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## An analysis of the attitudes of pre-service music teachers in Turkey towards instrument training in terms of their demographic features

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### Abstract

In this study, the attitudes of students in the departments of music education (part of the departments of fine arts) in three universities across Turkey, towards the individual instrument training classes have been examined. For the purposes of this research, the various demographic features of the students have been studied in relation to their individual instrument training. The working group of this study is comprised of senior students (N=358). According to the results obtained, it emerges that there is no difference “in their attitudes toward the training” in respect of gender or according to which universities they had graduated. However there is a difference in attitude in terms of the universities in which they study in their universities and instruments.

**Key words:** Music education, instrument training, instrument education lesson attitude.

### 1. Introduction

Instrument training, which is one of the core elements of music education, is conducted as a practical course, known as “individual instrument training” in the programs of the department of music education, under the department of fine arts, in faculties of education. The individual instrument training course in the program is a departmental course or departmental education course which aims to increase gaining music knowledge (“an understanding of music”) and is regarded as a basic course that will shape students’ professional lives after their graduation.

The practical individual instrument training course is applied by evaluating student success via an exam based on their performances at the end of each term, taking into account the programs and content determined according to the students’ individual instruments. During their training period, students express different views on the instrument training courses and these views and attitudes help shape their future careers.

Although the department of music education of the faculty of education is an institution training music teachers, such training helps provide them with the opportunity to become performers, orchestra staff, musicians, composers, soloists etc. However, for many students taking the training or graduating, the individual instrument training course is felt to be obligatory in order to have all the credits required for graduation, or it is seen as a course that will help in teaching, through encouraging the use of musical instruments in class. At present, these different points of view can change student attitudes towards the course that will affect both their professional and social lives. Individuals have chosen to study music education professionally in music education departments of faculties of education. Their

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training in those departments directs them towards music teaching. Instrument training is thus a very important part of the department of music education. The benefits of instrument training are for themselves and for their future students in relation to their careers. Instrument training is an indispensable element of an effective, efficient, permanent and intense music education (Bulut, 2005, p. 190).

Many variables, including the academic program, affect the attitudes of the students towards the individual instrument training course. The Latin source of the word “attitude” suggests a readiness to move. Today, the concept of attitude is accepted as a structure and even if it cannot be obviously observed, attitude is understood as being a structure that occurs prior to behaviour and it guides our movements (Tenkoğlu, 2005, p. 86).

Freedman, Sears and Carl Smith (1993, p. 267-268) define attitude as follows; it is an almost permanent system having cognitive and affective elements and including a behavioural tendency (Tavşancıl, 2006, p. 67).

The attitudes towards instruments and the direction of these attitudes are vital for instrument training; this is one of the dimensions of music education. Musical knowledge, attitudes and life experiences are closely interconnected, they affect each other dramatically. While musical knowledge and the attitude level of individuals are effective in shaping his/her music life, the music life form constructed by the individual determines the change and improvement as well as the direction of musical knowledge and attitude (Tenkoğlu, 2005, p.93).

Mullins emphasizes the importance of attitudes in music education by indicating that the students’ attitudes towards music should be improved, if not, negative attitudes could harm the music education program fast and deeply (Cited by Özmenteş, 2009, p. 354).

Determining the attitudes of the students in the department of music education in the faculty of education is important both in terms of detecting whether or not the instrument training course program achieves its goal and for improving the success levels of the students on that course. The variables determining the student attitudes towards instrument training could be considered as their genders, class as in “lesson” levels, instruments, academic programs, the academician and his/her training method and previous musical experiences.

In this study, the relation between pre-service music teachers’ demographic features and their attitudes towards the individual instrument training course is examined.

## **2. Objective of the Study**

In this study, the attitudes of the students in the department of music education, in faculties of fine arts in Turkey, toward individual instrument training classes have been examined. To this end, the various demographic specifications of the students in relation to the individual instrument training have been researched. The scale used in the study has been adapted from the attitude scale prepared by Tufan and Güdek, (2008) aimed at the piano lesson and studies of validity and reliability have been carried out. The reliability of the attitude scale, which has a total 30 articles, 18 of which are positive and 12 of which are negative, has been found as 96%. A Personal Information Form has been also used in the study, in an attempt to determine the demographic features of the teacher candidates. Answers have been sought for the following questions in the study:

Do the attitudes of the Pre-service Music Teachers towards Individual Instrument Training differ according to

- a- Their gender,
- b- Their grades,
- c- The universities where they study,
- d- Their individual instruments?

## **2. Methodology**

Research was carried out by the survey method.

### 3.1. Working Group

The working group was composed of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students studying in music education programs of fine arts education departments in faculties of education in three different Turkish universities in the 2009-2010 academic years. Three hundred and fifty eight students participated in the research, 239 of whom were female and 119 of whom were male. The distribution of the students according to the classes was as such: 105 1<sup>st</sup> grade students, 77 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 76 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 94 4<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Table 1. Percentage and frequency distributions according to the schools from which the students graduated

Type of the high school	N	%
Fine Arts High School	263	73,7
Public High School	47	13,2
Anatolian High School	22	6,2
Private High School	6	1,7
Vocational High School	9	2,5
Conservatory High School	10	2,8

Table 2: Percentage and frequency distributions of the students according to the universities where they study

University	N	%
Dokuz Eylül University	80	22,3
Marmara University	163	45,5
Abant İzzet Baysal University	115	32,1

Table 3: *Instrument Specializations of the Study Group*

Instruments	N	%
Flute	49	14,0
Guitar	52	14,9
Violin	105	30,1
Vocal	33	9,5
Cello	39	11,2
Contrabass	8	2,3
Clarinet	22	6,3
Viola	28	8,0
Others (piano, bağlama, trumpet)	13	3,7

### 2.2. Data Collecting Tools

An attitude scale towards the piano lesson was used to collect the research data by adapting it to the attitude scale towards the individual instrument training lesson. It is a Likert type scale. It was developed by (Tufan, E. and Güdek, B. 2008: 75-90), in order to determine the attitudes of the students studying in the music education program of the faculty of education towards piano lessons.

There are 30 items in the scale in total, 18 of which are positive and 12 of which are negative. It was found that these items reflected two basic elements (satisfaction and value) regarding the piano lesson which was taken into consideration in preparing this scale. When the scale was adapted to the attitude scale towards the individual instrument training lesson, validity and reliability tests were applied to the new scale before it was implemented.

The reliability of attitude scale towards the individual instrument training lesson was found to be 96 %. It can be concluded from this result that this scale is highly reliable. According to the results of the analysis that was carried out, factor structure of the Attitude Scale towards Individual Instrument Training Lesson was determined to include value, satisfaction and necessity.

### 2.3. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistical methods (Frequency, Percentage, Average, and Standard Deviation) were used while the data of the research were being evaluated and Kolmogorov-Smirnov distribution test was also used in order to examine the normal distribution. Mann Whitney U test was used in comparison of the quantitative data when there are two groups and in intergroup comparisons of the parameters not displaying normal distribution. Kruskal Wallis test was also employed in for the comparison of the quantitative data when there are more than two groups and in intergroup comparisons of parameters not displaying normal distribution and Mann Whitney U test was used to detect the group causing the difference. Additionally, Spearman Correlation Analysis was used in the cases which did not display normal distribution in the comparison of two quantitative data. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated for overall reliability and reliabilities of the sub dimensions. Results were assessed at 95% confidence interval and  $p < 0.05$  significance level.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1. Differences According to Gender in the Attitudes of Pre-service Music Teachers towards the Individual Instrument Training Lesson

Table 4: Distribution of Students Attitudes towards the Individual Instrument Training Lesson by Gender

	Group	N	Ort.	Ss	MW	P
Attitude	Female	239	3,095	0,796	12972	0,176
	Male	119	4,060	0,657		
Value	Female	239	3,774	0,899	12272	<b>0,035</b>
	Male	119	4,002	0,768		
Satisfaction	Female	239	4,065	0,815	13551	0,467
	Male	119	4,147	0,749		
Necessity	Female	239	4,127	0,818	13967	0,781
	Male	119	4,171	0,744		

The attitudes of the students participating in the research towards the individual instrument training course present a significant change in terms of gender. ( $p > 0.05$ ). Female and male student attitudes towards the individual instrument training course are found to be on an equal level.

However, their attitudes related to the value lower dimension of the applied scale do not present significant change in terms of gender ( $p < 0.05$ ). According to that, it is seen that male student attitudes towards the value dimension of the individual instrument training course are more positive than female student attitudes towards the value dimension of the individual instrument training course.

### 3.2. Differences According to Classes in the Attitudes of Pre-service Music Teachers towards the Individual Instrument Training Lesson

Table 5: Distribution of Students' Attitudes towards Individual Instrument Training Lesson by Class

	Group	N	Point Average	Sd	KW	p
Attitude	Grade I	105	4,237	0,587	22,14	0,000
	Grade II	77	3,920	0,754		
	Grade III	76	3,779	0,815		
	Grade IV	94	3,807	0,793		
Value	Grade I	105	4,209	0,667	28,35	<b>0,000</b>
	Grade II	77	3,816	0,834		
	Grade III	76	3,624	0,939		
	Grade IV	94	3,660	0,896		
Satisfaction	Grade I	105	4,319	0,713	15,45	<b>0,001</b>

	Grade II	77	4,033	0,817		
	Grade III	76	3,939	0,829		
	Grade IV	94	3,992	0,789		
	Grade I	105	4,230	0,804		
Necessity	Grade II	77	4,162	0,749	4,19	0,242
	Grade III	76	4,110	0,772		
	Grade IV	94	4,028	0,845		

The general attitudes of the students participating in the research towards the individual instrument training course present significant change in terms of their classes. ( $p>0.05$ ). According to that, the attitudes of first year students towards the individual instrument training course are found to be significantly higher than second, third and fourth year student attitudes towards the individual instrument training course.

Their attitudes related to value and satisfaction lower dimensions of the applied scale also present significant change according to class levels ( $p<0.05$ ). The attitudes of first year students towards value and satisfaction lower dimensions of the individual instrument training course are found to be significantly higher than those of second, third and fourth year students.

### 3.3. Differences According to Universities in the Attitudes of Pre-service Music Teachers towards the Individual Instrument Training Lesson

Table 6: Distribution of Students Attitudes towards the Individual Instrument Training Lesson by University

	Group	N	Point Average	Sd	KW	p
Attitude	Dokuz Eylül University	80	4,087	0,724		
	Marmara University	163	4,051	0,656	12,73	<b>0,002</b>
	Abant İzzet Baysal University	115	3,731	0,858		
Value	Dokuz Eylül University	80	3,988	0,856		
	Marmara University	163	3,950	0,776	11,83	<b>0,003</b>
	Abant İzzet Baysal University	115	3,612	0,943		
Satisfaction	Dokuz Eylül University	80	4,235	0,715		
	Marmara University	163	4,176	0,716	10,38	<b>0,006</b>
	Abant İzzet Baysal University	115	3,873	0,903		
Necessity	Dokuz Eylül University	80	4,156	0,780		
	Marmara University	163	4,261	0,719	8,60	<b>0,014</b>
	Abant İzzet Baysal University	115	3,962	0,873		

The attitudes of the students participating in the research towards the individual instrument training course present significant change in terms of their universities. ( $p>0.05$ ). According to that, the attitudes of the students studying in Abant İzzet Baysal University towards the individual instrument training course are found to be significantly lower than the attitudes of the students studying in Dokuz Eylül University and Marmara University towards the individual instrument training course.

It is determined that there is a significant difference in student attitudes related to the value lower dimension of the individual instrument training course according to their universities ( $p<0.05$ ). That finding shows that the attitudes of the students studying in Abant İzzet Baysal University, related to the value lower dimension of the individual instrument training course are found to be significantly lower than that of the students studying at Dokuz Eylül University and Marmara University.

Related to the satisfaction dimension of the individual instrument training course, again a significant difference in the attitudes of the students towards that course according to their universities is determined ( $p<0.05$ ). According to that result, the attitudes of the students studying in Abant İzzet Baysal University, related to the satisfaction dimension of the individual instrument training course are found to be significantly lower than those of the students studying at Dokuz Eylül University and Marmara University.

The attitudes of the students related to the necessity dimension of the individual instrument training course also change according to their universities ( $p<0.05$ ). The attitudes of the students studying in Abant İzzet Baysal University, related to the necessity dimension of the individual instrument training course are also found to be significantly lower than the attitudes of the students studying at Dokuz Eylül University and Marmara University.

### 3.4. Differences According to Instruments in the Attitudes of Pre-service Music Teachers towards the Individual Instrument Training Lesson

Table 7: Distribution of Students Attitudes towards the Individual Instrument Training Lesson by Instruments

	Instruments	N	Point Average	Sd	KW	p
Attitude	Flute	49	4,06	0,62	21,122	<b>0,007</b>
	Guitar	52	3,95	0,74		
	Violin	105	3,90	0,85		
	Vocal	33	4,29	0,58		
	Cello	39	3,91	0,77		
	Contrabass	8	3,58	0,88		
	Clarinet	22	3,69	0,80		
	Viola	28	3,74	0,69		
	Others (piano, bağlama, trumpet)	13	4,42	0,31		
Value	Flute	49	3,97	0,67	23,536	<b>0,003</b>
	Guitar	52	3,80	0,88		
	Violin	105	3,83	0,96		
	Vocal	33	4,21	0,71		
	Cello	39	3,78	0,92		
	Contrabass	8	3,51	0,96		
	Clarinet	22	3,54	0,85		
	Viola	28	3,55	0,73		
	Others (piano, bağlama, trumpet)	13	4,44	0,36		
Satisfaction	Flute	49	4,19	0,70	11,925	0,155
	Guitar	52	4,15	0,74		
	Violin	105	3,96	0,91		
	Vocal	33	4,37	0,58		
	Cello	39	4,10	0,76		
	Contrabass	8	3,74	0,91		
	Clarinet	22	3,87	0,87		
	Viola	28	3,96	0,85		
	Others (piano, bağlama, trumpet)	13	4,46	0,35		
Necessity	Flute	49	4,15	0,72	20,570	<b>0,008</b>
	Guitar	52	4,15	0,71		
	Violin	105	4,12	0,93		
	Vocal	33	4,47	0,68		
	Cello	39	4,08	0,77		
	Contrabass	8	3,42	0,58		
	Clarinet	22	4,03	0,79		
	Viola	28	3,96	0,70		
	Others (piano, bağlama, trumpet)	13	4,44	0,57		

It is seen that the attitudes of the students towards individual instrument training course present significant change according to their instruments ( $p < 0,05$ ). According to that, the attitudes of the students getting vocal training towards individual instrument training course are found significantly higher than the attitudes of the students trained in flute, guitar, violin, cello, contrabass, clarinet and viola towards individual instrument training course. Together with that, the attitudes of the students trained in other fields (piano, trumpet, bağlama-traditional Turkish folk instrument-) towards individual instrument training course are found significantly higher than the attitudes of the students trained in flute, guitar, violin, cello, contrabass, clarinet and viola towards individual instrument training course.

The attitudes of the students participating in research towards value dimension of the individual instrument training course also shows significant change according to their instruments ( $p < 0,05$ ). The attitudes of the students trained in flute towards value dimension of the individual instrument training course are found significantly higher than the attitudes of the students trained in clarinet and viola towards the individual instrument training course. The attitudes of the students getting vocal training, towards value dimension of the individual instrument training course are found significantly higher than the attitudes of the students trained in guitar, violin, cello, contrabass, clarinet and viola towards value dimension of the individual instrument training course. The attitudes of the students trained

in other fields (piano, trumpet, baglama) towards value dimension of individual instrument training course are found significantly higher than the attitudes of the students trained in guitar, violin, cello, contrabass, clarinet and viola towards value dimension of individual instrument training course. According to these obtained results, there is no significant difference in the attitudes of the students participating in research towards satisfaction dimension of the individual instrument training course according to their instruments that students are trained in ( $p>0,05$ ).

The findings in Table 7 show that there are significant differences in the attitudes of the students participating in research towards necessity dimension of the individual instrument training course according to their instruments ( $p<0,05$ ). According to that, the attitudes of the students getting vocal training, towards the individual instrument training course are found significantly higher than the attitudes of the students trained in violin, cello, contrabass, clarinet and viola. The attitudes of the students trained in other fields (piano, trumpet, baglama) towards necessity dimension of individual instrument training course are determined significantly higher than the attitudes of the students trained in contrabass towards necessity dimension of individual instrument training course.

## 5. Conclusion

According to the findings of this study in Table 4, male students when compared to female give more importance to the individual instrument training course and consider it as a valuable course. On the other lower dimensions, no significant difference is seen.

In Table 5, first year students in the sampling group are more interested in the course, like, give importance to it and find it significant when compared to second, third and fourth year students. According to those results, the students new to the course have more positive attitudes towards the course.

The attitudes of the students participating in the research towards the necessity dimension of the individual instrument training course show significant change according to their class year ( $p>0.05$ ). All students participating in the research find the individual instrument training course equally necessary.

In the literature study, research supporting the results of that the present research can be found. Some of them important examples of this are as follows:

Özmenteş and Özmenteş (2009), in their study of “The Attitude, Individual Features and Performance Level Relations regarding Practicing an Instrument”, the relation between the student attitudes and individual features and performance levels relating to practicing an instrument in instrument education is examined. The student attitudes towards practicing an instrument show important differences in relation to their ages, daily instrument practice and the universities they attended, but there is no significant difference in their attitudes in terms of their gender, individual instruments and instrument experiences. From a general perspective, the results show that an increase in the age of the student and in an increase in practice time is directly proportional to their attitudes towards practicing the instrument.

In Moray's (2003) thesis study, “An Analysis of the Attitudes and Regarding Instrument Practice amongst Music Students in Universities” the aim was to determine student attitudes and habits regarding instrument practice. In the research, a significant difference is found in the attitudes and habits of the music students towards practicing instrument in terms of gender, finished university, students graduated from university and those still at university and type of instrument variables. In this respect, concerning the class year variable, while the highest attitude and custom of practicing an instrument is observed in first year students, it is also determined that when compared to the students practicing 3-4 hours or more in a day, the students whose daily instrument practice takes 1-2 hours have lower attitudes and a less frequent habit of practicing the instrument.

Pagonowski (1985) conducted research to analyze whether or not student attitudes change in terms of their gender, class year, socioeconomic levels and their talents for music by using a process music education program. According to findings obtained as a result of the analysis, the students' attitudes towards music in the class show changes in relation to their class year, gender and socioeconomic levels.

Table 6 shows that students taking the individual instrument training lesson in Abant İzzet Baysal University have less interest in the lesson, find it less valuable and necessary and they enjoy the lesson less when compared to the students participating in the research from other universities.

In Table 7, students taking vocal training are thought under considered in the context of the individual instrument training lesson and their attitudes towards the lesson are found to be positively high. The students evaluated under the title of “**other**” are trained in the piano, the trumpet and the bağlama (an instrument with three strings) and their attitudes towards the individual instrument training lesson are also determined as positively high. It is possible to interpret that the revision reason of music teacher training program applying that result before 2006 (Kalyoncu; 2005, p. 208-210) is interpreted and applied differently compared to two departments in Abant İzzet Baysal University. The results in Table 7 show that the main aim of these departments is to train future music teachers “for work in the classroom and shows again the importance of vocal and piano training for use in instrument training.

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