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Investigation of Teachers' Self-Assessment to Create a Positive Classroom Environment

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine teachers' self-assessments of their ability to create a positive classroom environment. The study used a survey method, and the sample was composed of 260 teachers who worked in the province of Tokat in Turkey in the 2017–2018 academic year. Research data were collected through the Class Control Index developed by Howard (1978) and translated into Turkish by Özden (2005). To analyze the data, the researchers used the t-test, one-way analysis of variance, Kruskal-Wallis H and Mann-Whitney U tests, and Pearson Moments Multiplication Correlation Coefficient. According to the results, teachers have high self-assessments of their ability to create a positive classroom environment. Primary school teachers had higher self-assessment scores than middle and high school teachers. Women's scores were higher than men's, classroom teachers had the highest scores, and information technology teachers had the lowest. In addition, there was no significant difference in terms of age, occupational seniority, postgraduate education, type of school (for high school teachers), department from which teachers graduated, or classroom management.

Keywords: positive classroom environment, self-assessment, teachers

Introduction

If a positive classroom environment has been described as a setting in which, when one enters, one feels positive emotions and wants to remain there, what things can define this setting, and how can these be evaluated? Long-term studies on classroom environments have shown that students' motivation in school is an important variable in their participation and success (Fraser & Fisher, 1982; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; McRobbie & Fraser, 1993; Reyes et al., 2012; Ryan & Patrick, 2001; Walberg & Anderson, 1968; Wang & Degol, 2016). In studies examining both classroom climate and classroom atmosphere, researchers have expressed various ways of conceptualizing the characteristics of classroom environments regarding student participation (Patrick et al., 2007). Research has shown that when teachers think that they are creating classroom environments allowing students to participate and maximize their learning, self-efficacy and self-confidence increase (Pickett & Fraser, 2010).

Creating a positive and interesting classroom environment is one of the most powerful tools teachers can use to encourage children's learning and prevent problematic behaviors (Conroy et al., 2009). However, creating and maintaining a positive and productive classroom environment suitable for learning are important challenges teachers face in the field of classroom management. Westling (2010) argues that most teachers do not use effective classroom management strategies; challenging student behaviors have a negative impact on the general classroom environment and on interactions between students and teachers. Thus, expressions of class management definitions consist of actions the teacher takes to establish order, to make students active, or to encourage cooperation (Jones, 1996; Martin et al., 2006; Watkins & Wagner, 2000; Weinstein & Novodvorsky, 2011). According to Weinstein and Novodvorsky (2011), there are two main objectives in this context: (1) to create and maintain an attentive and orderly setting for children's participation in meaningful learning activities, and (2) to promote their social and emotional development. Jones (1996) indicates that classroom management is comprised of five basic components: (1) students' psychological and learning needs, (2) positive relations in the classroom, (3) teaching methods for learning needs, (4) organizing duties and responsibilities in the classroom, (5) ability to respond to problem behavior. Watkins and Wagner (2000) state that classroom management is related to a wide range of activities, such as organizing the physical arrangement of the classroom, identifying and implementing class procedures, observing students' behavior, reducing behavioral problems, and encouraging students to take responsibility for their learning. Therefore, as others have stated, the primary focus of the classroom teacher's responsibility is to create the best learning environment (Martin et al., 2006).

Teaching is a complex profession that requires implementing effective teaching while maintaining order in the classroom (Rosas & West, 2009). Classes are crowded and busy places where students grouped according to ability should be organized and directed to maximize work participation and minimize disruptions. Many events occur simultaneously, and the sequence of events is often unpredictable. Teaching in such environments requires a highly developed ability to manage events (Doyle, 1990). For this reason, it is necessary for teachers to focus not only on students' characteristics and behaviors but also on how to structure classroom environments and teaching to increase student motivation and participation. Pickett and Fraser (2010) argue that many teachers' class achievements are controlled by out-of-class factors; to overcome this, they point out that teachers should focus on the characteristics of their lessons in their own classrooms and evaluate themselves and their classroom environments so they can apply interventions to improve their weaknesses. It is important to employ engaging teaching, to use classroom management practices, to build positive relationships with students and their families, and to create supportive opportunities for all students to create an attractive classroom environment (MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012).

The classroom environment includes many relationships between students and teachers and among students. How will teachers manage the classroom, provide classroom communication, and keep students engaged at the same time? Studies have claimed that one of the basic elements of effective classroom management is positive interaction between students and teachers. Student-teacher relationships affect the classroom in ways both facilitating and challenging (Tabak, 2019). Strong teacher-student relationships not only reduce behavioral problems but also associate classroom and extracurricular behavior and decision-making processes with the curriculum (Wolk, 2003) and affect student achievement (Decker et al., 2007). To ensure positive teacher-student interaction and meet the needs of children in a classroom, the effective use of teacher incentives and feedback can be effective tools. In this

positive environment, children will feel comfortable about learning, and academic and social or behavioral errors will be considered opportunities for learning (Conroy et al., 2009). Positive feedback also influences students' perceptions of the classroom environment (Burnett, 2002). The classroom becomes a safe and stimulating learning environment when it provides a positive social environment and allows the active involvement of students in the teaching and learning process. As a result, such a teacher can achieve the best results in the education process (Djigic & Stojiljkovic, 2011). A positive classroom environment appears to be associated with higher quality of life for teachers and students, it increases satisfaction in school life, and its focus on education is broadly extended from academic learning to social and emotional development (Papšová et al., 2012).

Most studies on classroom environments are based on determining classroom dimensions, such as interpersonal relations, student-teacher relations, peer relations, teachers' beliefs and behaviors, teachers' communication styles, classroom management, and group processes (Allodi, 2010). In studies examining teachers' and students' perceptions and preferences regarding the classroom environment, researchers have concluded that perceptions and preferences are differentiated; teachers' perceptions and preferences are higher than students' perceptions and preferences (Raviv et al., 1990; Sinclair & Fraser, 2002).

Purpose of the Study

In the literature, although there are several studies on prospective teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about classroom management (Ercan-Özaydın et al., 2017; Şahin-Sak, 2015; Ünlü et al., 2017; Yüksel et al., 2017) and teachers' self-efficacy perceptions of classroom management or other skills, including the classroom management sub-dimension in self-efficacy perceptions (Aslan & Kalkan, 2018; Babaoğlan & Korkut, 2010; İpek & İpek, 2015; Kayabaşı et al., 2017; Koç, 2013; Özkurt & Erben-Keçici, 2017), the authors have not found a study aiming to directly measure teachers' self-assessments of their ability to create a positive classroom environment. Based on this deficiency, this study examines teachers' self-assessments of their ability to create a positive classroom environment in terms of several variables. For this purpose, the study seeks answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of teachers' self-assessments of their ability to create a positive environment in their classrooms?
2. Do teachers' self-evaluations of their ability to create a positive environment in their classrooms show significant differences according to personal variables (gender, age, professional seniority, subject, school stage, alma mater, type of school (for high school), postgraduate education status, and status of in-service training on classroom management)?

Method

Research Model

This descriptive study was designed with a survey model. The survey model aims to describe either the past or the present situation as it exists (Karasar, 2004).

Population and Sample

The population of the study consisted of teachers who worked in preschool, primary, secondary, and high schools (Anatolian high school and vocational high school) in the Tokat,

Turkey city center in the 2017–2018 academic year. the study sample included a total of 260 teachers who were selected using the easily accessible sampling method and were willing to participate in the study. Table 1 presents the demographic variables of the teachers in the sample.

Table 1.
Demographic Variables of Teachers in the Sample (N=260)

Variables			**N**	**%**
Gender		Female	101	38.8
		Male	159	61.2
Age ($\overline{X}$ =34, 9269) (Min= 23, Max=58)		25 and below	14	5.4
		26- 35	116	44.6
		36-45	117	45.0
		46-55	10	3.8
		56 and above	3	1.2
Professional Seniority ($\overline{X}$ =11.1077) (Min=1, Max=38)		5 and below	64	24.6
		5-10	67	25.8
		11-15	68	26.2
		16-20	42	16.2
		21-25	9	3.5
		26-30	7	2.7
		31-35	2	.8
		36 and above	1	.4
Subject		Foreign Language (Arabic-English)	16	6.2
		Science (Science/Biology/Physics/Chemistry)	24	9.2
		Art/Music/Physical Education	20	7.7
		Information Technologies	14	5.4
		Social Sciences (History/Geography/Philosophy/Social Studies/Religion and Culture)	34	13.1
		Guidance and Special Education	10	3.8
		Classroom Teacher	37	14.2
		Turkish Literature	22	8.5
		Vocational Courses	14	5.4
		Mats	22	8.5
		Pre-School	47	18.1
School Stages		Pre-School	48	18.5
		Primary School	45	17.3
		Middle School	75	28.8
	High School	Anatolian High School	56	21,5
	High School	Vocational High School	36	13,8
Alma Mater		Department of Education	231	88.8
		Department of Arts and Sciences	14	5.4
		Department of Theology	6	2.3
		Technical University	7	2.7
		Two-Year Vocational High School	2	.8
Postgraduate Education		No Postgraduate Education	220	84.6
		Master's	38	14.6
		Doctorate	2	.8
Status of In-Service Training in Classroom Management		Yes	133	51.2
		No	127	48.8

Table 1 reveals that 159 (61.2%) of the teachers included in the study sample were male; 117 (45%) were in the 36–45 age range; 68 (26.2%) had a professional seniority of 11–15 years; 47 (18.1%) were preschool teachers; 92 (35.3%), including 56 high school and 36 vocational high school, were high school teachers; 231 (88.8%) graduated from an education department; 220 (84.6%) had no post-graduate education; 133 (51.2%) had previously received in-service training on classroom management.

Data Collection Tools

Data in the study were collected through the Class Control Index developed by Howard (1978), which was translated into Turkish by Özden (2005). In the index, there are a total of 15 questions by which teachers self-evaluate how they create a good environment in their classrooms using a scale of 1 to 5 (1.00–1.80: never, 1.81–2.60: rarely, 2.61–3.40: sometimes, 3.41–4.20: often, 4.21–5.00: always).

Howard (1978) classifies the elements in the index as "relationships with students," "classroom management," and "teaching skills." A total score for creating a positive classroom can be taken from the index. If one has a score of 45 ($\overline{X}$ =3.00) or higher, one is probably a good classroom environment builder. If one has less than 35 ($\overline{X}$ = 2.33) points, one should question whether one has fulfilled one's requirements to create a positive classroom environment (Özden, 2005).

For this study, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was determined as .771, where all index items were assessed together. Teachers were considered to create more positive classroom environments as their total index scores increased. The lowest score of the index was 15, and the highest score was 75.

Analysis of Data

SPSS 22.0 was used for data analysis. In the analysis of the data, the t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were performed for the variables with a sample size of 30 or greater, while the Kruskal-Wallis H and Mann-Whitney U tests were used for variables with samples of less than 30. Also, the Pearson Moments Multiplication Correlation Coefficient test was used. The lowest (min), the highest (max), mean score - total score ($\overline{X}$), and standard deviation (Sd) values of the index were calculated and interpreted.

Findings

The first sub-problem of the study was, "What is the level of teachers' self-assessment of their ability to create a positive environment in their classrooms?" To solve this sub-problem, Table 2 shows the minimum (min), maximum (max), mean score - total score ($\overline{X}$), and standard deviation (Sd) values that teachers gave to the items regarding creating a positive classroom environment.

Table 2.
Teachers Self-Assessment of Creating a Positive Environment in Their Classrooms

Items/Dimensions	Min	Max	$\overline{X}$	Sd
Students know what I expect from them regarding behavior in the course and classroom.	3.00	5.00	4.46	.62
My assumption about students is that they want to do the right thing.	3.00	5.00	4.40	.65
My class is friendly, but the lesson is predominant. At least 70% of the lesson time is full of activities.	2.00	5.00	4.40	.64
I treat my students fairly (for example: I don't distinguish among students, and I don't have any favorites. I won't punish the whole class because of a few people.)	1.00	5.00	4.40	.93
I have some methods that I have developed and routinely applied on issues such as task distribution and paper collection.	1.00	5.00	4.35	.83
I'm well prepared before coming to lessons.	2.00	5.00	4.34	.70
I prefer to encourage positive behavior instead of punishing bad.	3.00	5.00	4.28	.69
I have a friendly relationship with my students.	1.00	5.00	4.27	.80
I use different teaching techniques. I think that my students have different learning styles.	3.00	5.00	4.20	.65
I regularly monitor student progress.	2.00	5.00	4.18	.77
I prefer to practice preventive discipline. (I take precautions before events break out.)	1.00	5.00	4.18	.83
I know my students and their families as individuals.	1.00	5.00	4.13	.84
I expect all my students to have realistic and high expectations.	1.00	5.00	4.08	.98
My students say they find their assignments meaningful and useful.	1.00	5.00	3.97	.81
I determine individual assignments and study subjects for my students. (I do not give the same assignment to each student.)	1.00	5.00	3.60	1.20
Average Score of Creating Positive Classroom Environment	2.80	4.93	4.21	.40
Total Score of Creating Positive Classroom Environment	42.00	74.00	63.20	5.93

As Table 2 reveals, teachers gave the highest self-assessment scores to the item "Students know what I expect from them regarding their behavior in the course and the classroom" ($\overline{X}$ =4.46, Sd=.62), while they gave the lowest score to the item "I determine individual assignments and study subjects for my students (I do not give the same assignment to each student)" ($\overline{X}$ =3,60, Sd=1,20).

Teachers' mean scores ranged between 2.80 and 4.93 ($\overline{X}$ =4.21, Sd=.40). The total score from the index ranged between 42 and 74, and the mean total score was $\overline{X}$ =63.20, Sd=.40. The "always" expression was rated with an average score of $\overline{X}$ =4.21. Accordingly, it is possible to say that teachers' self-assessments of their ability to create a positive classroom environment were quite high.

The second sub-problem of the study was, "Do teachers' self-assessments of their ability to create a positive environment in their classrooms differ significantly according to their personal variables (gender, age, professional seniority, subject, school stage, alma mater, type of school (for high school), postgraduate education status, and status of in-service training on classroom management)?" The results of the analysis for this sub-problem are given below.

Table 3.
T-Test Results for Teachers' Self-Assessment of Creating a Positive Classroom Environment According to Gender

Gender	n	$\overline{x}$	Sd	t	df	p
Female	101	64.43	5.30	2.697	258	.007
Male	159	62.42	6.18			

Table 3 shows the teachers' self-assessments of their ability to create a positive classroom environment according to their gender. Female teachers received higher self-assessment scores than male teachers (female $\overline{x}$ =64.43, male $\overline{x}$ =62.42, $t_{(258)}$= 2.697, p<.01). Accordingly, it can be said that female teachers considered themselves more qualified to create a positive classroom environment than male teachers.

Table 4.
Pearson Moments Multiplication Correlation Coefficient Results for Teachers' Self-assessment of Creating a Positive Classroom Environment According to Age and Professional Seniority

Variable	$\overline{X}$	S	Age	Seniority	P.C.E
Age	34.93	6.45	1	.916**	.058
Professional Seniority	11.11	6.72		1	.085
Total Score	63.20	5.93			1

p<**0.01, *0.05

Table 4 shows that the teachers' mean age was $\overline{x}$ = 34.93 and professional seniority average was $\overline{x}$ =11.11. Although there were positive correlations between positive classroom environment scores and ages (r=.058, p>.05) and between scores and seniority levels (r =.08, p>.05), the relationship was not statistically significant.

Table 5.
Kruskal Wallis H Test Results for Teachers' Self-Assessments of Creating a Positive Classroom Environment According to Subject

Subjects	n	Rank Avg.	X^2	p
Classroom Teacher	37	176.38	32.39	.000
Social Sciences (History/Geography/Philosophy/Social Studies/Religion and Culture)	34	142.63		
Science (Science/Biology/Physics/Chemistry)	24	137.50		
Mathematics	22	133.57		
Preschool	47	128.72		
Foreign Language (Arabic/English)	16	128.28		
Vocational lessons	14	121.57		
Turkish/Literature	22	117.77		
Guidance and Special Education	20	104.18		
Art/Music/Physical Education	10	100.20		
Information Technologies	14	59.64		

According to Table 5, teachers' scores differed significantly according to their subjects ($X^2_{(10)}$ =32.39, p<.01). The ones with the highest self-assessments according to their subjects were classroom teachers (average = 176.38), while informatics teachers (average = 59.64).

The results of the analysis comparing two groups at a time of teachers' self-assessments of their ability to create a positive classroom environment differentiated according to their subjects are presented below.

Table 6.
*Mann Whitney U Test Results for Teachers' Self-assessment of Creating a Positive Classroom Environment According to Subjects**

Groups	n	Average Rank	Row Total	U	p
Foreign Language	16	18.75	300.00	60.00	.030
Informatics	14	11.79	165.00		
Foreign Language	16	19.78	316.50	180.50	.025
Classroom	37	30.12	1114.50		
Science	24	24.00	576.00	60.00	.001
Informatics	14	11.79	165.00		
Science	24	25.50	612.00	312.00	.050
Classroom	37	34.57	1279.00		
Art/Music/Physical Education	20	18.88	377.50	167.50	.001
Classroom	37	34.57	1279.00		
Informatics	14	15.39	215.50	110.50	.004
Social Sciences	34	28.25	960.50		
Informatics	14	9.89	138.50	33.50	.030
Guidance and Special Education	10	16.15	161.50		
Informatics	14	12.11	169.50	64.50	.004
Mathematic	22	22.57	496.50		
Informatics	14	10.96	153.50	48.50	.000
Classroom	37	31.69	1172.50		
Informatics	14	13.54	189.50	84.50	.023
Turkish Literature	22	21.66	476.50		
Informatics	14	11.36	159.00	54.00	.042
Vocational Lessons	14	17.64	247.00		
Informatics	14	15.86	222.00	117.00	.000
Preschool	47	35.51	1669.00		
Classroom	37	51.95	1922.00	520.00	.001
Preschool	47	35.06	1648.00		
Classroom	37	34.04	1259.50	257.50	.019
Mathematics	22	23.20	510.50		
Classroom	37	28.57	1057.00	164.00	.044
Vocational Lessons	14	19.21	269.00		
Classroom	37	34.89	1291.00	226.00	.004
Turkish Literature	22	21.77	479.00		
Guidance and Special Education	10	13.50	135.00	80.00	.006
Classroom	37	26.84	993.00		

*Because of the large number of sub-variables, a large number of analyses were performed, in which all binary groups were tested; only groups with statistical significance were included in the analysis results.

The results in Table 6 indicate that classroom teachers' scores were significantly higher than teachers working in the foreign language, science, art/music/physical education, informatics, preschool, mathematics, vocational, Turkish literature, and guidance-specific education subjects. Informatics teachers' self-assessment scores were significantly lower than foreign language teachers, classroom teachers, and teachers of science, social sciences, guidance/special education, mathematics, Turkish literature, vocational lessons, and preschool. Accordingly, we can say that classroom teachers have the most positive self-assessment, while informatics teachers have the most negative self-assessment, when the mentioned subject teachers were compared.

Table 7.
One-way ANOVA Test Results for Teachers' Self-Assessment of Creating a Positive Classroom Environment According to Educational Stage

Educational stage	N	$\overline{X}$	S		Sum square	Sd	Mean Squares	F	p
Preschool	48	63.250	3.10	Between Groups	387.78	3	129.26	3.80	.011
Primary school	45	65.78	5.68	In-group	8717.22	256	34.05		
Middle school	75	62.64	6.87	Total	9105.00	259			
High school	92	62.36	6.07						

Table 7 indicates that primary school teachers had the highest ($\overline{X}$ =65.78, S=5.68) scores, while high school teachers had the lowest ($\overline{X}$ =62.36, S=6.07). We used one-way ANOVA to evaluate teachers' scores according to their educational stages ($F_{(3-256)}$ = 3.80, p<.05). To test for homogeneity of variances, Levene's test was carried out in groups with significant difference, and the results show that the variances were homogeneous (F=10.80, p<.01). The results of the Tukey test conducted to determine which groups show a difference to create a positive classroom environment according to educational stages are displayed below.

Table 8.
One-Way ANOVA of Teachers' Self-Assessment of Creating a Positive Classroom Environment According to Educational Level/Tukey Test Results

Groups		Average Difference (*p=<.05)	Standard error
Preschool	Primary school	-2.53	1.21
	Middle school	.61	1.08
	Preschool	.89130	1.04
Primary school	Preschool	2.53	1.21
	Middle school	3.14*	1.10
	High school	3.42*	1.06
Middle school	Preschool	-.61	1.079
	Primary school	-3.14*	1.10
	High school	.28	.91
High school	Preschool	-.89	1.04
	Primary school	-3.42*	1.06
	Middle school	-.28	.91

According to Table 8, primary school teachers' scores ($F\overline{X}$ =2.53) were higher than those of secondary school ($F\overline{X}$ =3.14, p<.05) and high school ($F\overline{X}$ =3,42, p<.05) teachers.

The educational stages are divided into preschool, primary, secondary, and high school levels; two different high school types were included in the study: Anatolian high school (n = 56) and vocational high school (n = 36). The T-test results conducted to examine high school teachers' self-assessments according to the type of high school are given below.

Table 9.
T-Test Results for Teachers' Self-assessment of Creating a Positive Classroom Environment According to High School Type

High School Type	n	$\overline{x}$	Sd	t	df	p
Anatolian high school	56	63.07	6.54	1.413	90	.161
Vocational high school	36	61.25	5.13			

As Table 9 shows, although the self-assessment scores of teachers working in Anatolian high schools were higher than those of teachers working in vocational high schools (Anatolian high school $\overline{x}$ =63.07, vocational high school $\overline{x}$ =61.25, $t_{(90)}$=1.413, p>.05), these scores did not show a statistically significant difference.

Table 10.
T-Test Results for Teachers' Self-Assessment of Creating a Positive Classroom Environment According to Post-Graduate Education Status

Post-Graduate Education	n	$\overline{x}$	sd	t	df	P
Educated	220	62.90	5.98	-1.869	258	.063
Not Educated	40	64.80	5.43			

As the results in Table 10 show, although teachers with postgraduate education had higher self-assessments than non-graduate teachers, the difference between the scores was not statistically significant (educated $\overline{x}$ =62.90, non-educated $\overline{x}$ =64.80, $t_{(258)}$=1.869, p>.05).

Table 11.
One-way ANOVA Test Results for Teachers' Self-Assessment of Creating a Positive Classroom Environment According to Alma Mater

Graduation	n	$\overline{x}$	sd	t	df	p
Education Department	227	63.13	6.01	-.456	258	.649
Other	33	63.64	5.42			

Table 11 indicates that the differences in self-assessment scores according to teachers' alma maters were not statistically significant (education dept. $\overline{x}$ = 63.13, other=63.64, $t_{(258)}$= -.456, p>.05).

Table 12.
T-Test Results for Teachers' Self-Assessment of Creating a Positive Classroom Environment According to Status of In-Service Training on Classroom Management

In-Service Training	n	$\overline{x}$	S	T	Sd	p
Yes	133	62.99	5.27	-.566	258	.572
No	127	63.41	6.56			

Based on Table 12, one can observe that although the teachers who did not receive in-service training had higher self-assessments than those who had in-service training, the difference between the scores was not statistically significant (yes $\overline{X}$ =62.99, no $\overline{X}$ =63.41, $t_{(258)}$= -.566, p>.05).

Discussion, Conclusion, and Suggestions

Bandura (1994) stresses that self-efficacy beliefs that affect cognitive, affective, motivational, and selective processes determine how individuals feel, think, are motivated, and behave. He also states that they have their own beliefs about how their perceived self-efficacy affects their performance. In this study, which examined teachers' self-assessments of positive classroom settings in terms of several variables, the results show that teachers' self-assessment scores were quite high. Considering that teachers' positive attitudes and behaviors in classroom management increase students' problem solving skills, contribute to their academic and social development, and increase their learning ambition, gratitude, and self-confidence (Sezer, 2018), it is possible to say that the results are parallel to the literature.

Teachers' self-assessment scores for knowing what students expect were the highest, while self-assessment scores related to assignments were the lowest. Study results in the literature show that female teachers have higher self-assessment scores than male teachers (İpek & İpek, 2015; Özgan et al., 2011; Toy, 2015). Similarly, the findings of this study support those that female teachers have higher class management self-efficacy perceptions than male teachers (İpek & İpek, 2015; Özgan et al., 2011; Toy, 2015). Özgan et al. (2011) indicate that the biggest differences between female and male teachers are in how they prepare students for listening, make students love the lesson, and plan activities in accordance with students' attention spans. However, Topdemir (2013), in a study of mathematics teachers, found that male teachers had higher competency scores than female teachers for the physical layout of the classroom and behavioral modification.

In our study, classroom teachers had the highest self-efficacy scores, while informatics teachers had the lowest. The reason for this may be related to the different roles and responsibilities of information technology teachers from other areas. Studies in the literature state that there is a greater workload outside of their courses (Eren & Uluuysa, 2012; Ball & Göktaş, 2012). In addition to this, the low number of lesson hours in information technology courses and the fact that the students are not graded may also reduce their motivation. Furthermore, the fact that the course is elective has been shown to have negative results pedagogically (Öztürk & Yılmaz, 2011). Our results also showed that primary school teachers had higher self-efficacy scores than middle and high school teachers. Thus, it seems that teachers have increasing difficulty in creating a positive classroom environment as education stages go up. This finding may be associated with age and developmental stages. The reason for classroom teachers' high self-assessments may be higher student-teacher interaction because they spend more classroom hours in the same class. Indeed, some studies indicate that student-teacher interaction is very important in creating a positive classroom environment (Burnett, 2002; Decker et al., 2007; Wolk, 2003; Conroy et al., 2009).

Participants gave themselves high scores for these statements: "I prefer to encourage positive instead of punishing"; "I use different teaching techniques"; "I think my students have different learning styles"; and "I know students and their families as individuals." According to this finding, put in terms of the literature, teachers recognize the importance of making

teaching engaging, using classroom management practices, building positive relationships with students and family, creating supportive opportunities for all students (MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012), and using reinforcement and feedback (Burnett, 2002; Conroy et al., 2009) to create a positive classroom environment. However, the teachers had the lowest self-assessment for the item "I determine individual assignments and study topics for my students (I do not give each student the same assignment)." In a similar study, Çubukçu and Girmen (2008) found that teachers evaluated field mastery skills at the highest level, while they evaluated planning skills at the lowest level. The fact that teachers who plan and organize the learning process and control students' learning outcomes have knowledge about their students' individual differences, which they use to improve the students' learning potential, has an important effect on students' academic achievement, so the current finding suggests that individual differences in teaching are not given enough consideration. This may be because classes are crowded, the teacher has lack of adequate evaluation time, or the teacher does not recognize all students individually.

This study used a method in which teachers evaluated their own ability to create a positive classroom environment. Ross (2006), in his study on the validity, reliability, and usefulness of students' self-assessment, points out that student self-assessments are generally higher than the scores teachers give to the students; he states that this may result from self-inflated perceptions and motivation. A similar situation may have occurred in our findings. Erol (2014) found that there was a significant difference between the opinions of administrators and teachers about teachers' classroom management competencies; teachers found themselves more adequate in all subjects than their administrators' assessment. In studies in which the students evaluated their teachers, they gave intermediate ratings in terms of compliance with the principles of education, teacher-student relations (Can & Arslan, 2018), and classroom management (Can & Arslan, 2018; Gündüz & Can, 2013). Thus, a future study could be designed in which teachers' ability to create a positive classroom environment is also evaluated by students and administrators.

In the literature, the perceptions of teachers and students regarding classroom environments are examined. The common finding of these studies is that perceptions and preferences differ; teacher perceptions and preferences are higher than those of students (Raviv et al., 1990; Sinclair & Fraser, 2002). For this reason, conducting a self-assessment study will contribute individually and institutionally. Teachers who can evaluate themselves objectively know their weaknesses and strengths, and self-assessment enables them to review their own behaviors and attributes that need improvement. Self-assessment creates an opportunity for teachers to contribute to their professional performance by looking at their experiences from an outside perspective. Teachers who can treat their professional development as a formal process have higher productivity (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Self-assessment helps teachers to question their professional competencies, to realize their shortcomings, and to improve themselves continuously.

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