



Examining The Informal Communication Levels of Physical Education Teachers: The Case Of Istanbul Province

Beden Eğitimi Öğretmenlerinin İnfomal İletişim Düzeylerinin İncelenmesi: İstanbul İli Örneği

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to determine whether the informal communication levels of physical education teachers working in Istanbul differ according to their personal variables. The research subject was examined in the descriptive research design, one of the quantitative research methods. The universe of the research consists of physical education teachers working in Istanbul in the 2021-2022 academic year. The sample group consisted of 131 volunteer physical education teachers who were accessible to researchers from within the research universe. Participants were selected by random sampling. The Informal Communication Scale developed by Uğurlu (2014) and the personal information form created by the researchers were used to determine the informal communication levels of 131 physical education teachers (75 women and 56 men) who constitute the sample of the study. The Informal Communication Scale applied on the sample was found to be highly reliable with a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.897. Sub-dimensions of Friendship (0.778); Entertainment (0.804); Affecting (0.820) and Information (0.771). The scales were prepared electronically and sent to physical education teachers, who could be reached via virtual network channels. The independent variables are gender, age, educational status, marital status and professional seniority. The dependent variable is informal communication levels. The research results showed that the informal communication level of physical education teachers differed significantly only according to the gender. The data were analyzed with the SPSS 26.0 package program. It is thought that the research results will shed light on future studies.

Keywords: Informal Communication, Physical Education, Sports, Communication, Teacher.

ÖZET

Bu araştırmanın amacı İstanbul ilinde görev yapan beden eğitimi öğretmenlerinin infomal iletişim düzeylerinin kişisel değişkenlerine göre farklılaşıp farklılaşmadığını belirlemektir. Araştırma konusu, nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden, betimleyici araştırma deseninde incelenmiştir. Araştırmanın evrenini 2021-2022 eğitim-öğretim yılında İstanbul ilinde görev yapan beden eğitimi öğretmenleri oluşturmaktadır. Örneklem grubunu ise araştırma evreni içerisinde araştırmacıların ulaşabildiği, 131 gönüllü beden eğitimi öğretmeni oluşturmuştur. Katılımcılar rastgele örnekleme yolu ile seçilmiştir. Araştırmanın örneklemini oluşturan 131 beden eğitimi öğretmenin (75 kadın ve 56 erkek) infomal iletişim düzeylerinin belirlenmesi amacıyla Uğurlu (2014) tarafından geliştirilen İnfomal İletişim Ölçeği ve araştırmacılar tarafından oluşturulan kişisel bilgi formu kullanılmıştır. Örneklem üzerinde uygulanan İnfomal İletişim Ölçeği'nin, 0,897 Cronbach alfa güvenilirlik katsayısı ile yüksek derecede güvenilir olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Arkadaş alt boyutu 0.778; Eğlenme alt boyutu 0,804; Etkileme alt boyutu 0,820 ve Bilgi alt boyutu 0.771 Cronbach alfa güvenilirlik katsayıları ile yüksek derecede güvenilir bulunmuştur. Ölçekler, elektronik ortamda hazırlanarak, sanal ağ kanalları (sosyal medya, e-mail) vasıtasıyla ulaşılabilen beden eğitimi öğretmenlerine iletilmiştir. Araştırmanın bağımsız değişkenleri cinsiyet, yaş, eğitim durumu, medeni durum ve mesleki kıdemdir. Bağımlı değişkeni ise infomal iletişim düzeyleridir. Araştırma sonuçları, beden eğitimi öğretmenlerinin infomal iletişim düzeyinin sadece cinsiyet değişkenine göre anlamlı bir şekilde farklılaştığını göstermiştir. Veriler SPSS 26.0 paket programı ile analiz edilmiştir. Araştırma sonuçlarının, gelecekte yapılacak çalışmalara ışık tutacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Beden Eğitimi, İletişim, İnfomal İletişim, Öğretmen, Spor.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of the most important factors for the survival of societies. The importance of communication is the same for organizations. This phenomenon, which is included in the literature as "intra-organizational communication", has been a subject that has been frequently emphasized recently. The wide-ranging aim of this research is to emphasize the importance of communication styles and informal

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communication in educational environments where sports exist. Its narrower aim is to determine the informal communication levels of physical education teachers working in the province of Istanbul.

According to their conditions, people engage in formal and informal communication as well as verbal and non-verbal communication. Formal communication has a number of procedures and is a prerequisite for organizations to survive and be successful. Informal communication, on the other hand, plays an effective role in maintaining the organizational climate and managing potential conflicts correctly (Simić & Ilić, 2019).

In the first part of the research, a conceptual framework was created. In this context, the concepts of organization, organizational culture and organizational climate are defined. In the second part, after explaining the concept of communication and its importance, verbal and non-verbal communication and formal and informal communication are emphasized. While the informal communication levels of physical education teachers are analyzed in the third part, the data obtained from the research is presented in the fourth part. In the last part, the findings were discussed in the light of the literature and suggestions were made for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of Organization, Organizational Culture and Organizational Climate Concepts

Considering the many definitions of the concept of organization in the literature, it can be clearly seen that it is not an easy concept to define.

In order to better understand how we work within the organization and to be successful, we need to learn the basic principles, processes and appropriate behavior patterns we must apply. As technology progresses, it is very important to constantly read, follow trends and research in order to be open to certain innovations and to survive in the market.

Uyguç (2000) defines organizational culture as a phenomenon that emerges as a result of the interaction of external factors and organizational factors within the national cultural texture, which is unique to the organization and exhibits complex relations with each other (as cited in Şahin, 2010). According to Janićijević (2008), we can consider organizational culture in four different ways: power culture, role culture, duty culture and support culture (cited in Simić & Ilić, 2019).

Power culture: The main feature of this culture is its orientation towards the leader. In the power culture, the leader takes the source of her power from her/his charisma or the way she/he controls the resources. This type of culture can be found in small and young organizations that have not yet begun to implement the bureaucratic model.

Role culture: In the power culture, the leader is replaced by standards and formal rules in the role culture. Role culture is based on the view that the organization is a single environment. Here, it is possible to talk about a social structure that regulates the rules and procedures agreed upon in order to achieve a common goal. This culture suits people who try to be safe at work, like things to be predictable, and dislike risk and change.

Task culture: As the name suggests, this culture is task oriented. People are valued and cared for not by their hierarchical position, but by their ability to contribute to solving tasks. Since competence is the key to success, employees should be empowered to make decisions.

Support culture: The individual's goals and autonomy are placed at the center of events. This type of culture can very rarely be found in companies, because everything is subordinate to individuals and the goals of the organization as a whole are neglected. For this reason, companies that still decide to implement this culture cannot stay in the market for a long time.

Organizational culture and the prevailing climate are inextricably linked with the organization. The thing that creates an organization is undoubtedly the human factor. The efficiency of organizations depends on the workforce. The productivity of the workforce, on the other hand, depends on many factors such as the formal and informal rules developed by the team, the members of that team, and the homogeneity of the team. Team homogeneity deals with the question of how similar team members are to one another when it comes to knowledge, skills, ways of communication, abilities, interests, and the like. For the concept of organizational culture, the homogeneity of the group is perhaps the most important as an element that contributes to efficiency.

It is well known that the role of management of an organization is to create an atmosphere in which every individual in the organization feels that they belong, welcome, needed and useful to the organization. This motivates employees to provide high performance, strengthens employee safety, but also increases

commitment and loyalty to the organization. It is desirable that management conduct annual reviews of the organizational climate to know to what extent they have succeeded in creating such an atmosphere. Organizational culture is a broader concept than organizational climate. Climate is the way employees see and feel the culture nurtured in the organization in which they work. Climate is shaped and constructed through certain behaviors: existing personal policies, compensation policies, management methods, etc., that is, climate is created as a variable derived from its culture. Organizational culture is a real situation and climate is the perception of this real situation (Simić & Ilić, 2019). Culture is common to the entire organization and climate can vary from industry to industry, employee to employee.

The Concept of Communication and Its Importance

Etymologically, the term communication comes from the Latin word *communicare*, which means to connect people. There are different definitions and views on communication:

There is no end to the definitions of communication as spreading information, talking to someone, television, radio, hair style, body language, literary criticism (Fiske, 2002).

The process of transferring knowledge and understanding from person to person is called communication (Davis, 1988).

While Mihailović et al. believe that communication in a broader sense is any transfer of information from one place to another, communication in a narrower sense is interaction with signs (Simić & Ilić, 2019).

Consists of signals produced by one organism that are meaningful to other organisms and thereby influencing their behavior (Tümekaya, 2012).

Some researchers compare the communication of the organization with the blood circulation because communication conveys the corporate culture (Senić & Senić, 2015). There are streams of communication that can be horizontal or vertical and are combined with communication schemes or networks. It is important that the communication networks have as many channels as possible, because then the communication will be more successful (Bajić & Karavidić, 2016).

If we look at the common points of all these definitions, it is possible to define communication as follows. Communication is a one- or two-way phenomenon, a system in which elements such as information, feelings, thoughts and behaviors are transferred between all units, from the smallest to the largest, and this transfer takes place in a certain process and through a selected channel, causing a change in the message field (Dumangöz, 2019).

The communication process begins when one party has an idea that they want to convey to the other, and then the sender transforms that idea into a form that the receiver can understand. It is about encoding or translating an idea into a written or spoken language known to the recipient. The encoded message is sent to the intended person or persons through the communication channel (Simić & Ilić, 2019). The receiver receives the message and decrypts it, if he did it right, the ideas he understands are exactly what the sender wanted to convey, but we must not forget that we have different abilities in understanding and interpreting messages. We can continue the communication process in that the receiver sends the message back to the sender via so-called feedback, and when this information reaches the former sender and current receiver, it encourages a new idea. Obstacles such as noise or noise may occur in the communication process.

Perception is an inevitable companion of the communication process that occurs in both participants. Perception of information is also important for encoding and decoding messages. It is often found in the sense given to the message by the sender and receiver of the information. Good communication aims to make the meaning given to the message by the sender as close as possible to the meaning given by the receiver. They should look at the message "with the same eyes". Therefore, diversity of perception is the most common cause of difficulties and interruptions in communication. (Simić & Ilić, 2019).

According to Bazarra et al. (2006), the main types of communication in an educational institution are:

Management – teachers: The main feature of this communication model is that there is practically no direct communication between management and teachers, beyond the usual greetings in the hallways or trivial conversations in the teachers' room. All the information that the headmaster has about what happens every day at the school or institute passes through the "filter" of intermediate directions (heads of departments, departments, coordination of heads, etc.). This communication, in the form of an inverted funnel, creates a distance between the administration and the teachers and as a result loses the credibility of their role and existence as the leader of the school. Teachers perceive management from a purely managerial perspective. Second, middle managers are not always interested in communicating the real situation the school is in. The

false pursuit of tranquility, “everything is fine” and the fear of losing stability in the position can sometimes lead to gossip and cause a conflict between teachers and management over half-truths.

Teachers – teachers: There are two clearly defined areas of communication between teachers; personal and professional space. The first of these can only be approached with respect, and being different should be a constant source of wealth rather than a problem. Professionally, there is nothing more enriching than the presence of different educational methodologies and philosophies in an educational institution.

Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

Communication can be verbal and nonverbal. Robbins (2005) states that people generally communicate with each other by talking to each other through verbal communication. Common forms of verbal communication include conversations, formal discussions, informal discussions, and gossip. The advantages of verbal communication are transmission and fast feedback. It is possible to transmit a verbal message and receive a response in minimum time. If the recipient is unsure of the message, prompt feedback allows the sender to detect the ambiguity and correct it.

The most significant disadvantage of verbal communication occurs when a message has to go through several people. In an organization where decisions and other communications are verbalized in a top-down hierarchy of authority, messages are likely to be distorted (Valdez et al., 2008). Communication can be considered as the foundation of our relationship with the environment. It is the basis for understanding our relationships, but also the cause of misunderstandings.

Nonverbal communication is the way people communicate, consciously or unconsciously, without words. It is used to reflect personality traits, encourage verbal communication, express emotions and show attitudes (Bogcev, 2018).

Nonverbal communication includes facial expressions, head movements, gestures, paralinguistics such as loudness or tone of voice, touch, body language, appearance, personal space, and eye contact.

Formal and Informal Communication

Organizational communication differs in formality. Official correspondence forms official sections approved by the organization to which the information is communicated. It can move up, down or horizontally and often involves paperwork (Valdez et al., 2008).

Communication within the organization can occur through different channels and in different directions. The two main channels through which the communication process takes place are formal and informal communication channels. How communication takes place in the organization depends on the model of the organizational structure. Formal communication channels are formal and regulated forms of communication in an organization. Formal communication channels refer to verbal and written communication. In this sense, it is possible to talk about two types of formal communication: vertical and horizontal. Vertical communication can take place in two directions: "top-down" (instructions and directives are communicated) and bottom-up (information is communicated). In the first direction, that is, top-down formal communication, it establishes a downward communication from top management to middle management and operations. In this way, subordinates receive feedback on the success of their job duties as well as being informed about the organization's policies and procedures. When it comes to bottom-up communication, communication flows upwards from operations to middle management and top management of the organization. This type of successful communication gives superiors insight into possible problems they may encounter with the work and attitudes of subordinates, and in this way, subordinates create a sense of involvement that further affects their work and motivation (Simić & Ilić, 2019).

Informal communication is a communication in which the message is conveyed among the people in the organization without knowing the exact origin and without following the formally established channels. Not all communications from managers are made through official channels. They are often forced to use the informal network to receive information or transmit messages. To take advantage of this environment, the manager needs to know how rumors work.

Informal communication enables large numbers of people to be informed at high speed. The disadvantage of informal communication is the fact that it can distort information leading to a decrease in motivation, but informal communication can be a source of rumor and implication. Informal communication can be positive or negative, and it can be said that the messages received by the people involved in this communication chain are very reliable. Observing the fact that the rumors mostly come from friends or colleagues, this is understandable. If the employees have bad thoughts about the management or there is no trust in the

communication made through official channels, the employees will believe the rumors more (Simić & Ilić, 2019). Rumors weave a social web of informal communication that helps people interpret the organization, translates official messages from management into the language of businesses, and conveys information that the official system does not mention. On the other hand, rumors can be devastating when irrelevant, trivial or misguided rumors multiply and harm operations.

Successful managers do not interfere with this type of communication because it is an inevitable element in the business of the organization. Successful managers follow him and try to influence him. Informal communication in the organization spreads according to the hanging pattern. The first type is known as a "single chain", one person forwards one message to another, who then forwards the same message to a third party, the second forwards it to the fourth person, and so on. This creates a long communication thread. The second type is called "gossip chain". An individual transmits a message to everyone they meet, and each of these individuals can (but should not) forward the message. The third type of probability chain is formed by transmitting information to randomly selected individuals. The chosen people continue and spread the same information, albeit at random. People disseminate information that they think is very important when it comes to business, with the aim of reaching as many people as possible. The fourth type is the "cluster chain", where one person chooses another person with whom they want to share information. The message will only be forwarded to the selected ones. It has the function of spreading trust and creating an atmosphere of trust (Simić & Ilić, 2019). Rumors can lead to a decrease in people's trust in the organization they work for and in their colleagues. However, the rumors cannot go away. Therefore, managers should work by accepting the existence of the rumor (Valdez et al., 2008).

According to Greenberg and Baron, informal communication has a dual function:

1. The social function is to bring people together, socialize and develop friendships,
2. The function of spreading rumors is to spread informal and often false information.

Some of the features of informal communication are:

1. It connects individuals at different hierarchical levels.
2. It is difficult to control.
3. Informal information is transmitted through informal communication.
4. They are faster than formal communication.
5. Informal communication techniques are created by the users themselves.

Informal communication methods include:

1. Optional interviews with employees.
2. Personal networks.
3. Confidential written materials circulating within the organization.
4. Jokes.
5. Hidden signs like "Beware the boss is coming", "Boss is watching you".
6. Rumors (as cited in Simić & Ilić, 2019).

There are some national studies on communication and informal communication in educational organizations (Arslan & Afat, 2019; Ay & Uğurlu, 2016; Güçlü, 2017; Uğurlu, 2014; Üstün & Bostancı, 2021).

The Purpose of the Research

The hypotheses to be tested in line with purpose of the research are as follows;

Hypothesis 1. Physical education teachers have high scores on informal communication levels (H1).

Physical education teachers;

Hypothesis 2. gender (H2), hypothesis 3. age (H3), hypothesis 4. education level (H4), hypothesis 5. marital status (H5), hypothesis 6. professional seniority (H6), there is a significant difference between informal communication levels according to variables.

The fact that the number of studies conducted on physical education teachers on this subject is low, increases the importance of this research even more.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Sample

The research subject was examined in the descriptive research design, one of the quantitative research methods. For this, primary sources (scale and personal information form) and secondary sources were consulted. The aim is to determine whether the informal communication levels of physical education teachers working in Istanbul differ according to their personal variables. The independent variables of the research are gender, age, educational status, marital status and professional seniority. The dependent variable is informal communication levels.

The universe of the research consists of physical education teachers working in Istanbul in the 2021-2022 academic year. The sample group consisted of 131 volunteer physical education teachers who were accessible to researchers from within the research universe. Of the 131 physical education teachers, 75 are female and 56 are male. Participants were selected by random sampling. Information showing the personal characteristics of the study group is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of participants on demographic variables (N) and (%)

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	75	57.3
Male	56	42.7
Age		
18-29	26	19.8
30-41	71	54.2
42 and above	34	26.0
Educational Status		
Undergraduate	90	68.7
Postgraduate	41	31.3
Marital Status		
Single	51	38.9
Married	80	61.1
Professional Seniority		
1-5 years	31	23.1
6-10 years	43	33.1
11 years and above	57	43.8

According to Table 1, 57.3% of the study group is female, and 54.2% is in the 30-41 age group. The rate of participants with undergraduate degrees is 68.7%. 61.1% of the participants are married. While 43.8% of them have a professional seniority of 11 years or more, it is seen that the professional seniority of 23.1% is between 1-5 years.

Research Instruments and Procedures

Personal Information Form. It is a 5-item form created by the researcher to reveal personal data.

Informal Communication Scale. It was developed by Uğurlu (2014). It consists of a total of 24 items. It is a 5-point Likert type scale scored as “Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree”, “Slightly Agree”, “Agree” and “Totally Agree”. Friendship (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8), Entertainment (items 9, 10, 11, 12, 13), Affecting (items 14, 15, 16, 17) and Information (items 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24) the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale, which consists of sub-dimensions was found to be .89 (Uğurlu, 2014). In this study, the Informal Communication Scale applied to 131 physical education teachers was found to be highly reliable with a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.897. Friendship sub-dimension 0.778; Entertainment sub-dimension 0.804; Affecting sub-dimension was found to be highly reliable with Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of 0.820 and Information sub-dimension of 0.771.

The scales were prepared electronically and sent to physical education teachers, who could be reached via virtual network channels (social media, e-mail).

Data Analysis

The descriptive statistics (number, percentage, mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum) given in this study are given. The reliability of the scale used in the research was checked with the reliability test. As the first step of the statistical analysis, the assumption of normality was checked with the Shapiro Wilk test.

Independent Sample T test was used to compare the means of two independent groups with normal distribution. Mann Whitney U test was used to compare the means of two independent groups that did not have a normal distribution. Anova test was used to compare the means of three or more independent groups with normal distribution. The Kruskal Wallis test was used to compare the means of three or more independent groups that did not have a normal distribution. Analyzes were carried out in IBM SPSS 25 program. The margin of error accepted in the research is $p < 0.05$. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients of the total scale and its sub-dimensions for this study are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of the Informal Communication Scale

	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Friendship	8	0.778
Entertainment	5	0.804
Affecting	4	0.820
Information	7	0.771
Total Score	24	0.897

The Informal Communication Scale used in this study was found to be highly reliable with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.897. Friendship sub-dimension 0.778; Entertainment sub-dimension 0.804; Affecting sub-dimension was found to be highly reliable with Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of 0.820 and Information sub-dimension of 0.771.

Ethical Procedures

Ethics committee approval was given for the research by the Social and Human Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee of Istanbul Technical University with its decision no. 216 on 03.02.2022.

FINDING

Write In this section, descriptive statistics on the personal characteristics of physical education teachers working in Istanbul and analyzes to find answers to research questions are presented.

Table 3: Distribution of participants' informal communication scale scores

	Friendship	Entertainment	Affecting	Information	Total Score
N	131	131	131	131	131
\bar{x}	28.0	18.9	13.1	25.1	85.1
Sd	5.51	4.50	3.88	5.98	17.6

As seen in Table 3, informal communication was perceived at the highest level in the "friendship" sub-dimension ($\bar{x}=28.0$). Then, "information" ($\bar{x}=25.1$) and "entertainment" ($\bar{x}=18.9$) sub-dimensions followed, respectively; the lowest level was perceived in the "affecting" ($\bar{x}=13.1$) sub-dimension. The total average of the informal communication levels of physical education teachers was determined as 85.1 ($Sd=17.6$). Accordingly, it can be said that the informal communication levels of physical education teachers are at a "high" level.

Table 4: Distribution of participants' informal communication levels scores according to gender variable

	Female n=56	Male n=75	U	p
Friendship	28.1 ± 5.63	27.9 ± 5.46	2061	0.857
Entertainment	19.8 ± 4.95	18.1 ± 4.02	1491	0.007*
Affecting	13.0 ± 3.90	13.1 ± 3.88	2060	0.852
Information	25.7 ± 6.60	24.7 ± 5.47	1855	0.254
Total Score	86.4 ± 18.90	83.9 ± 16.68	1839	0.293

U: Mann Whitney U Test, *: $p < 0.05$

As can be seen in Table 4, a statistically significant difference was found between the total mean scores obtained from the Fun sub-dimension according to gender ($p < 0.05$). The fun sub-dimension score of the female participants was statistically significantly higher.

The scores obtained in the total scale and other sub-dimensions did not differ according to gender ($p < 0.05$).

Table 5: Distribution of participants' informal communication levels scores according to gender variable

	18-29 n=26	30-41 n=71	42 and above n=34	χ^2	p
Friendship	27.4±4.54	28.1±5.90	28.3±5.45	0.324	0.851
Entertainment	18.3±4.68	18.9±4.67	19.1±4.06	0.422	0.810
Affecting	13.2±3.38	13.4±4.06	12.2±3.81	1.686	0.430
Information	26.0±4.96	25.6±6.41	23.5±5.59	3.051	0.218
Total Score	84.8±15.4	85.9±18.8	83.2±17.1	0.452	0.798

χ^2 : Kruskal Wallis Test

According to Table 5, there was no significant difference in the total and sub-dimension scores of the Participants' Informal Communication Scale compared to the age group ($p>0.05$). Age group does not affect the Informal Communication Scale scores.

Table 6: Distribution of participants' informal communication levels scores according to the variable of educational status

	Undergraduate n=90	Postgraduate n=41	U	p
Friendship	27.6±5.39	28.9±5.75	1600	0.224
Entertainment	18.7±4.72	19.1±4.00	1776	0.807
Affecting	12.6±3.89	14.1±3.70	1458	0.054
Information	24.8±6.23	26.0±5.35	1665	0.372
Total Score	83.5±17.9	88.0±16.7	1585	0.231

U: Mann Whitney U Test

According to table 6, there is no significant difference in the total and sub-dimension scores of the participants' Informal Communication Scale according to their education level ($p>0.05$). Educational status does not affect Informal Communication Scale scores.

Table 7: Distribution of participants' informal communication levels scores according to marital status variable

	Single n=51	Married n=80	U	p
Friendship	28.8±4.83	27.5±5.88	1809	0.275
Entertainment	19.3±4.15	18.6±4.71	1817	0.379
Affecting	14.0±3.80	12.5±3.83	1587	0.032
Information	25.8±5.88	24.7±6.04	1775	0.211
Total Score	87.7±16.27	83.2±18.31	1682	0.129

U: Mann Whitney U Test

There was no significant difference in the total and sub-dimension scores of the participants on the Informal Communication Scale according to marital status ($p>0.05$). Marital status does not affect the scores obtained from the Informal Communication Scale.

Table 8: Distribution of participants' informal communication level scores according to the variable of professional seniority

	1-5 years n=31	6-10 years n=43	11 years and above n=57	χ^2	p
Friendship	26.5±5.16	28.7±5.71	28.2±5.54	2.63	0.268
Entertainment	17.7±4.84	19.3±4.54	19.2±4.29	1.82	0.403
Affecting	12.3±3.46	13.8±4.17	12.8±3.84	2.19	0.334
Information	24.3±5.84	26.3±6.15	24.7±5.93	2.88	0.237
Total Score	80.8±17.2	88.2±18.3	84.6±17.3	2.28	0.319

χ^2 : Kruskal Wallis Test

There was no significant difference in the total and sub-dimension scores of the participants in the Informal Communication Scale according to professional seniority ($p>0.05$). Professional seniority does not affect the scores obtained from the Informal Communication Scale.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Supporting physical education teachers, who play an important role in the construction of a physically and mentally healthy society, in many ways, and identifying and correcting possible negative factors is seen as an academic responsibility as well as a social one.

It was revealed that the informal communication levels of physical education teachers were high. There are other studies in the literature that support this result (Arslan & Afat, 2019; Ay & Uğurlu, 2016; Saracaoglu et al., 2009; First & Tomic, 2011). In the current study, informal communication was determined at the highest level in the friendship sub-dimension. This was followed by the sub-dimensions of information, entertainment and affecting, respectively. A study that overlaps with the results of the current research was conducted by Ay & Uğurlu (2016) and it was determined that the informal communication levels of teachers were high in the friendship dimension. According to these results, it can be said that physical education teachers' participation in social and cultural environments and out-of-school activities that will move away from the seriousness of the work environment and improve friendship relations is high. Sufficient number of people, time and space are needed for the formation of social environments and friendships. For teachers, the school environment can be a source where informal communication is high, friendships are established, information is shared, and the feeling of having fun and being happy is supported. The reason why the lowest average is seen in the sub-

dimension of affecting may be that it is difficult for teachers to change what they know to be true, like every other person. In addition, it can be said that teachers will not easily accept any thought because they are inquisitive. According to this result, it can be said that physical education teachers have informal communication at a level that can meet the social and organizational demands of their schools. Informal communication not only increases performance, but also provides free expression of ideas, safety, and the formation and development of a strong school culture (Himmetoğlu et al., 2020).

A statistically significant difference was found in the sub-dimension of entertainment according to the gender variable of physical education teachers ($p < 0.05$). According to this result, women's entertainment sub-dimension score is significantly higher. Scores obtained in the total scale and in other sub-dimensions do not differ according to gender ($p < 0.05$). Ay & Uğurlu (2016), on the other hand, concluded that male teachers use informal communication more effectively in the sub-dimension of affecting. Likewise, Yıldırım (2018) determined that male teachers had higher scores than female teachers in using informal communication. The results of the studies conducted by Çetinkaya (2011) and Tepeli & Arı (2011) and the results of our research are in agreement. However, in the study conducted by Arslan and Afat (2019) on 405 teachers, they concluded that there was no significant difference in the level of informal communication by gender. In another study, Üstün & Bostancı (2021) stated that being a woman or a man did not cause a significant difference in the level of informal communication. There are other studies in the literature that support this result (Pehlivan, 2008; Çiftçi & Taşkaya, 2010; Bayırlı, 2012; Polat, 2014; Kurt, 2014; Tunçeli, 2013). These results do not coincide with the results of our research.

It has been observed that the informal communication levels of physical education teachers examined within the scope of the research do not differ according to the age variable. Studies with similar results have been found in the literature (Baydar Posoğlu, 2014; Bayırlı, 2012; Kurt, 2014; Polat, 2014). However, when Arslan and Afat (2019) examined the informal communication levels of teachers, it is seen that there is a significant difference according to age. The informal communication levels of the teachers in the 26-30 age group were higher than the teachers in the 41 and over age group. Researchers attribute this to the fact that the majority of teachers in the 26-30 age group are single or do not have children, so they can spend more time at school and participate more frequently in out-of-school activities. There are other studies in the literature that contradict the current research results (Nacar & Tümkaya, 2011; Aküzüm & Gültekin, 2017).

There was no significant difference in the total scores and sub-dimension scores of physical education teachers from the Informal Communication Scale, according to the variable of educational status ($p > 0.05$). Looking at the literature, it was seen that Üstün and Bostancı (2019) reached similar results. This suggests that physical education teachers' undergraduate or graduate education levels do not have a relationship with the level of informal communication, so communication may be related to other variables.

It has been observed that the informal communication levels of the physical education teachers examined within the scope of the research do not differ according to the marital status variable. When the literature was examined, similar results were found (Bozkurt Bulut, 2004; Memduhoğlu & Saylık, 2012; Baydar Posluoğlu, 2014). Accordingly, it can be said that marital status variable is not an effective predictor of physical education teachers' informal communication levels. Considering that informal communication is related to the social side and personality of the individual, it can be said that being married or single does not create a personality change.

Finally, according to the results of the analysis regarding the sixth hypothesis (H6) of the research, no significant difference was found in the total and sub-dimension scores of the physical education teachers according to professional seniority ($p > 0.05$). There are studies in the literature that support this result (Bozkurt Bulut, 2004; Yıldırım, 2018; Doğan, 2017; Memduhoğlu & Saylık, 2012). Üstün & Bostancı (2021), on the other hand, found a statistically significant difference in the information sub-dimension of teachers' informal communication levels. Accordingly, they concluded that teachers with a professional seniority of 1 to 10 years have higher perceptions of the dimension of information compared to teachers with a professional seniority of 21 years or more. When the results are examined, the reason for the difference may be that the subject of informal communication in educational environments has not been researched and the current studies have focused on different variables. Therefore, it is thought that this situation prevents the generalization of the research results when the professional seniority variable is considered.

As a result, according to the findings, the informal communication levels of physical education teachers were found to be high. It has been concluded that gender is an important determinant of informal communication level in the entertainment sub-dimension. Age, educational status, marital status and professional seniority variables were not found to be a determinant of informal communication level in this research sample. With

these results, only H1 and H2 hypotheses of the research were accepted, and H3, H4, H5 and H6 hypotheses were rejected.

According to the above, managers should consider informal communication for a good organizational climate. For this, it is important to provide social and cultural environments where physical education teachers at all levels can improve their informal communication levels. For this, social meetings, invitations, travel activities, special day activities can be organized where they can develop their friendships. It is thought that the activities to be planned in or out of school addressing all age groups can increase participation. It can be suggested that physical education teachers should share their knowledge, experience and responsibilities with each other. For this, joint studies can be planned by considering the aims of education. In the current education system, informative seminars on informal communication and its importance can be organized by experts in the field. Thus, the functionality of schools can be increased. The current research has been done using quantitative research methods, similar research can be done by applying qualitative research methods.

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