Attitude scale development study in relation to music history

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to develop a Music History Course Attitude Scale in order to measure music teacher candidates' attitudes towards the Music History course. 253 students studying in Pamukkale University Faculty of Education Department of Music Education, Adnan Menderes University Faculty of Education Department of Music Education, Muğla University Faculty of Education Department of Music Education and Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Education Department of Music Education were included in the sample of this study. Factor coefficients and the item total correlations of the 48 item pretesting scale made based on expert opinions have been investigated. Upon the investigation of the item total correlations, items with an item total correlation lower than 0.35 were removed. Items with a factor coefficient lower than 0.40 were removed, too. As a result of these analyses, the number of items in the Music History Course Attitude Scale dropped from 48 to 29. The Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient was 0.90.
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1. Introduction

Scientific, technological and artistic expectations from a human being have changed in the 21st century, also known as the "Science Age". The definition of "well-equipped person" has taken on additional meanings. In the past, academic success was enough for a successful, happy and satisfactory life. However, recently it has become a known fact that individuals who can intellectualize, question, think positively, have a democratic point of view, strong communication and empathy skills, be in peace with the technology and be open to learning are more successful and keep pace with the developments across the world. Education is of high importance to create the modern human being as described above. Teachers are undoubtedly crucial elements in a high-quality education. Because, high-quality individuals can only be raised by high-quality teachers.

The quality of university education has different consequences in different disciplines. A doctor lacking high-quality medical education may cause fatalities; whereas, a civil engineer without adequate education may also cause the destruction of city due to the weak buildings constructed by him. Whereas the scientific disciplines are effective on the growth in social welfare, art education is important in the development of aesthetic values.

Departments of art education in faculties of education have a distinct importance. Because, art departments have a big role on the creation of the "well-equipped person". Art is the most effective instrument in enabling and

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empowering the individuals to have a healthy, satisfactory, harmonious and well-organized life. It's the best way for developing and putting one's skills in use as well as for self-actualization (Uçan, 1996). There are many dimensions involved in art education. One of these dimensions is the music education. The definition of music education, as combined with the general definition of education, can be expressed as the process of earning musical behaviors to the individuals in any desired path. The most important role in earning musical behaviors to students is played by the music teacher.

Insights on music culture are very important for teachers in boosting the effects of their musical and professional assets as well as in acting as a role model for their students. Knowledge on Music History has an unquestionable role in the formation of music culture. The interpretation, conscious listening and the systematic teaching of the music relate to high-quality Music History knowledge. In Faculties of Education Divisions of Fine Arts Departments of Music Education, Music History courses are taught by the name "General History of Music" in the 2nd semester of the freshman year, and by the name "History of Turkish Music" in the 1st semester of the sophomore year. Music History is a field that involves the musical periods; economic, politic and social influences on the formation of the musical periods; composers, the creations of these composers and important music events in these periods. Music History courses are very important components of the music education as they allow for the creation of high-quality music teachers and accordingly high-quality music lessons.

A positive classroom atmosphere leads not only to academic success but with the support of supportive teaching methods it also leads to an effective and pleasurable education process. The results of the previous studies have been in line with this opinion. Bloom (1995) stated that 25% of the school learning was related to the affective characteristics of students and that students had to be interested in a subject and eager to learn in order to learn that subject (Altınok, 2006). Attitude, one of the most important elements of affective characteristics, is among the crucial factors in academic success.

Smith's definition of attitude, which affects the social perceptions and behaviors of the individuals, is the classical definition accepted by today's social psychologists. Accordance to Smith, attitude is "the ascribed disposition of an individual which regularly makes up his/her thoughts, emotions and behaviors on a psychological object" (Smith, 1968; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1999). Attitudes are formed through the organization of an individual's experience and knowledge.

Another attitude related subject of social psychology is the concept of "value". The concept of value is used interchangeably with attitude. These two concepts are very similar to one another. It is not possible to give two very distinct definitions for these two concepts. Sherif (1996) related these two concepts to each other as follows: To him, attitude is "psychological process of value which ends in individual, i.e. scientific aspect of value" (Eserpek, 1981)

Another concept that is difficult to distinguish from attitude is "internal factors". Not every internal factor is an attitude. The basic criteria that set attitude apart from internal factors are the following:

1. Attitudes are not inborn.
2. Attitudes are somewhat persistent.
3. Attitudes always involve a subject-object relationship (Sherif and Sherif, 1996).

As indicated in the criteria that distinguish attitudes from internal factors, attitudes take place between individuals and objects. Individuals' attitudes towards objects, events and people differ from one person to another. This differentiation is due to different attitude properties. Attitude properties can be specified as follows (Özkalp ve Kocacık, 1991).

Strength level: The strength level of attitudes towards different attitude objects is different. For example, a kid's attitudes towards going to movie theater and playing soccer have different strength levels. Also, one can conclude that strength levels of different individuals' attitudes towards the same attitude object may differ.

Degree of complexity: Individuals' level of interest, i.e. the attitude strength level, towards their attitude objects is different for different attitude objects. The stronger an individual's feelings towards an attitude object, the more the knowledge he/she has on this object. This concept is called "degree of complexity" in social psychology. For instance, a teenager's attitudes towards democratic societies and a rock band have different degrees of complexity. While he can give only few democratic country names, he knows a lot about the rock band such as the establishment date, names of the members and information on the private lives of the members. In this situation, the degree of complexity of the attitude towards the second object can be said to be higher than that of the first.

Congruity among the elements: Elements of attitudes tend to be congruent with each other. Only if they are congruent the attitude can come into life. For example, for an individual who wants to live in a big city, congruity among the elements means that there is congruency among the attitude elements such as feeling good in social environments and enjoying an active life.

Relations with other attitudes: Relation of an individual's attitude with another attitude of his. Whereas there are parallel interactions between some attitudes, there may be some differences between some of them. For example, the possibility of existence of a relation between the attitude which is deterministic in deciding on which players to enlist in a football team and the religious or political attitudes is rather low. On the other hand, it is highly possible that the political attitudes are strongly related to the religious attitudes or the attitudes towards the newspaper one reads.

2. Method

In this section; research group, data collection tools, process and data analysis are discussed.

2.1. Research Group

253 students studying in Pamukkale University Faculty of Education Department of Music Education, Adnan Menderes University Faculty of Education Department of Music Education, Muğla University Faculty of Education Department of Music Education and Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Education Department of Music Education were included in the research group of this study.

2.2. Data Collection Tools

In the study, Music History Course Attitude Scale, a scale developed by the researcher, was used to measure the attitudes of the subjects. 50 junior and senior students studying in Dokuz Eylül University Buca Faculty of Education Division of Fine Arts Education Department of Music Education wrote an essay on request with the subject matter of "Your Opinions and Expectations on Music History Course" so as to act as a resource for determining the scale items. Content analysis was applied on these essays. The opinions of the students were ascertained through studying their expressions that are indicative of their attitude towards the course. Moreover, a 58 item scale was made by capitalizing on the previous attitude scales (Bilen, 1995; Kılıç, 2004; Canakay, 2007) and the related literature. The scale was analyzed by two music history experts, one music education expert, one psychologist and two educational scientists. As a result of these analyses the number of the scale items was reduced from 58 to 48. Before the pretesting period opinions of 15 students studying in Dokuz Eylül University Buca Faculty of Education Division of Fine Arts Department of Music Education were obtained. Some of the expressions were modified in accordance with the obtained opinions. They were made plainer and more understandable.

2.3 The Process

48-item Music History Course Attitude Scale was applied on a total of 253 students.

2.4 Data Analysis

SPSS 11.0, a statistics software, was used to analyze the results of the pretesting. During these analyses, item total correlations and factor coefficients were observed.

3. Findings

Upon the investigation of the item total correlations, items with an item total correlation lower than 0.35 were removed. Accordingly, the number of the items in the Music History Course Attitude Scale was reduced from 48 to 29. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability coefficient of the 29 item Music History Course Attitude Scale was found to be 0.90. Table 1 shows the Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient of pretesting questionnaire of the Music History Course Attitude Scale. Table 2 shows the item total correlations.

Table 1. Reliability Coefficient of Pretesting Questionnaire of the Music History Course Attitude Scale

Item number	n	Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient
29	253	0.9010

Table 2. Item Total Correlations of Pretesting Questionnaire of the Music History Course Attitude Scale

Item No	Item Total Correlations
1.	.5214
3.	.5828
4.	.5388
5.	.3799
8.	.4498
10.	.3467
13.	.4061
15.	.5559
17.	.4337
18.	.4167
19.	.3501
20.	.3949
21.	.4104
23.	.4049
28.	.3911
30.	.5206
32.	.5767
33.	.4583
34.	.4241
35.	.5221
36	.4918
37	.5176
38.	.5569
39.	.5693
42.	.4771
43.	.4523
46.	.4217
47.	.3696
48	.3889

Factor analysis was conducted to ensure the structural validity of the scale. Factor analysis is a multivariate statistics which brings together a total of p variables and aims to find out new variables (factors, dimensions) that are less in number, unrelated with each other and conceptually meaningful. In other words, it is a statistical method which aggregates the variables all of which measure the same structure or quality and aims to explain the measurement with less number of factors (Büyüköztürk, 2005). Factor coefficient is used to explain the relation between the scale items and the factor. This figure is between 0.45 and 0.30. In the Music History Course Attitude Scale this it was taken as 0.40. Items with a factor coefficient smaller than 0.40 were removed from the scale and all items were listed under one factor. Item total correlation showed that the items not included in the first factor were the same. Factor coefficients of the items listed under the first factor are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Factor Coefficients of Pretesting Questionnaire of the Music History Course Attitude Scale

Item No	Factor Coefficent
1.	.533
3.	.605
4.	.534
5.	.522
8.	.440
10.	.513
13.	.401
15.	.581
17.	.415
18.	.545
19.	.481
20.	.522
21.	.534
23.	.402
28.	.522
30.	.507
32.	.574
33.	.475
34.	.401
35.	.474
36.	.444
37.	.450
38.	.556
39.	.539
42.	.449
43.	.421
46.	.567
47.	.494
48.	.506

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