

## **ATTITUDES OF THE MUSIC TEACHER CANDIDATES IN TURKEY TOWARDS THE “INDIVIDUAL INSTRUMENT TRAINING LESSON”**

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### **—Abstract —**

This research is a descriptive study conducted in order to determine the attitude levels of candidate music teachers studying at the Music Education Departments of Universities in Turkey towards the instrument lesson during their education at the universities. Working group of this study is comprised of senior students studying in Faculty of Education from different universities of Turkey. The scale used in the study was adopted from the attitude scale prepared by Tufan and Güdek (2008) and aimed at the piano lesson and the studies of validity and reliability were carried out. After the factor analysis performed, the factor structure of the scale was determined as; value, pleasure and necessity. As a result of the study, value, pleasure and necessity dimensions, which are the subdimensions of the Attitude Scale of the teacher candidates aimed at the instrument lesson, were compared with one another within the context of the study findings and consequently, significant determinations were revealed.

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

**JEL Classification: I 23**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Dimensions of the music education can be addressed as voice training, musical hearing training, musical taste training, creativity training and instrument training (Bilen, 1995: 14). Instrument training is one of the dimensions of music education. The process of learning to play an instrument is composed of systematic attainment of certain skills in order to display the skill of playing an

instrument (Schleuter, 1996). General objectives of the instrument training are to enable the students to develop their musical knowledges and tastes, musicalities and skills to perform music together, to have them acquire organized and disciplined working habits and to help them recognize national and global art of music (Biber, 2001:95). Instrument training is an important dimension from behavioral and contextual aspects within the scope of music education. Recognizing the instrument, comprehending the basic behaviors regarding the ability of playing and displaying organized and effective behaviors are expected in the music education (Saraç, 1992:2). Instrument training handles cognitive, affective and kinesthetic aspects of individuals as a whole. Individuals gain theoretical information and skills as well as aesthetic values through this training. It enriches the cultural life. In this manner, creative, investigative, interpretative, analytic and self-confident individuals grow, which is the objective of the training (Akgül, 2007:4).

In our country, the instrument training lesson is given in the institutions which train artists and art educators by being based on different programs according to their objectives. The authority of training art educators to work in private and public schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education has been granted to the Fine Arts Education Departments of Faculties of Education in universities (Özbudun, 2009:200). Teacher candidates are trained at three main fields including world knowledge, music information and teaching knowledge (Tufan, 2004:97). Being one of the basic dimensions of music education, instrument training lesson is given as an applied course under the name of individual instrument training in the Music Education programs of Fine Arts Education Departments in the Faculties of Education. Individual instrument training lesson which is included in the program in order to provide the students with music information is considered as a fundamental course shaping the professional lives of the students following the graduation. Students of the Music Education Program take the instrument training lesson for one hour in a week during their education process of four years and eight terms. Individual instrument training lesson is given practically by academicians specialized in this field, is conducted within the programs and contents determined according to the instruments of the students and academic standings of the students are assessed through an exam based on performance at the end of each term. The individual instrument training lesson included in the Music Education Program of the Fine Arts Education Department in the Faculty of Education has a distinctive character for students. Besides, this lesson gains importance for the students to perform the teaching profession and in other professional dimensions such as instrument playing

competences and status of benefiting from instruments in lessons and activities. Within the framework of the fundamental objective of the Faculties of Education as institutions vested with the authority to train music educators in our country, it is of great importance to examine the individual instrument training lesson which is one of the compulsory lessons and determine the attitudes of the students towards this course.

Attitude means *ready to take action* in its original latin form. Today, the concept of attitude is seen as a structure and even though it is not observed directly, it is understood as structure preceding our behaviors and guiding our movements (Tenkoğlu, 2005:86). However, (Freedman, Sears and Carlsmith, 1993:267-268) defines attitude as “a rather permanent system including cognitive and affective elements and containing a behavioral tendency” (cited from: Tavşancıl, 2006:67). Attitude is the reaction tendency of an individual towards any phenomenon or object around him/her. In fact, attitudes constitute a part of the attained personality characteristics of an individual and they are learned by way of classic or pragmatic conditioning or by observing and imitating the models just like the other attained personality characteristics. Attitudes can not be observed directly, attitude of an individual towards an object can only be understood by monitoring the behaviors of that individual. There are three components of attitude as cognitive, affective and behavioral (Morgan, 2006: 363). Cognitive element is all thoughts, beliefs and information that an individual has towards an object as a part of any attitude. Affective element is closely associated with the system of values of an individual. Whether the issue of attitude serves for the benefits of the individual causes positive or negative feelings to arise. In this sense, attitude carries an instrumental value for the individual. Behavioral element reflects the behavior tendency of an individual towards the attitude issue in a specific stimulus group (İnceoğlu, 2000:8-10). Attitude, skill, interest and willingness of students and attitude, approach and behaviors of teachers, materials that are used, education methods and techniques as well as conditions of the learning environment draw attention as crucial factors for an effective education in almost all fields of education but especially in teaching of the branch lessons. Differently from other education fields, music education becomes influential for the individuals to develop attitudes by strengthening their perceptual aspects thanks to its more personal and emotional nature.

### **1.1. Aim**

Aim of this research is to put forth the attitudes of the students studying at Music Education program of Fine Arts Education Department in the Faculty of

Education towards the individual instrument training lesson. Answers will be sought to the following questions in line with this overall aim:

1. What are the levels and directions of the general attitudes of the students towards the instrument training lesson?
2. Do general attitudes of the students towards the instrument training lesson differ according to the subdimensions of the attitude scale regarding individual instrument training lesson?

## 2. METHOD

Research was carried out by the survey method.

### 2.1. Working Group

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 at the Music Education Program of Fine Arts Education Department in the Faculty of Education in three different University in the 2009-2010 academic year in Turkey. 358 students participated in the research, 239 of whom were female and 119 of whom were male. 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: Percentage and frequency distributions of the students according to their individual instruments

<b>Individual instrument</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
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**

Attitude Scale Towards Piano Lesson was used to collect the research data by adapting it to the attitude scale towards 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 at 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 individual instrument training lesson, validity and reliability tests were applied to the new scale before it was implemented. Reliability of the Attitude Scale Towards Individual Instrument Training Lesson was found as 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. Analysis of the Data**

Descriptive statistical methods (Frequency, Percentage, Average, Standard Deviation) were used while 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 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 comparison of two quantitative data. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated for overall reliability and reliabilities of the subdimensions. Results were assessed at 95 % confidence interval and  $p < 0,05$  significance level.

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1. Findings Regarding the Distribution of the General Attitudes of the Music Teacher Candidates Towards Instrument Training Lesson

Table 4: The students' attitudes towards individual instrument training lesson

	<b>N</b>	<b>Avr.</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>
Attitude	358	3,956	0,756	1	5

Average of the attitudes of the students participating in the research towards individual instrument training lesson was found to be 3,956. This finding can make us think that attitudes of the students towards individual instrument training lesson were above the average and high in a positive manner. Findings that were obtained showed that attitudes which students developed towards this lesson were positive. When the relevant literature was examined, it was observed that some studies that were carried out to determine the attitudes towards instrument training lesson and practicing instruments put forward similar results with this research.

In their research Özmenteş and Özmenteş (2009) expressed that relationship between attitude levels of the students towards instrument practice and their performance levels displayed positive significance.

It was determined in a study conducted by Akıncı and Moray (2005) that university students who were practicing their instruments for 3-4 hours a day had the highest attitudes and habits regarding instrument practice while those practicing for 1-2 hours a day had the lowest attitudes and habits in this regard.

In the study conducted by Çalışkan (2008) it was concluded that there was a significant relationship between motivation levels of the students regarding the individual instrument learning and their academic achievements.

### 3.2. Findings Regarding the Distribution of Subdimensions of the Attitude Scale Towards Individual Instrument Training Lesson

Table 5: Distribution of the attitudes of the students towards individual instrument training lesson according to the subdimensions of the scale

	N	Avr.	Sd	Min.	Max.
Value	358	3,850	0,864	1	5
Satisfaction	358	4,092	0,793	1	5
Necessity	358	4,142	0,793	1	5

Averages of the individual instrument training lesson were 3,85, 4,09 and 4,14 as regards to the value subdimension, satisfaction subdimension and necessity subdimension, respectively. The students participating in the research attached more importance to the necessity subdimension as distinct from value and satisfaction subdimensions. We can conclude from this finding that students considered the individual instrument training lesson as a crucial lesson completing their education.

Table 6: Findings regarding the comparison of subdimensions of the students' attitudes towards individual instrument training lesson

Dimension	Dimension	r*	p
Value	Satisfaction	0,707	<b>0,000</b>
Value	Necessity	0,631	<b>0,000</b>
Satisfaction	Necessity	0,517	<b>0,000</b>

\*Spearman Correlation Coefficient

A positively significant relationship was found at the level of 70,7 % between attitudes of the students participating in the research regarding the value dimension of the individual instrument training lesson and their attitudes towards its satisfaction dimension. Accordingly, as the attitudes of the students towards the value dimension of the individual instrument training lesson increase, their attitudes towards satisfaction dimension also increase. It can be concluded from this finding that students who consider the individual instrument training lesson as valuable also have high levels of interest, curiosity, affection and satisfaction towards it. It can also be interpreted that as value given to the course by the students increase, they love the course much more and follow it carefully.

A positively significant relationship was found at the level of 63,1 % between attitudes of the students participating in the research regarding the value dimension of the individual instrument training lesson and their attitudes towards its necessity dimension. Accordingly, as the attitudes of the students towards the

value dimension of the individual instrument training lesson increase, their attitudes towards necessity dimension also increase. It can be concluded from this finding that students who consider the individual instrument training lesson as important also think that this lesson is an essential course completing their education. In parallel with the increase of the value attributed by the students to the individual instrument training lesson, it can be alleged that their attitudes towards necessity of the lesson also increased and belief in its necessity will also increase as its importance is recognized.

A positively significant relationship was found at the level of 51,7 % between attitudes of the students participating in the research regarding the satisfaction dimension of the individual instrument training lesson and their attitudes towards its necessity dimension. According to this result, as the attitudes of the students towards the satisfaction dimension of the individual instrument training lesson increase, their attitudes towards necessity dimension also increase. It was concluded that students who took pleasure in the individual instrument training lesson and followed it eagerly and curiously realized the necessity of this lesson to improve themselves and contribute to their education.

In the study conducted by Tufan and Güdek (2008), it was detected that students were hesitant within the context of “satisfaction” subdimension of the scale towards piano lesson while they found the piano lesson valuable in the “value” subdimension of the scale.

In the thesis of Karabulut (2009) it was also concluded that general tendency of the student attitudes towards the piano lesson was hesitation even though they differed partially within the framework of the determined variables. On the other hand, it was found out that students were undecided as regards to the “satisfaction” subdimension of the scale applied in the research but they found piano lesson valuable in the “value” subdimension.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Students consider this lesson as essential and important within education activities and processes at more significant levels than their satisfaction towards individual instrument training lesson and the value that they attribute to this lesson.

It was inferred from the study that as the importance attributed to the individual instrument training lesson by the students increased and the value given to the lesson increased, interests, willigness and satisfaction towards the lesson also showed increase. when findings were evaluated, it was detected that there was a positively significant relationship between attitudes of the students towards value



subdimension of the lesson and their attitudes towards its necessity subdimension. This finding revealed that students who thought that this lesson connected them to the music and thus, appreciated it also found this lesson essential as an element completing their education and attributed a high level of importance to this lesson. It was observed that as the value given to the lesson by the students increased, their opinions regarding the necessity of the lesson also increased. It was also concluded that increase in the interest, willingness, desire, curiosity and satisfaction of the students towards lesson led to an increase in their opinions and beliefs of finding the lesson necessary.

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