Investigation into The Effectiveness of The "I Love My School" Intervention Program Regarding the Improvement of Attitudes Toward School

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Article Info

Abstract

The current study aims to examine the effectiveness of the "I Love My School" intervention program designed to improve primary school students' levels of attitude towards school. The study was conducted at a primary school in the Selçuklu district of Konya province in the 2021-2022 academic year. A quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest control group was employed in the study, and the participants consisted of primary school 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade students. There are 30 students in the control group and 32 students in the study group. The pre-test and post-test results of the groups were compared via nonparametric analysis techniques. The research results reveal that the "I Love My School" intervention program has positively improved primary school students' levels of attitude towards school positively. Hence, it is recommended to implement such programs as "I Love School" and similar in-school intervention programs to support the commitment of primary school students who cannot receive family support regarding love, value, adaptation, and trust regarding school.

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Introduction

Apart from the time spent with the family, children spend most of their time at school, commonly described as their 'second home'. School is a large ecosystem for children who have reached school age, where they meet for the first time with children from different age groups, teachers conducting the education-teaching process, school administrators, and school staff ready for various tasks. Schools are safe socialization environments that surround children like a cocoon, where they start to get to know themselves and others, become individuals and learn. As a social system, schools are service organizations that provide education and training services for groups of people organized according to specific criteria, in a particular area and time, within the framework of a curriculum and plan (Şişman & Turan, 2004). This routine operation of schools effectively maintains discipline and order and adapts students to a new social environment. However, it can also direct the attitudes developed toward school. One of the most significant factors required to maintain the order of schools is students' affective characteristics since they are significant in forming attitudes developed towards school. The affective domain consists of many spiritual elements specific to the individual, including such internal characteristics as self-personality perceptions, self-confidence, interest, motivation, value judgments, and such social relations as beliefs, choices, emotions, expectations, values, and ethics. Considering students' affective characteristics and creating a school atmosphere that can influence them in this context is one of the most powerful steps in developing attitudes towards school (Kurnaz, 2002). In this sense, it is possible to turn students' attitudes towards school into positive ones by addressing and paying particular attention to students' affective characteristics.

In general, attitudes toward school include students' positive or negative opinions about it, their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors about how they feel at school (Stern, 2012). Attitudes are generally evaluated in terms of cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects (Taylor, Peplau, & Sears, 2005), and therefore attitudes toward school should also be considered within this framework. In order for individuals to form an attitude towards a phenomenon, they need to have a pre-experience with the attitude object or have awareness about the subject in any way. In this context, the attitude object is school, and students' thoughts, beliefs, and school knowledge refer to the cognitive dimension in their attitudes toward school (Linden et al., 2015). Affective features are at the center of attitudes and possess a crucial role in their formation (Martin & Briggs, 1986).

To sum up, all positive or negative feelings about an attitude object form the affective characteristics of the attitude (Petty, Fabrigar & Wegener, 2003). The affective dimension of attitudes towards school consists of students' liking or disliking of school and their feelings about it. The behavioral dimension of attitudes is individuals' all observable behaviors about an attitude object or the intention to act (Eagly, 2008). Such actions as students' communication with their teachers, being cheerful or sad when they go to school, going to school willingly or unwillingly, protecting or damaging school belongings, making positive or negative statements in their conversations concerning school, being enthusiastic or reluctant to participate in school activities refer to the behavioral dimension of students' attitudes towards school (Atik, 2016). Cheng and Chan (2003) argue that the effort put forth by students in activities inside and outside the classroom and all school-related studies represents the behavioral dimension in their attitude toward school.

In-school elements possess a significant impact on students in the formation of attitudes toward school. The most important in-school factor in attitudes toward school is how teacher-student relations influence students (Yoon, 2002). The results of the research conducted by Hallam, Ireson, and Davies (2004) point out that group activities in the classroom are a dominant factor influencing students' attitudes toward school. In a study to test the hypothesis on the subject, İlhan (2017) states that their perceptions could explain 33% of students' attitudes toward school in the context of the classroom assessment atmosphere. According to the research results, the classroom climate's characteristics and the classroom environment's elements have significant relationships with the attitudes toward school (Macmillan et al., 1992; Marks, 1998; Şeker, 2011 and 2013). Similarly, Açıkgöz (2017) states that a significant negative relationship exists between students' peer victimization and peer bullying levels and their attitudes toward school. Additionally, school burnout is influential in developing negative attitudes towards school (Salmela-Aro, Savolainen & Holopainen, 2009).

Some studies examine the phenomenon of teachers in attitudes toward school. According to Yavuzer (1996), a teacher's positive communication with students and the way s/he conducts the educational process and classroom activities contribute notably to students' success and the development of positive attitudes towards school. One of the significant results of Atik's (2016) thesis study is that students' trust in their teachers explains about 43% of the variance in their attitudes towards school and directly influences their attitudes towards school. Lee (2007) specifies that if students believe their teachers are honest and reliable, they develop positive attitudes toward the lessons and school. Consequently, students' trust in their teachers, perform pleasant group activities with their peers without being bullied, have fun while learning, and have a positive classroom atmosphere will bring about positive attitudes toward school.

In forming attitudes towards school, the factors that include families and teachers are mostly related to students' affective characteristics. Nielsen and Mortorff-Albert (1989) and McCoach and Siegle (2001) conclude in their research that students with low school achievement have negative school attitudes compared to those with high school success. In Yüksel's (2003) thesis study, it is concluded that the learned helplessness levels of 9th-grade students are effective in explaining the variability in school attitudes. According to the findings of Pişkin's (2005) thesis study, developing students' self-efficacy enhances positive school attitudes. Feld and Shusterman (2015) state that there is a significant relationship between student stress levels and attitudes toward school. In Koç's (2019) thesis study, it is argued that values are the most important variable influencing adolescents' attitudes towards school and school burnout. In Demir's (2021) thesis study, a positive and moderately significant relationship is concluded between secondary school students' social skills and their attitude toward school. In this sense, it can be argued that students' attitudes towards school are shaped by the level of learned helplessness, the level of stress at school, school success, values, social skills, and self-efficacy. It can be said that attitudes towards school have lots of short and long-term effects on students, schools, and society. Majoribanks (1992), Ainley (1994), Maher (2000), Price (2000), McCoach and Siegle (2003), Bölükbaşı (2005), Ak and Sayıl (2006), Downey, Ainsworth and Qian (2009), Erkman et al., (2010) and Alıcı (2013) state in their studies that there is a direct and significant relationship between students' attitudes towards school and their academic achievement. Atik (2016) concludes that attitudes toward school indirectly influence academic achievement. It is concluded that positive attitudes toward school result in improved self-regulation skills and motivation (McCoach, 2000) and

social-emotional learning skills (Kutluay Çelik, 2014). More widespread effects are spotted when the subject is evaluated in terms of negative school attitude. The first is the relationship between negative school attitudes and school absenteeism. In the study of Adıgüzel and Karadaş (2013), it is seen that students with high absenteeism have more negative attitudes toward school compared to those with less absenteeism. Gülcemal's (2019) thesis study states that school perception and attitude toward school predict school dropout behavior at a moderate level. It is known that dropouts occur due to more negative school attitudes. Ainley and Sheret (1992) and Rumberger and Lim (2008) emphasize that students with negative attitudes toward school have higher dropout rates than other students. In addition, for the good of society, it is necessary to examine students' potential to commit the crime and take necessary precautions.

For this reason, it can be said that attitude towards school can be a detection tool in this regard. Atmaca's (2019) research results indicate a positive, moderately significant relationship between asocial behavior, alienation from school, negative school attitude, and tendency to crime. In this correlation, negative attitudes towards school explain the levels of asocial behavior, alienation from school, and tendency to crime in secondary school students at a rate of 44%. In addition, Cheng and Chan (2003) report that some students with negative school attitudes exhibit substance use and involvement in the crime. It is significant for students to develop positive attitudes towards school so that they can reach the desired level of educational goals and acquire as many learning outcomes as possible (Kpolovie, Joe, & Okoto, 2014).

Besides, Baron, Byrne, and Branscombe (2006) point out that students' attitudes towards school will have an effect on their future decisions about career choice and lifestyle. The results of the studies on the subject indicate that positive attitudes towards school are a necessity for students and schools. It is also essential for the healthy functioning of society. In the literature review, while there are mainly case studies on attitudes toward school, there are few hypothesis-testing studies. However, no direct intervention studies have been conducted to improve attitudes toward school and turn them into positive ones. In addition, it is concluded that studies on secondary school students' attitude levels toward school are mostly limited, and research on primary school students. Positive attitudes towards school will enable students to associate themselves with the school. Therefore, students' willingness to go to school and their participation in the course will increase, and academic, social, and emotional skills will be developed. Besides, early measures will be taken against students' potential to commit crimes. Developing attitudes towards school, especially starting from the primary education level, will help achieve these outcomes earlier and permanently. In this regard, it is thought that the current study will significantly contribute to the literature and practice. The following hypotheses are tested in the study, which examines the effectiveness of the intervention program called "I Love My School" to improve primary school students' attitude levels toward school:

H1: The "I Love My School" intervention program effectively develops positive attitudes towards school in students.

    H1.1: The "I Love My School" intervention program effectively affects students' love of school.

    H1.2: The "I Love My School" intervention program effectively allows students to adopt a school as a value.

    H1.3: The "I Love My School" intervention program is effective in helping students adapt to school.

    H1.4: The "I Love My School" intervention program effectively builds students' trust in school.

Method

Research Design

The current study was a quasi-experimental design with the pretest-posttest control group, one of the quantitative research methods. Basically, the experimental method represents research models in which the researcher directly controls education and intervention to find out the cause-effect relationship (Karasar, 2015). In the quasi-experimental model, however, not all variables can be controlled. This model is frequently utilized to determine effectiveness, especially in social sciences and education research. Experimental and control groups are randomly formed. While the pretest-posttest is applied to both groups, intervention is only done to the experimental/study group (Balcı, 2018; Büyüköztürk et al., 2017; Creswell, 2016; Karasar, 2015). The procedure regarding the experimental process of the research is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Experimental Process

	n	Pre-Test	Procedure	Post-Test
Experimental Group	32	☒	☒	☒
Control Group	30	☒	☐	☒

Participants

Sixty-two students participated in the research. Before the study started, the students' families were informed about the study, and their permission was obtained. The number of participants in the control group is 30, and the number in the experimental group is 32. Information about the students is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Participants

		Control Group (n=30)		Experimental Group (n=32)		Total (n=62)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Gender	Female	13	43,3	17	53,1	30	48,4
	Male	17	56,7	15	46,9	32	51,6
Grade Level	1	6	20,0	6	18,8	12	19,4
	2	8	26,7	5	15,6	13	21,0
	3	5	16,7	11	34,4	16	25,8
	4	11	36,7	10	31,2	21	33,8

When Table 2 is examined, it is realized that the gender variable is at similar rates in control, experimental, and total participant groups. Males (56.7%) in the control group, females (53.1%) in the experimental group, and total males (51.6%) have slightly higher rates and frequencies. When the grade levels are examined, the participants with the highest frequency are the 4th grade students, with a rate of 33.8%. Similarly, there are 4th grade students mostly (36.7%) in the control group. In the experimental group, however, it is spotted that most (34.4%) students are from the 3rd grade. In addition, before the research, participants' attitudes toward school were compared in the experimental and control groups. The comparison results are provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of Participants' Pre-Test Scores

Scores	Control Group			Experimental Group			*U*	*Z*	*p*	*r*
	N	Mean	Sd	N	Mean	Sd				
Love	30	16,57	2,50	32	17,97	3,94	390,50	-1,272	,203	,026
Value	30	15,53	2,79	32	16,56	3,72	407,50	-1,027	,304	,017
Adaptation	30	11,60	2,18	32	12,28	2,68	444,50	-,506	,613	,004
Trust	30	17,73	2,21	32	17,88	3,48	430,00	-,713	,476	,008
Total	30	61,43	7,46	32	64,69	11,87	446,50	-,473	,637	,004

According to the analysis results in Table 3, the pre-test scores are love (U = 390.50; p > .05), value (U = 407.50, p > .05), adaptation (U = 444.50; p > .05), trust (U = 430.00; p > .05) and total scores (U = 446.50; p > .05). Therefore, it is concluded that there is no statistically significant difference between the control and experimental group scores. In other words, at the beginning of the study, there was no significant difference between the attitude levels of the control and experimental group students towards school.

Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form

The form, developed by the researchers, includes information about students and their parents, such as gender, class, number of siblings, mother's education level, father's education level, and family income level.

Attitude Scale towards School

The validity and reliability study of the scale was carried out by Adıgüzel (2012). In the first part of the item pool, students were asked in which sentences they expressed their positive or negative attitudes toward school, and these sentences were recorded as a list. In the second part of the item pool, the scale items developed to find out attitudes toward school in the relevant literature were examined, and the statements of attitude were listed. Later, the two lists were brought together, and the first question pool consisting of 42 items deemed appropriate was prepared. Expert opinions were taken, and four items containing mistakes were excluded from the scale. For the remaining 38 items, a pre-test was applied to a determined group, and as a result, incomprehensible sentences were rearranged. The prototype version of the 38-item scale was evaluated via factor analysis, and 17 items with an item load of less than .1 were removed from the scale. The rotation process was performed with the remaining 21 items, and as a result, four sub-dimensions were obtained. These sub-dimensions are: Love (6 items), Value (5 items), Adaptation (4 items), Trust (6 items).

The general internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be .860. In the scale, a 5-point Likert-type graded answer option was provided so that students could express their level of agreement with the statements. These are listed as "I totally agree (5), I agree a lot (4), I agree somewhat (3), I agree a little (2), and I do not agree at all (1)" of the 21 items on the scale, 14 have positive attitudes toward school, and seven are related negative attitudes.

Experiment Process

In order to contribute to student's academic and social development at a primary school in the Selçuklu district of Konya, to increase their attendance at school and learning motivation, interviews were held with teachers, school administrators, and parents.

Table 4. Content Information of the Intervention Program

Activity Goal	Activity Name and Duration	Activity Content	Following Activities	Materials
(Improving Peer Interaction and Collaboration)	"Will you play with me?" (40')	Ice breaking activities and meeting	Question-answer	Ball, ball of string, balloon
	"Who is s/he?" (40')	Each participant's description and estimation of one of the other group members with the 3 most distinctive features	Expressing students' views on the activity in a single sentence	Paper-pencil
	"My Portrait, Your Portrait" (40')	Group members sitting in pairs and facing each other and drawing portraits of each other	Double portrait presentations	Types of water-dry-crayons, painting paper
	Two heads are better than one (40+40')	Preparation of a stationery aid box together for students in need at school	Sharing feelings/opinions about the activity	School bag and school stationery supplies
(School From Students' Perspectives)	"What Does School Mean?" (40+40')	Through different methods (Brainstorming, metaphor), revealing the school image formed by students	Creating a joint mind map (with drawings or words)	Paper, Colorful pencils
	"Dear Diary, Today at School…" (40+40')	Among the events that happened at school that day, expressing the most affected event in a diary format, either verbally or in writing	Peer recommendations regarding the events experienced	Paper-pencil
	"My Dream School-1" (40+40')	Illustration of the school that is imagined in accordance with the principles of visual design	Painting exhibition	Types of water-dry-crayons, painting paper
	"My Dream School-2" (40+40')	Preparing a common school model using waste materials by combining the most popular features among school designs.	Model exhibition	Types of water-dry-crayons, cardboard, adhesive, plastic and paper waste materials
(Developing Positive Attitudes Towards School)	"Good Things-Bad Things" (40+40')	In two boxes named Good Things and Bad Things, students write down the situations that they like or do not like at school, then choose a good and a bad situation paper randomly from the opened box and read it, share opinions about good things, discuss what can be done to fix bad things.	Exit ticket - Write a solution and paste it on the board	Sticky paper, pencil, two sealed boxes
	"What Would Happen If There Was No School?" (40')	Discussing the situation of a society without school with the reverse brainstorming technique	Creative drama about the unschooled society	Paper, pencil
	"How Did You Succeed?" (40+40')	Interviewing an individual who has achieved a good position as a result of his/her success at school and asking questions about the role of school in success	Question-answer	Paper-pencil
	"Here is My School" End of Education Celebration (40+40')	Karaoke party, treats, dance performances etc.	Emotion/opinion sharing	Class decoration materials, sound system, treats

The results of the interviews indicated that the students had negative attitudes toward school. Attitude is having a positive or negative approach to a person, event, phenomenon, or situation (Uyanık, 2017). There is a cause-and-effect relationship between attitude and behavior. Students' temperaments, teachers, school administration, families, and the physical conditions of the school affect their attitudes (Adıgüzel, 2012). Consequently, it was planned to develop and implement an intervention program for students. During the process, the parents of the

students at the appropriate grade level were informed about the study, and the research consent and voluntary participation forms were sent. Among the parents who agreed to participate in the research, the control and experimental groups were formed by considering the students' grade levels and genders.

The content of the intervention program to be applied to improve students' attitudes toward school was prepared by considering the topics obtained from the interviews before the research. The work schedule of the intervention program was planned as three months, February-April 2022. Content information regarding the implemented intervention program is summarized in Table 4.

The intervention program consists of three main modules (Developing peer interaction and collaboration, developing positive attitudes towards school and school from students' perspectives). Each module has four sub-applications and the implementation period of the module was one month. The implementations were planned as separate sessions for each grade level, and the intervention program was completed within a total of three months.

Data Analysis

Before the research data analysis, the data set was checked for incorrect entries and missing and extreme values. Before the analysis, the normality assumptions of the data were examined in the context of the sub-scores and total scores of the scale. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov significance values referenced for the univariate normality control were $p > .05$, the skewness and kurtosis values were between -1.5 and $+1.5$, and were checked by examining the histograms, Q-Q graphs, and P-P graphs (Akbulut, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). As a result of the normality tests, it was concluded that the data did not indicate normal distribution characteristics, and it was found appropriate to use nonparametric tests in the analysis. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was used for repeated measurement scores. In addition, Mann-Whitney U analysis was employed to compare the pre-test and post-test scores between the groups. In this sense, the measurement results obtained and the process of the analyses performed are presented below.

Table 5. Process of the Analysis Performed

Group	Measurement	
	Pre-test	**Post-test**
Experimental Group	A1.E.Pre	A1.E.Post
Control Group	A1.C.Post	A1.C.Post

First of all, A1.E.pre*A1.C.pre comparison was made, and it was checked whether there was a significant difference between the control group and the experimental group before the intervention. The purpose of this comparison was to reveal that the participants were chosen randomly and that they had similar attitude levels in the beginning.

A1.E.post*A1.C.post comparison was made, and it was tested whether there was a significant difference between the experimental and the control group attitude scores after the intervention. The purpose of this comparison was to reveal the improvement of the group that received the intervention at the end of the process compared to the

group that did not.

By comparing A1.E.pre*A1.E.post, it was aimed to reveal the improvement experienced in the experimental group before and after the intervention. With the A1.C.pre*A1.C.post comparison, it was aimed to reveal whether there was any improvement in the control group depending on the time passed during the experiment or the development without intervention. In the analyses, the maximum value of type I mistake probability was accepted as 5%, that is, $p \leq .05$. In terms of sensitivity to smaller mistake probabilities, $p \leq .01$ and $p \leq .001$ significance levels were also taken into account in reporting, and p values were specified.

Results

In order to determine the effectiveness of the intervention program within the scope of the research, pre-test and post-test comparison analyses were carried out specifically for the experimental and control groups. In the study's first hypothesis, it is stated that the "I Love My School" intervention program will effectively develop positive attitudes toward school in students. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test analysis results obtained in the context of testing both the first hypothesis and sub-hypotheses are presented in Table 6 for the experimental group and Table 7 for the control group.

Table 6. Pre-Test & Post-Test Comparison Results of the Experimental Group Scores

Scores		n	*Rank Mean*	*Rank Total*	*z*	*P*	*r*
Love	Negative Rank	6	11,83	71,00			
	Positive Rank	20	14,00	280,00	-2,667[b]	**,000*****	**,115**
	Equal	6					
Value	Negative Rank	3	4,17	12,50			
	Positive Rank	26	16,25	422,50	-4,448[b]	**,000*****	**,319**
	Equal	3					
Adaptation	Negative Rank	3	7,50	22,50			
	Positive Rank	23	14,28	328,50	-3,898[b]	**,000*****	**,245**
	Equal	6					
Trust	Negative Rank	15	15,90	238,50			
	Positive Rank	16	16,09	257,50	-,188[b]	,851	,001
	Equal	1					
TOTAL	Negative Rank	5	11,00	55,00			
	Positive Rank	25	16,40	410,00	-3,654[b]	**,000*****	**,214**
	Equal	2					

*Note: b= Based on negative ranks; c= Based on positive ranks; * = p <.05; ** = p <,01; *** = p <,001.*

When Table 6, which presents the comparison results of the pre-post test scores of the experimental group, is examined, it is seen that there is a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test scores in terms of love (z=-2.667; p ≤.001), value (z=-4.448; p ≤.001), adaptation (z=-3.898; p ≤.001) and total (z=-3.654; p ≤.001). In terms of the trust sub-dimension (z=-.188; p >.05), there is no statistically significant difference. According to these results, A1-A2-A3 hypotheses are accepted, and A4 hypothesis is rejected. When the effect sizes obtained in the analysis results are examined, a moderate effect size (0.3 < r < 0.5) is obtained in the context of the value score. In the context of love, adaptation, and total score types, small (r < 0.3) effect size values are spotted.

When the means in Tables 3 and 8 regarding the types of scores for which a significant difference is obtained are examined, it is spotted that there is a significant increase in all sub-scores and total score means of the experimental group after the intervention. For example, while the total pre-test score mean is $\bar{X} = 64.69$, the final score mean is $\bar{X} = 72.97$. In other words, after the intervention, there was a positive increase in the attitude levels of the experimental group students toward school. The Wilcoxon signed ranks test results related to the comparison results of the pretest-posttest scores of the students in the control group are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Pre-Test & Post-Test Comparison Results of the Control Group Scores

Scores		n	Rank Mean	Rank Total	z	P	r
Love	Negative Rank	8	13,38	107,00			
	Positive Rank	18	13,56	244,00	-1,748	,080	,102
	Equal	4					
Value	Negative Rank	13	13,42	174,50			
	Positive Rank	15	15,43	231,50	-,651	,515	,014
	Equal	2					
Adaptation	Negative Rank	10	10,45	104,50			
	Positive Rank	13	13,19	171,50	-1,024	,306	,035
	Equal	7					
Trust	Negative Rank	18	13,36	240,50			
	Positive Rank	8	13,81	110,50	-1,659	,097	,092
	Equal	4					
TOTAL	Negative Rank	13	15,42	200,50			
	Positive Rank	17	15,56	264,50	-,659	,510	,013
	Equal	0					

Note: b= Based on negative ranks; c= Based on positive ranks; * = p <.05; **= p <,01; ***= p <,001

When the pre-test-post-test comparison results of the scores obtained for the control group students are examined, it is observed that there is no statistically significant difference in terms of love (z=-1.748; p >.05), value (z=-.651; p >.05), adaptation (z=-1.024; p >.05), trust (z=-1.659; p >.05) and total attitude levels towards school (z=-.659; p >.05). In another saying, there is no significant change in the attitude levels of the students in the control group, who did not receive any intervention. After the intervention, the analysis results carried out between the experimental and control groups in the context of school attitude scores are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups Post-Test Results and Mann Whitney U Results

	Control Group			Experimental Group						
Scores	N	Mean	Sd	N	Mean	Sd	*U*	*Z*	*p*	*r*
Love	30	17,57	2,10	32	19,94	3,53	275,50	-2,905	**,004****	**,136**
Value	30	16,17	2,74	32	20,19	1,79	125,50	-5,048	**,000*****	**,411**
Adaptation	30	12,23	2,06	32	14,94	1,52	153,00	-4,680	**,000*****	**,353**
Trust	30	16,70	2,29	32	17,91	2,23	339,00	-2,014	**,044***	**,065**
Total	30	62,67	6,42	32	72,97	7,37	137,00	-4,838	**,000*****	**,378**

Note: * = p <.05; **= p <,01; ***= p <.,001

When Table 8 is examined, the results of the analysis performed in the context of post-test score means indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in terms of love (U = 275.50; p ≤.01), value (U = 125.50; p ≤.001), adaptation (U = 153.00 p ≤.001), trust (U = 339.00) and total scores (U = 309.50; p ≤.001). When the mean scores of the groups are examined, it is concluded that the mean scores of the experimental group are higher in all sub-scores and total score means. In other words, while there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups before the intervention program, the scores of the experimental group increased significantly after the intervention. When the effect sizes are examined, medium effect sizes are seen in value, adaptation and total scores, and small-level effect sizes are obtained in love and trust scores.

When the mean scores of the pre-test presented in Table 3 and the post-test presented in Table 8 are scrutinized, there are non-significant increases in the levels that can be described as time and development effects in other score types except for the trust sub-dimension. However, in the context of the trust sub-dimension, the control group's mean score decreased from 17.73 to 16.70 at the end of the study.

As a result, while the students have similar levels of attitude towards school, in the beginning, there is a statistically significant difference between their scores after the intervention. This difference is seen both within the experimental group (pre-test – post-test) and as a result of comparing the post-tests of the experimental and control groups. That is to say, while there is no significant change in the attitude levels of the control group, the meaningful and desired change after the intervention offered to the experimental group indicates that the intervention content is effective.

Discussion

The research examines the effectiveness of the "I Love My School" intervention program in improving primary school students' attitude levels toward school. The study participants are primary school 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th grade students. The research was carried out according to the quasi-experimental design with the pretest-posttest control group, one of the quantitative research methods. The results of the research point out that the "I Love My School" intervention program has improved primary school students' attitude levels toward school in a positive way.

One of the results obtained in the research is that the intervention program applied to the students effectively develops students' love for school. In a study conducted by Azapağası-İlbağı & Akgün (2012), students define school as 'the place where they learn knowledge and skills that will benefit them in the future, use their time correctly and effectively, and develop love attitudes towards school.' However, it is argued that the structures of schools and parents' adverse school backgrounds negatively affect students' attitudes toward school (Başaran & Yıldırım, 2017). Nevertheless, as seen in this research, it can be ensured that children love school through correct practices.

It is observed that the intervention program applied to the students participating in the research effectively defines a school as a "value." It is realized in metaphorical studies that there is negative progress regarding the value attitude towards school. In the study conducted by Atalay- Mazlum and Balcı (2018) for vocational high schools, it was found that the participants defined school with metaphors such as 'zoo, prison, arena, coffeehouse' that could not be associated with school and that the majority of the teachers did not regard school as a value. Archambault et al. (2009) express in their research that the perception of "value" regarding school is not normative. In addition, when primary school children are compared with secondary and high school students, they argue that primary school students tend to see school as a value. Studies in the literature reveal that different situations create different levels of value perception in children toward school. The current study's appropriate intervention program for children strengthened students' perceptions of valuing school. As a result, it is concluded that the proper practices contribute to developing positive attitudes in students toward school.

According to the research results, the intervention program applied to the students participating is effective in developing adaptation and trust attitudes toward school. Children experience different environmental transitions during childhood that require adaptation to new environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The school environment itself is an environmental transition that children face. It can take different forms, such as transitioning from one level of education to another, starting a new school, and transitioning from one school to another. Regardless of which of these, the child has to deal with lots of new challenges to adapt (Ladd & Price, 1987). According to Balcı (1999), perceiving school as authoritarian, chaotic, and disciplined reduces school adaptation and confidence in primary school children. The fact that attitudes towards school have started to evolve into negative ones while still in primary school indicates a severe problem that needs to be intervened. It is possible to mention many factors that undermine adaptation and trust in school. However, as seen in the results of the research, appropriate and valid practices increase children's adaptation and trust in school.

According to the results of the research, the intervention program implemented improved the students' attitudes toward school in a positive way. Students' attitudes toward school have positive or negative effects on their development and academic life (Tatar, 2006; Sarı & Cenkseven, 2008). Considering that students spend most of their time at school, it can be concluded that their feelings and thoughts about school will also impact their personality traits. Today, it is a well-known fact that attitudes towards school play an important role among other important factors affecting students' success (Berberoğlu & Balcı, 1994; Marks, 1998; Lamb & Fullarton, 2002; Mok & Flyyn, 2002; Yapıcı, 2003; McCoach & Siegel, 2003; Cheng and Chan, 2003; Tatar, 2006; Erkman et al., 2010). It cannot be expected that the academic success of a student who does not like his school, does not like going to school, hates school, and exhibits truant behavior at school. The academic success of a student who loves his school enjoys going to school, and believes in the importance of school is the same (Alıcı, 2013). In this sense, the positive development of student's attitudes towards school is of great importance for both school and life success. Hence, it is essential to develop students' positive attitudes towards school via the intervention program implemented in the research.

Attitudes towards school are in cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions and include the love, value, adaptation, and trust a student has towards school. Developing attitudes towards school will boost students' commitment to school and benefit from school in different subjects. For the sustainability of societies, bringing up generations properly in all respects is the primary duty of the family and school. Schools are the environments where children from all walks of life can receive education and equal opportunities in education can be achieved. Therefore, it is essential to develop students' attitudes towards school starting from the primary school level with the support of parents and teachers. The intervention program, the effectiveness tested in the current study, is an essential action-oriented

educational step that encourages students to develop positive attitudes towards school, especially by addressing their affective characteristics.

Conclusion

The study aims to examine the effectiveness of the "I Love My School" intervention program, which was prepared to improve primary school students' attitude levels toward school. The following conclusions are reached in light of the research findings.

• The intervention program increased students' love attitude towards school.
• The intervention program increased students' value attitude towards school.
• The intervention program increased students' school adaptation levels.
• The intervention program increased students' trust in school.

According to the research results, it was concluded that the students found the "I Love My School" intervention program helpful and experienced a general increase in positive moods toward school. In light of these results, it can be argued that implementing an intervention program is an effective method in developing attitudes towards school, preserving the existing positive attitude levels, and thus supporting students' affective characteristics, which are the main source of their attitudes towards school. As a result, it can be said that the intervention program "I Love My School," which was designed to develop positive attitudes towards school at the primary school level, is effective.

Recommendations

It can be concluded that the intervention program implemented in the current research enabled the students to like school. For this reason, such activities as "Two Heads Are Better than One, Good Things, Bad Things and Dear Diary" based on the identity, region, and culture of each school and students' affective characteristics and which will make students like school can be implemented. In light of these examples, new activities can be designed, and necessary interventions can be made by considering these factors.

Considering that the intervention program in the research made the students like school, it can be recommended to implement activities similar to the activities applied in this intervention program. It is thought that there should be areas where the school can attribute value to students and society, with its corporate identity and material and moral benefits. For this reason, feasibility studies can be carried out so that schools create their unique identity cultures and have important societal positions and weights.

In order for schools to rise as a value, activities such as "What Does School Mean? "My Dream School-1, My Dream School-2" can be applied to students. In the intervention program implemented in the current study, great attention was paid to ensuring that all the elements that make up the school were in harmony. Thus, a positive development of attitudes towards school has been achieved. In order to achieve this, the factors that cause

disruptions and unrest within the school should be detected, and necessary studies should be carried out in this regard.

Within the scope of the studies to be done, "Will you play with me? Who is s/he? My Portrait is Your Portrait" activities can be applied to students. In order to create a sense of trust in the school, students must have positive experiences at school. In this sense, practitioners and researchers should determine the elements students need to have trust in school. Accordingly, "What Would Happen If There Was No School? How Did You Succeed? Here is My School" activities can be done.

In order to enhance the attitudes towards school, if possible, cooperation can be made with guidance teachers from the primary school level, and educational interventions can be integrated into guidance lessons. These applications should cover all members of the school, not just students. Therefore, training of teachers, administrators, and even school personnel, especially family education, can be added to intervention programs.

In future studies, other quantitative measurement tools can be used to determine the effectiveness of the intervention in multiple ways and to increase its validity and reliability. In addition, qualitative data collection methods such as interviewing and identifying metaphorical perceptions can be used. The current study examines students' attitudes toward school, consisting of love, valuation, adaptation, and trust. Future research can also investigate cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions of attitudes. Attitude is a sub-dimension of motivational beliefs. Motivational beliefs include motivation, self-efficacy for learning, anxiety, and perceptions of expectation and value. In this respect, studies on students' motivation toward school can be included in the broader scope.

This research has been conducted through an experimental method and a quantitative approach. In future studies, student's attitudes toward school can be examined with qualitative approaches or a mixed approach in which quantitative and qualitative approaches are employed together. The study was conducted with primary school students. Research can be conducted on the effectiveness of intervention programs that can be applied to middle and high school students.

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