1	Ö195. We need to study lessons on a daily basis and listen to lessons.

The data in Table 5 were obtained as a response to the question "What should be done to achieve in lessons?" According to the respondents, the most importantcriteria of success in lesson are *studying in a regular and planned way* (f= 104), *answering tests* (f = 97), and *revising topics* (f = 31). They are followed by *listening to the teacher in lesson* (f = 27) and *doing homework* (f = 25).

On the other hand, the opinions with low frequency were found as attending paid evening classes (f = 1), making efforts (f = 1), choosing a good opponent (f = 1), cooperating (f=1), getting help from the family (f=1), and studying on time(f=1).

Table 6: Students' perceptions of "the favourite lesson "

3. What lessons do you enjoy studying for? Why?	f	%
Mathematics	192	38,17
Natural Sciences	112	22,27
Turkish	84	16,70
English	58	11,53
Social Sciences	25	4,97
Physical Education	8	1,59
Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge	6	1,19
Art	6	1,19
All	12	2,39

Students' responses to the question "What lessons do you enjoy studying for?" were analysed and given in Table 6. The frequency values reveal that mathematics (f = 192) comes at the beginning of the courses that students like most. It is followed by *Natural Sciences* (f = 112), and *Turkish* (f = 84). It can be inferred that study participants enjoy numerical lessons more than verbal lessons. Also the proportion of students who enjoy Turkish language course seems to support themoderate relationship between success and risk taking behavior in Turkish class.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study was carried out to investigate the level of academic risk-taking inTurkish class by secondary school students and also the relationship between academic achievement and academic risk taking behaviours. The following results were reached in the study:

1. Academic risk-taking level was graded as low, medium, and high based on mean and standard deviation scores in this study. So, the participants were found to have medium level of academic risk-taking according to the whole scale and the sub-scales. Success level increases as academic risk level increases. To exemplify, Bozpolat and Koç (2016) examined the extent at which mathematics-oriented risk-taking behaviours of 8th graders are predicted by variables such as self-efficacy towards mathematics lesson, gender, TEOG (Transition from Primary to Secondary Education) score, duration of mathematical study outside school, parental educational status, family income level, and private tutoring. They found out thatstudents with a high tendency to prefer difficult operations showed willingness to take academic risks. The level of students' awareness of their behaviours in mathematical topics is also thought to accountfor their choice of difficult operations in mathematics. It is thought that increased awareness of students about their behaviours in mathematics also led to an increase in their mathematics-oriented academic risk-taking behaviors. It is thought that the students shunned academic risk to save negative impressions. As another result of the abovementioned research, it was found out that students who can transfer mathematics into life skills, using mathematics effectively in their daily life namely, are able to recover more easily in case of failure(p. 14-16).

In another study investigating the relationship between risk taking behavior and gender and verbal expression competence was examined (Majidifard et al., 2014), it was found that there was no significant relationship between the risk taking behaviors of Iranian students and verbal expression competences.

2. Our study results reported no statistically significant relationship between students' academic risk taking behaviors and the variable of gender. This is a similar finding compared to Clifford et al. (1989) examining the developmental and cultural patterns that affect academic risk-taking behaviours. It reported that gender does not change academic risk-taking or tolerance for failure significantly. Likewise, in the study by Korkmaz (2002: 173) developing an implementing the science teaching project centered around the project-based learning approach, no significant relation was

found between academic risk-taking and gender in relation with average scores in the sub-scales as reflecting the tendency to take negative feelings after failure, reflecting the tendency to perfer difficult operations, reflecting the tendency to rebound and be effective after failure, and reflecting the tendency not to do homework.

Yet, there are studies with opposite findings concerning the effect of gender variable on students' academic risk taking behaviour. Mostly they report findings in favour of male students. For example, Strum's (1971) research on the relationship between creativity and risk taking revealed that male students are more likely to take risks than their female peers. In a study investigating the relationship between risk taking behaviours and mathematical performances of learners and whether gender affects risk taking behaviours (Ramos and Lambating, 1996); it was found that students displaying more risk taking behaviours achieve betterin mathematics lessons and male students take more risks than females. In other words, in mathematics tests where risk taking behaviours plays an important role, boys performed better. Miller and Byrnes (1997) found out that risk-taking behaviours vary by gender, special variables such as age or gender do not increase likeliness to take risks; still, the variables such as overconfidence, competitiveness, indifference to possible outcomes, and seeking excitement were reported to increase the likelihood of risk taking among students of both sexes. Byrnes et al. (1999), in their meta-analysis of 150 studies comparing the risk taking tendencies of male and female participants, found out that male participants are more inclined to exhibit risk-taking behaviours. In summary, male students show higher risk taking behaviours than girls and those who have higher achievement levels display more risk taking behaviours than others(Gündoğdu et al., 2005).

3. Another finding is that there is no statistically significant relationship between students' academic risk-taking behaviors and grade level. Clifford et al. (1990) studied academic risk-taking behaviors in the form of choosing assignments ranked by difficulty likelihood of success. In the study carried out on students attending the 4th, 6th, and 8th grades, it was found out that risk taking behaviors increased with development. Beghetto (2009) conducted a study on the relationship between students' personal characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, grade level and proficiency in natural sciences course, their interest in natural sciences course, and their creative self-efficacy beliefs and mental risk taking behaviors. They found out that students become less willing to take risks as their age increaess. Similar results were also reported by Daşçı and Yaman (2014) investigating the effects of cognitive development periods of learners and learning stages on mental risk taking skills. They found out that mental risk taking skills of students go downas the educational grade progresses; the students' cognitive development period has no effect on mental risk taking ability; and the students at the first grade exhibited higher levels of mental risk taking than those at the second grade. It is thought that as education grade increases, students go through the teaching process for the sake of achieving in the central exams so academic risk taking behaviours tend to fall. This result byDaşçı and Yaman (2014) seems to comply with the findings by Beghetto (2009). Beghetto (2009: 217) found out that students showed less risk-taking behaviours as their age increased as a result of measuring their skills, self-beliefs and perceptions. On this aspect of the findings, researchers broughtvarious explanations such as more competitive classification policies, increased social comparisons, flawless learning, and higher scores in exams.

4. There is a statistically significant relationship between academic risk taking behaviors of the students and father's education level. It can be suggested that parental education level is one of the reasons affecting academic risk taking behaviors of students. This result may be due to the patriarchal structure of Turkish families with father perceived as a dominant figure in the family. On the other hand, no statistically significant relationship was found between academic risk taking behaviors of the students and mother's education level. It is a remarkable result that father's education level rather than mother's is related to risk taking behaviour although the mother usually takes care of the children in the family and helps them do their homework. In this regard, Avcı and Özenir (2016) carried out a study dealing with mathematics-oriented risk taking behaviors. Their findings concerning the variable of mother's educational status revealed that students whose mothers have different educational levels differ in mathematics-oriented risk taking behaviours.

5. Moreover, no significant relationship was found between students' academic risk-taking behaviors and their perception of being loved and envied by the majority in their classes, good communication with classmates, constant supervision by parents, and perceptions regarding sharing everything or not with parents, perceptions of being constantly controlled by their families, and perception of sharing everything with their families. It can be inferred that academic risk-taking by students in Turkish class is not affected from variables such as being loved or envied by someone, communicating well with others, being controlled by the family, or sharing everything with the family. Contrary to this result, Çetin et al. (2014) pointed out that academic risk-taking behaviours of students are affected by the viewpoint of the classmates and the teacher, and positive or negative judgement of others. the fear of negative evaluation increases, academic risk taking behavior decreases. The findings in the study by Çetin and others also indirectly refer to the relationship between academic risk taking and in-class communication, and puts forward a contrasting view to our finding.

6. There is a statistically significant relationship between students' academic risk taking behaviours and perceived trust for the other sex and close friends about lesson, exams, and knowledge. In other words, as students' perceptions of trusting others for knowledge increase, risk taking behaviours also increase.Özbek(2008) argues that trusting someone else means taking risks. If a person trusts someone else, s/he fact has high self-confidence and such people can always take risks. In this context, it can be said that students who choose to trust their friends or the opposite sex in Turkish lesson are more willing to take academic risks than those who do not trust.

Miller and Byrnes (1997: 814) reported that risk-taking behaviors are affected by five variables as self-efficacy, preference for a new experience, peer relationship, competitiveness and interest. They added that as probability of failure increaess, risk-taking reaction decreases. According to researchers who developed therisk-taking strategy called "Self Regulation Model", excessive trust facilitates risk taking, while those who feel inadequate avoid risk taking. Because these people think they lack the necessary skills. Particularly, students want to have confidence in their classmates in all matters related to lesson.

7. There is a statistically significant relationship between students' academic risk-taking behaviors and perceived excellent communication with those in class. Such relationship seems pleasing for those who say they can communicate very well with everyone in their class. There is a low percentage for those who say they can not communicate with those who are reluctant to communicate well. So it can be said that the students who communicate well with everyone are more successful in taking academic risk in Turkish lesson than those who are not able and are shy.

8. There is a significant relationship was found between academic risk-taking behaviour of students and perceived support received from parents in all conditions and perceived freedom by parents in all conditions. It is understood that pupils are not left alone by their parents on receiving support and freedom. This in turn affects their academic risk taking behaviors in Turkish lesson. Students who stated being supported and set free in any circumstance are more likely to have a higher level of risk than those who reported negative feedback. A similar result was also foundin the study of İlhan, Çetin, Öner Sünkür and Yılmaz (2013) stating children receiving support from family show higherlevel of risk-taking.

9. A significant relationship was found between perceived ban by parents and academic risk-taking behaviour of students. This finding applies to those who stated that their parents have no restrictions on them. In other words, students facing bans from their family take less academic risks.

10. There is a statistically significant relationship between students' academic risk-taking behaviors and their achievement in Turkish lesson. To explain, there is a right proportion between students' academic risk-taking levels and academic achievement. As their success in that lesson increases, the level of risk-taking behaviors increases, and as success decreases, the risk level also decreases. As students become more interested in teaching, academic risk-taking behaviors also

increase(Beghetto, 2009). In their study determining a significant relation between study skills and the academic risk taking behaviours, İlhan, Çetin, Öner Sünkür and Yılmaz (2013) stressed that academic risk-taking behaviors are effective on academic achievement of the students and added that supporting the academic risk taking behaviors of students would contribute to their success. In another study investigating the relationship between risk taking behaviors and academic achievement among high school students (Gündoğdu, Korkmaz and Karakış, 2005), also a significant relationship was found between the two variables. That study revealed that successful students have shown more risk-taking behaviors. It can be argued that individuals who take risk place importance on academic achievement and expect high success. Öner Sünkür et al. (2013) also found out in their study examining the relationship between positive and negative perfectionism attitude of 8th grade students and their academic risk taking levels that academic risk-taking behaviors are positively correlated with positive perfectionism but negatively correlated with negative perfectionism. As a result, students displayed more academic risk-taking behaviors when their positive perfectionism was supported.

Çakır and Yaman (2015) investigated the relationship between students' mental risk taking ability and metacognitive awareness levels. It was found that there is a significant positive correlation between students' mental risk taking ability, metacognitive awareness levels and academic achievement in science. As students' mental risk taking ability and metacognitive awareness levels increased, they recorded higher academic levels in science lesson. In another study, there was a significant positive correlation between the level of academic risk taking of talented students and problem solving skills. Those with higher problem-solving skills were more likely to take academic risks (Tay et al., 2009). This seems to support the findings indicating a meaningful difference between academic achievement and academic risk taking levels levels of students.

11. Taking into consideration the rate of those who are not sure about taking academic risk in Turkish lesson, the level of academic risk taking was also found to be modest. This finding also supports our findings obtained from the quantitative data. There can be many reasons preventing risk-taking by students. For instance, they might stay cautious about showing risk taking behavior in order to avoid failure. A similar result of the study by Erricker (2014) looks striking. The researcher carried out a study by giving an interesting literary text for analysis to students with learning difficulties and those who cannot learn to identify the effects on such students. It was found out that those with learning difficulty were hesitant to take risks in the learning process because they did not want to fail and they were not confident in anlaysing linguistic complexities in discourse analysis and they were not again self-confident in independent studies.

12. In the light of the content analysis, the opinions with high frequency value indicate that perception of a good lesson is teacher-centered. This contradicts the basic principles of academic risk taking and demonstrates that, contrary to the quantitative findings, students put the responsibility on the teacher rather than taking over the responsibility for learning.

13. According to the students in our study, *achieving in lessons* requires studying in a regular and planned way, answering tests, revising topics, listening to the teacher well in class, doing homework. Students who know how to be achieve in lessons and have high ability to study can show more academic risk taking behaviors. As reported by a study (İlhan et al., 2013) indicating a meaningful relationship between study skills and academic risk taking, academic risk taking behaviors increase as studying ability of students increase.

14. As for the students' favourite subjects, mathematics and science were reported in the first rank among the students' favorite courses, but Turkish lesson was reported in the third rank. This result also overlaps with the findings from the quantitative data because those who enjoy Turkish lesson less than the other two lessons exhibited moderate levels of academic risk-taking in the context of Turkish lesson.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study focuses on the relationship between achievement and academic risk levels of students in Turkish lesson in secondary schools. Research on wider samples can be undertaken to assess different school types and class levels. The present study investigated the relationship between the variables. So future studies could be designed in different patterns.

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