

Metaphorical perceptions of physical education and sports: An evaluation from the perspective of pre-service teachers

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ABSTRACT

This study has been designed to examine pre-service teachers' metaphorical perceptions of physical education and sports. In this study, phenomenology, one of the qualitative research designs, was used. The study group consists of 60 pre-service teachers studying at the Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching at Şırnak University during the 2020-2021 academic year. Research data were obtained from the statements of students who were asked to complete the sentence "Physical Education and sports are like ... for me because ... ". Research data were analysed using the content analysis method. The analysis of the data consists of stages including classification, elimination, category development, validity and reliability tests, and interpretation of the metaphors obtained in the study, respectively. Six categories were created in this study in which the metaphorical perceptions of pre-service teachers of the concept of physical education and sports were examined. Categories created for physical education and sports were *healthy/quality life, life/lifestyle, freedom/entertainment, indispensable/sine qua non, source of peace/love, and development*. As a result, it was determined that pre-service teachers have positive opinions about physical education and sports and have no negative judgment.

Keywords: Metaphor, physical education, sports, student.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main factors in self-improvement and development. It is in constant interaction with education in every period of human life (Cirit, 2020). Education is the process of deliberately bringing about the desired behavioural change in an individual's behaviour through his/her own experiences (Ertürk, 1973). Though the potential benefit of education varies depending on characteristics, skills, and expectations of societies in a basic sense, it is designed to enhance and change people's skills, abilities, talents, knowledge, and values (Erjem, 2013). Education has more than one general purpose. These are as follows (Töremen, 2011):

1. To contribute to the self-realization of the person,
2. To contribute to the creativity of the person and to ensure s/he is a productive individual,
3. To ensure that the person is raised as a virtuous, characterful, and entrepreneurial personality,

4. To gain the person scientific thinking and professional competence,
5. To help the person gain the ability to be democratic and independent, with free will, respect and understanding, and in solidarity and a tolerant manner,
6. To ensure the person has a healthy adaptation to social life and to ensure the change, development, and progress of modern life.

Physical education is a must in education. It mainly aims to provide a healthy lifestyle and social gains for students such as winning-losing and being assisted after physical education classes. Students also improve themselves in displaying balanced spiritual behaviour, developing self-efficacy, and coping with negative emotions. Physical education contributes to the growth and development of students through physical activities and in this context, it is considered as a complementary element of education

(Darst and Pangrazi, 2009). On the other hand, sport is defined as activities that individuals or communities do for purposes of health, entertainment, or show within the framework of certain rules, based on competition and physical and/or mental activity (Güneş, 2013). Together with the integrity of the training received by the individual, the sport acts as a bridge that provides the connection between people and society. In addition, it contributes positively to health in terms of physical and mental aspects. It is cognitively essential to well-organized and healthy. It is stated that it will help create a society that respects the rules and laws, has high business efficiency, appreciates good things, seeks appropriate ways for success, and has a high level of awareness of taking lessons in case of failures (Harmandar, 2004).

Using a word or concept to mean something other than the accepted one is defined as a metaphor (TDK, 2014). It can also be expressed as making use of the features of a concept (Tamimi, 2005). In addition, it is to describe the unknown concept employing known concepts and to make the phenomenon known based on the analogies of a phenomenon (Balci, 2003). Learning through metaphor increases the permanence of information, making it more meaningful. In this context, if students have learned information using metaphors, learning becomes more permanent for them. For, metaphor helps unknown concepts to be learned more easily and enables the learned information to be kept in memory and at the same time contributes to easy recall (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). Metaphors allow the person to transform from the style of understanding in mind to another form of comprehension (understanding) and enable the individual to see a particular phenomenon as another phenomenon by looking from a different perspective (Döş, 2010). In this context, the aim of the study is to examine the metaphorical perceptions of pre-service teachers towards the concept of physical education and sports.

METHODOLOGY

Research model

Phenomenology, one of the qualitative research approaches, was used in the study to determine the perceptions of pre-service teachers towards the concept of physical education and sports. The objective of phenomenology is the direct investigation of individual perceptions, experiences, and perspectives following the description of personal perceptions or perspectives towards a certain phenomenon and the interpretation of the existing state (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005; Yin, 2003).

Research group

The research group consists of a total of 60 pre-service

teachers (26 female and 34 male) studying at the Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching at Şırnak University during the 2020-2021 academic year.

Data collection tool

The participants were asked to complete the sentence "Physical Education and sports are like for me because" to identify the metaphors. In this context, the form containing these items was sent to the participants in a computer environment to ask them to express their thoughts in writing. In metaphor studies, the concept of "like" is generally used to more clearly evoke the similarity between the subject of metaphor and the source of metaphor (Saban, 2008). Expressions of the pre-service teachers were used as a data source.

Data analysis

The "content analysis" technique was used to evaluate the data. The main objective of content analysis is to determine the presence of the concepts and relationships that can describe the collected data. What is basically carried out in content analysis is to gather similar data within the framework of certain concepts and themes and to organize and interpret them in a way that the reader can understand (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013).

The metaphors created by the participants were analysed in four stages:

- (1) Coding and sorting,
- (2) Compiling sample metaphor images,
- (3) Category development,
- (4) Validity and reliability.

Metaphors were primarily subjected to coding and sorting. Forms that were left unfinished or left blank were eliminated. We discarded those showing inconsistency between the metaphors created by the participants and descriptions regarding these metaphors during the analysis. Then, the classification, which includes elimination and clarification, was launched. Metaphors were examined and classified by three researchers. At this stage, the metaphors written by the students were read and reviewed one by one, and each metaphor was analysed in terms of the subject of the metaphor, the source of the metaphor, and the relationship between the subject of the metaphor and the source of the metaphor. Unaccepted and weak metaphors were not included. During the category development stage, those with similar characteristics were classified in groups. The results of validity and reliability studies are the two main criteria. Thus, these studies were carried out. To increase the reliability of the classifications, the study was first classified separately by the researchers and finalized following a comparison (Sevinç and Ergenç, 2017).

FINDINGS

This section covers the findings of pre-service teachers' metaphorical perceptions of the concept of physical education and sports.

Sixty (60) participants created a total of 56 metaphors related to the concept of "physical education and sports". The main metaphor was "health", which was repeated

by 10 participants. In this section, the metaphors created by the pre-service teachers regarding the concept of "physical education and sports" are presented in 6 different conceptual categories, under the following headings, and analysed and interpreted. Besides, quotations were made from the sentences related to the metaphors and their descriptions (Table 1).

Table 1. Pre-service teachers' metaphorical perceptions of physical education and sports.

Categories	Codes (frequency)	Some expressions of the participants
Healthy / Quality life f(14)	Health (10)	... "because as long as a person loves her/his body, s/he values health, realizing that s/he has to stay away from bad habits and stands clear of such habits."
	Comfort (1)	
	Medicine (2)	... "because physical education improves the physical and mental health of the individual."
	Life coach (1)	... "because we cannot recover without medication."
		... "because physical education and sports help individuals not only to have fun but also to use their bodies actively. It is also a sort of medicine against obesity, which is a major health problem today."
Life / lifestyle f(7)	Life philosophy (2)	... "because physical education, which is as useful as education, work, and lessons that we consider necessary in our lives, is a guiding assistant that helps improve spirit, physique, and mind. For this reason, it is like a life coach for me."
	Struggle (1)	
	Part of life (1)	... "because every human being is born, grows up, and ultimately dies. Meanwhile, every person has distinctive wishes, desires, and hobbies. Some people want to paint, some want to read a book, and some want to improve their body and become fit by doing sports. For this reason, it is a life philosophy for me."
	The centre of life (1)	
	Social life (1) Peace (1)	... "because there are difficulties encountered in life. And I need to have the strength necessary to face these difficulties of life."
Freedom / Entertainment f(5)	Recreation (1)	... "because I do my sports activities with free will without being subjected to any pressure."
	Magic wand (1)	
	Pleasure (1)	
	Excitement (1)	... "because we become more energetic in our lives thanks to physical education and sports, and we focus better on our work in our daily lives and perform it with pleasure. This gives us pleasure and delight. "
Indispensable/Sine qua non f(9)	Domination of the spirit over the body (1)	... "because it provides physical and mental strength and support for people in overcoming difficulties and all obstacles that continue throughout life."
	Habit (1)	
	Support Arm (1)	
	The foundation of a building (1)	... "because it strengthens and sustains the individual physically and spiritually in all aspects."

Table 1. Continues.

	<i>The column that sustains the house (1)</i>	... "because a table can stand firmly with its 4 legs. Without one of the four legs, it becomes inoperable and loses its former function."
	<i>Table leg (1)</i>	
	<i>Critical period (1)</i>	
	<i>Mathematics (1)</i>	
	<i>Requirement (1)</i>	... "because the sport is the make-up of the body."
	<i>Physical aesthetics (1)</i>	
A source of peace/love f(7)	<i>Happiness (3)</i>	... "because a person who does physical activity stays healthy, dynamic, and young. This makes the individual feel better. In this way, s/he lives a happy life."
	<i>The welfare of the soul (1)</i>	
	<i>Love (1)</i>	
	<i>Breath (1)</i>	... "because physical education not only contributes to a person's body and physical appearance but also provides a person's well-being, both spiritually and psychologically."
	<i>De-stress (1)</i>	... "because love contains everything in it. Physical Education is not only physical development but also an important factor in psychological factors apart from the body."
Development f(14)	<i>Brain (2)</i>	... "because physical education for an individual is not about going to the gym and having a beautiful and fit body, but about socializing and finding his or her personality and following the right path."
	<i>Body (1)</i>	
	<i>Body, spirit, physical and social development (7)</i>	
	<i>Book (1)</i>	
	<i>A long way (1)</i>	... "because the more books we read, the more we can improve ourselves. Physical education is just like that. The more active we are, the more we can move ourselves to higher levels in every field."
	<i>Prize (1)</i>	
	<i>Rocket (1)</i>	
	<i>When a baby starts to Crawl (1)</i>	... "because a body that is not aware of what to do currently asks for help and develops gradually like a step toward victory."

DISCUSSION

The following interpretations are given in light of the qualitative findings obtained in this section of the study. Six categories were created in this study. Categories created for physical education and sports were *healthy/quality life*, *life/lifestyle*, *freedom/entertainment*, *indispensable/sine qua non*, *source of peace/love*, and *development*. There are few studies on metaphors related to the concept of physical education and sports in the literature. The categories and codes obtained as a result of this study are similar to the results of studies on metaphors related to physical education and sports.

In a study titled "Perceptions of 7th-Grade Students of Primary School on the Concept of Sports", the metaphors created by the participant students were examined and it was seen that most of them were grouped in the category of Sports is a tool for a healthy life (Koç et al., 2015). In this study, most of the university students revealed metaphors related to a healthy life.

In a study conducted by Sofi (2015) with secondary school students, 60 metaphors were created related to physical education. These metaphors were sport (32), game (16), entertainment (12), running (9), life (7), healthy life (6), water, health (5), flower (4), music (3), shoes (3), exercise (3), leisure (2), lesson (2), live (2), nature (2), candy (2), amusement park (2), relaxing activity (2), tree (2) and action (2), true, cleanliness, line of life, running man, feet, meaning of life, warming up, walking outside, football, match, ball, resting body, dove, gymnastics, meal, free activity, self-improvement, toy, game box, playground, activity, soldier, plant, madness, street, discipline, meaning of school, addiction, recreational activities, social studies, sports community, physical education, jigsaw, wood, happiness, sport branch, cheetah, leopard, and body building.

Türkeli (2019) examined the metaphors of pre-service teachers regarding the concept of exercise. In this context, metaphors about the concept of exercise were evaluated under 6 categories which were a source of

health, indispensable, interest/devotion, development tool, entertainment, and value. Yılmaz et al. (2017) examined the metaphorical perceptions of talented students towards physical education and sports and found 7 categories, 6 of which were positive sense and 1 of which was negative. Positive categories with a high frequency were "beautiful and entertaining courses", which included metaphors such as "adventure", "fun sports", "game", "drama", "Ferris wheel" and "game and entertainment". Researches and findings obtained from these studies overlap with our results and findings.

Esentürk et al. (2016) concluded that physical education teachers associate sport with psychosocial development. The responses of the participants in the study conducted by Uzun (2020a) who investigated the perceptions of pre-service teachers towards physical education and sports teaching revealed that nine different themes including success, non-disability, effects, universality, development, discovery, leadership, socialization, and orientation were identified. In the study by Kurtipek and Sönmezoğlu (2018), who investigated the metaphorical perceptions of sports managers towards the concept of sports, categories including basic needs, psychosocial comfort, increasing the quality of life, passion, being inherent in the individual, and providing physical benefit were created. In the study conducted by Sevinç and Ergenç (2017) aimed at describing the metaphors of university students about sports, it was seen that students always have a positive perception of sports. Categories were created under topics such as sports as an element of peace, happiness, pleasure, health, which is necessary, a positive contributor, and which requires attention and effort".

Sevinç and Ergenç (2017) concluded that the most frequently used metaphorical perceptions were life ($f = 11$), water ($f = 8$), medicine ($f = 5$), happiness ($f = 5$), and health ($f = 4$), adding that the categories that contain the most metaphors were peaceful-pleasing-joyful ($f = 50$), healthy ($f = 39$), and necessary ($f = 38$). The sport is thought to be an integral part of human life (Arpa, 2014). In this context, as the frequency of doing sports increases, people enjoy sports activities more (Uzun et al., 2017). Sports play an important role in keeping a person healthy, successful and happy throughout his life and boosting morale (Arpa, 2014). Again, in a study conducted by Karakaya and Salici (2016), it was determined that the main metaphor was "happiness". In the study conducted by Köse et al. (2019), a significant difference was found in both subjective happiness and subjective fitness scores according to whether or not to do regular sports. The subjective happiness and fitness levels of the students who do sports were found to be higher than the students who do not do sports. Human is one of the most important building blocks of society. Individual happiness, peace, and health bring social happiness and health. Sports have a very important place in human life. Therefore, regardless of age, conscious

and systematic sports based on scientific foundations play a vital role in increasing success and keeping happiness and moral power at the maximum level (Ramazanoğlu et al., 2005; Koçak et al., 2017; Aligül, Mumcu, Özleyen and Mumcu, 2019; Toptaş Demirci, 2019). Zhang and Chen (2018) determined in their study that the relationship between physical activity and happiness was positive. Hamer et al. (2009) concluded that any physical activity (including domestic, hiking or sports activities) done with at least 20 minutes showed a positive correlation with lower psychological distress levels.

Yet another metaphor created by the students in the study was "recreation". In this context, students associate the concept of physical education with recreation and recreational activities that people participate in in their free time are very beneficial for their mental and physical health. People spend their free time outside of their daily needs engaging in certain activities to have a spiritual rest and physical well-being (Koç and Uzun Dönmez, 2020). In a study, students were asked why they regularly participate in sports activities, and 32.8% of them stated that they participate in activities to make use of their free time (Uzun and Gözaydın, 2017). Free times may be "positive" if individuals are engaged in exercising, do healthy activities, and participate in cultural activities or "negative" if individuals have a drug addiction and get involved in violence. Recreation can be taught and has a crucial role in preventing violence so it may guide young people in terms of future habits (Mansuroğlu, 2002). Recreation has functions such as increasing the quality of life of individuals of all ages, ensuring the correct use of the body with habits gained from childhood and adopting social values as a life philosophy (Uzun, 2020b). In addition, recreational sports activities, develop the ability to live more independently, provide effective socialization, control stress and gain the power to use their physical abilities more functionally, can also be regarded as an alternative form of therapy (Uzun and Yılmaz, 2020). Again, Recreational activities for healthy active living, obesity can be prevented, smoking is reduced, the mental health of the individual is positively affected and plays an active role in raising a healthy and conscious individual (Serin and Uzun Donmez, 2020). In this respect, as inter individual relations are enhanced using the integrative and socializing features of sports and recreational activities and the physical and social development during adolescence process in which the personality structure begins to settle, the participation of the individual in sports and recreational activities is a necessity of society (Ekinici et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION

As a result of this research, metaphors were created for "Physical Education and Sports" under issues such

health, comfort, medicine, life coach, life philosophy, struggle, part of life, the centre of life, social life, peace, recreation, magic wand, pleasure, excitement, the domination of soul over the body, habit, support arm, foundation of a building, the column that sustains the house, leg of the table, critical period, mathematics, necessity, physical aesthetics, happiness, the well-being of the soul, love, breathing, relieving stress, brain, body, spirit, physical and social development, book, a long way, prize, rocket, or when a baby starts to crawl. When examined within this framework, it was determined that pre-service teachers have positive opinions about the concept of physical education and sports and have no negative judgment.

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