DETERMINING INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION IN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE RELATION WITH MOTIVATION

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this research is behaviors and motivations of the students on the instructor's social, physical and instructional attractiveness. This research is a descriptive work. 258 students (133 female and 125 male) who studied in 2008-2009 term at Anadolu University Communication Sciences Faculties Journalism, Cinema and Television, Public Relations, Advertising and Communication departments participated in the research. The instructor's social, physical and instructional attractions and motivations were determined by using 5-point Likert scale. The findings of this research will be additions for determining and arguing the instructor's responsibilities, besides educational ones as a communication director, for taking the students' participation and success levels to a higher degree. Existing perceptions of the students on interpersonal attraction will be introduced in this research. The participants are students enrolled in the courses of two professors, two associate professors, two assistant professors and two lecturers who are the staff of Communication Sciences Faculties and in both genders.

Keywords: Interpersonal attraction, motivation in education, instructor's qualities.

INTRODUCTION

One of the human behaviors that has been tried to be explained is that a particular person seems attractive to us while somebody else does not or that we seem attractive to some people while not to other people. The concept of attractiveness can be a determinant factor on the development and continuation of relations in social environments where interaction takes place.

The concept termed as "attractiveness" or "interpersonal attraction" in psychology is defined as the tendency of someone to have appreciation and positive feelings towards someone else (Turunç, 2009). McCroskey and McCain (1974) put forth two factors as important in their research about the place of attractiveness in interpersonal communication: (a) The more people find someone attractive, the more they can have communication with that person and (b) the more someone is found attractive, the more (s)he has an influence on them during communication. It is possible to explain interpersonal attraction through different theories. This study includes the Learning Theory and the Theories of Cognitive Balance and Class Generalization.

The understanding which explains interpersonal attraction through the Learning Theory benefits from theories of classical conditioning. According to this, if one is pleased with his environment, he shows a tendency to find people in that environment attractive and to get closer with those people. In the light of the Learning Theory, it is possible to note four factors determining interpersonal attraction. These factors comprise of closeness,

familiarity (being known or acquainted), beauty (physical appearance) and similarity in the environment. One who attributes one or several of these factors to someone can find him/her attractive (Gökdağ, 2004).

a) Closeness and Familiarity in the Environment

Closeness between people is pointed as one of the reasons why people find each other attractive. The fact that people sharing an environment have more potential to interact with each other and this closeness leads to a familiarity can be a guiding principle to explain the attractiveness attributed to people. What is important at this point is not the content of the interaction between two people but the feelings of appreciation and attraction invoked by familiarity formed through such closeness. Closeness leads us to get to know someone and to obtain information about him/her. Thus, one's chance to predict the known person's next behaviors is more than one who is totally a stranger to this known person.

In an experimental research carried out to determine the influence of closeness on interpersonal attraction, a woman entered into different classrooms and sat there without speaking to anyone. This woman who had never been seen by anyone in the classrooms was seen 15, 10 or 5 times in these classrooms. Then, among the students who were asked how attractive they found this woman, those who saw the woman longer found her more attractive and beautiful compared to the students who saw the woman for a shorter period of time (De Vito, 1989). People who are physically closer to each other are more accessible than those who are distant. Positive or negative interpersonal relations take place between people who know or frequently see each other (Kaypakoğlu, 2008).

b) Beauty (Physical Appearance)

Physical attractiveness comes to the fore in face to face communication. There are research which put that beautiful people are perceived to be more interesting, warm, extrovert and socially more talented than people who are not beautiful (Kaypakoğlu, 2008). Duran and Kelly (1988) note that attractive people are thought to be more successful, popular, sociable, persuasive and happy than unattractive people according to the belief " the beautiful is good."

In a research carried out to determine the influence of physical attractiveness on communication, students who were shown a persuasive presentation and video were asked to evaluate the presenters with the condition to take the verbal and non-verbal variables of communication into consideration. As a result of the research, it was demonstrated that the attractive speakers were found more fluent and persuasive than unattractive speakers (Duran and Kelly, 1988).

c) Similarity

The influence of attitudes on attractiveness should not be disregarded. There are different points of view on this matter. For example, similarity of attitudes increases attractiveness, which means that people who have common views, thoughts and values find each other more attractive. Another point of view is that people of opposite characteristics satisfy each other's needs and have features complementing each other and that this complementariness becomes determinant on interpersonal attraction (Ergin and Birol, 2000; Gökdağ, 2004; Turunç, 2008). Apart from some exceptions, people of similar national, racial background, common skills, similar physical features, level of intelligence and attitudes find each other attractive (DeVito, 1989). In his research in which he observed friend relationships of male university students staying in a dormitory, Newcomb handled the way students appreciated certain attitudes, values and other people at different intervals within a period of eight weeks. As a consequence of his research, similarity increases as attitudes are shared and students stay longer in the dormitory. Newcomb found a positive relationship between similarities of attitudes and finding each other attractive (Zanden, 1987).

It is also a fact that people find those who do not resemble to themselves attractive. For example, one can find features that (s)he does not have attractive. In this case, differences are taken into more consideration than similarities (Kaypakoğlu, 2008).

The understanding which explains interpersonal attraction through the Theory of Cognitive Balance benefits from the views of Heider and Newcomb. According to the balance theory of Heider (1958) who tries to determine the ways people perceive and organize their relations with other people and their environment, one, in interpersonal relationships, has the tendency and the need to turn an unbalanced situation into a balanced one and to be consistent in his/her attitudes and behaviors towards and relations with other people. Inconsistency and unbalance will lead to an internal stress, and people will try to decrease this tension and to have harmony with others again (Dönmez, 1987). Within the scope of this approach, the relationship between the source, the receiver and the object of attitude is pointed out with the components of the communication period taken into consideration. The individual who becomes content reaching a balanced condition makes an effort to maintain the continuity of the communication (Secord and Backman, 1974).

Webster and Drsikell (1983) put forth their views on the Theory of Class Generalization and physical attractiveness. To them, attractiveness is one of the widespread class features in the culture which determine cognition and behavior. People who are physically more attractive are perceived to be more intelligent than others (Jakson, Hunter and Hodge, 1995).

Apart from the factors above, prestige, money, power and certain personal characteristics can be determinant on interpersonal attraction (DeVito, 1989).

Attractiveness in Educational Communication
In the process of educational communication, the source is usually the instructor, and a good instructor should have certain educational and personal qualifications. The source should have certain personal qualifications to put his/her general knowledge, field information and an ability to teach into practice. These are reliability, attractiveness, patience, tolerance, regularity, being a good director and researcher and the symbols of body language. Among these symbols are body posture and movements, the style of dressing, facial expressions, eye contact and tone of voice (Şimşek, 2000). High reliability is one of the most important features that the source should have. In general, there is a positive relationship between the expertise, honesty and likeability of the source and his/her ability to persuade (Ergin and Birol, 2000; Dönmez, 1987).

Apart from his/her basic duties to plan, to introduce the information, to manage the class, to take the needs of students into consideration, to evaluate success, to do cooperation, to direct students and to motivate them for success, a successful educator should have the features of a source who inaugurates communication during the communication period (Şimşek, 2000). Travis and Giuliano (2007) note that while they have an evaluation of their instructor, students pay attention to his/her intelligence, sense of humor, politeness, being a role model, physical attractiveness, whether (s)he has anything in common with them and his/her personal intimacy.

In conclusion, it can be said that an instructor who shares more values with his/her students is found more intimate by his/her students. It is possible to express this case in the jargon of communication as that the extensity of a common living space leads to attraction and facilitates the sharing of messages (Şimşek, 2000).

In this study, the skills and abilities of the instructor in his/her social and emotional relationship with students are categorized as social attractiveness; his/her nice and elegant outfit and special care for his/her cleanness and dressing are categorized as social attractiveness; his/her effective use of class hours and technology, and realization of democracy in the classroom are categorized as instructional attractiveness. These categorizations

are performed under the umbrella of interpersonal attraction and the relationship between these factors and the learner's motivation is questioned:

The main goal of this study is to determine the attitudes and motivation of the learners towards the instructors' social, physical and instructional attractiveness during educational communication. In this respect, answers to the following questions were investigated:
1. Is there a relationship between attraction subgroups and title of academicians?
2. Is there a relationship between attraction subgroups and academicians?
3. Is there a relationship between attraction subgroups and motivation?

It is thought that the findings derived at the end of the research will help the teacher, who is a director of communication apart from his main educational responsibilities, to determine and discuss the main factors that will increase the students' participation and success.

METHOD

This study is a descriptive one which investigated the opinions of students studying at the Faculty of Communication Sciences, Anadolu University about the social, physical and instructional attractiveness of instructors. The study also investigated the relationship between these opinions and class motivation. The study, as a descriptive work, aimed to bring forth the original perceptions of the students.

The participants of the research were composed of 258 voluntary students who studied in Journalism, Cinema and Television, Public Relations, Advertising and Communication Departments of Communication Sciences Faculty in Anadolu University during the term, 2008/2009. Of the participators, 133 were female and 125 were male. These students were selected on voluntary basis by two professors, two associate professors, two assistant professors and two lecturers from the Communication Sciences Faculty among their officially registered students.

In the research, the instructor's social, physical and instructional attractiveness and motivations were determined by using 5-point Likert scale. The researcher used the scale by McCroskey and McCain (1974) to develop the questions regarding social and physical attractiveness while those regarding instructional attractiveness and motivations were developed using scale by Ellis (2000). Social attractiveness placed under the title of interpersonal attractiveness is explained through the social abilities and status of the person. The abilities of people in their social and emotional relationships can be an influential factor in their making friendship (Jones and the others, 2007, 267). In the scale developed by McCroskey and McCain (1974), such communicational capabilities as the evaluator's seeing the evaluated person as a friend, his/her getting acquainted with the evaluated and his/her patterning himself/herself on the evaluated, his /her not having problems in personal relationships are dealt within the scope of social attractiveness. In the category of physical attractiveness, the evaluated one's nice and elegant outfit and his/her care for cleanness and dressing were handled. The researcher added to these items propriety and fluency of the speech, and the tone of the voice. Within the context of instructional attractiveness, the lecturer's effective use of class hours and his/her realization of democracy in the classroom were handled. In respect of class motivation, the student was expected to assess the course and the content of the course.

The scale prepared was evaluated by two experts in terms of the clarity, cultural harmony, language and content of the items, and some corrections were made where necessary as a result of the criticisms. In the next stage, a student was asked to answer the questions in the scale. At the end of all these stages, a scale of 40 questions was prepared. The reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated to be 0, 95 (Cronbach's alpha). Also, on the basis of sub-factors, the Cronbach's alpha values reached were 0, 71 for social attractiveness, 0.88 for physical attractiveness, 0.89 for instructional attractiveness and 0.92 for motivation (Table 1).

Table 1
Reliability Analysis Results of Scale

Scale Subgroups	Alpha
(A) Social Attraction	0,71*
(B) Physical Attraction	0,88*
(C) Instructional Attraction	0,89*
(D) Motivation	0,92*
All Scale Items	0,95*

In the light of the explanation above, the results of the this study and the guide study, which was performed by McCroskey and McCain (1974), were nearly the same; 0,84 (Cronbach alpha) for social attraction and 0,86 (Cronbach alpha) for physical attraction. . The researchers who studied on the same issue had reached similar results. (Duran & Kelly, 1988; Wheeless, Frymier & Thompson, 1992).

RESULTS

Kruskal Wallis Test was performed to test whether there was a significant difference between the scale scores of faculty and faculty titles. The results of this analysis can be seen in Table 2. The results of the analysis indicates that there is a significant difference in the medians (For instructional attraction p<.005 and for other subgroups p<.000.) There is significant difference between the attraction subgroups and instructor title.

Table 2
Difference between the scale scores of faculty and faculty titles

	Social	Physical	Instructional	Motivation
Chi-Square	24,988	31,687	10,056	18,341
df	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	,000	,000	,018	,000

Table of mean ranks indicates that assistant professors have highest score for social attractiveness; professors have highest score for physical attractiveness (Table 3). For instructional attractiveness and motivation, professors have highest scores in all titles. Correlation test was performed to figure out relation between titles and subscale scores. The results of correlation analysis indicate that there is no significant relation between them.

Table 3
Mean ranks of titles for subscale groups

	Title	Mean Rank
Social	Instructor	120,13
	Assist.prof.	156,46
	Assoc.prof.	102,36
	Prof.	145,58
Physical	Instructor	97,48

	Assist.Prof.	152,44
	Assoc.Prof..	118,08
	Prof.	196,15
Instructional	Instructor	120,93
	Assist.Prof.	144,50
	Assoc.Prof..	117,88
	Prof.	170,23
Motivation	Instructor	115,03
	Assist.Prof.	150,42
	Assoc.Prof..	111,92
	Prof.	172,65

Kruskal Wallis Test was performed again to test whether there was a significant difference between the scale scores of academicians and their names. The results of this analysis can be seen in Table 4 (The names of the academicians are nicknames, not real). The results of the analysis indicates that there is a significant difference in the medians (For all subgroups p<.000.) According to these, there is a significant difference between academicians for attraction subgroups.

Table 4
Difference between the academicians for scale scores

	Social	Physical	Instructional	Motivation
Chi-Square	47,352	46,314	33,969	52,471
df	7	7	7	7
Asymp. Sig.	,000	,000	,000	,000

Table of mean ranks indicates that Ayşe has highest score for social attractiveness; Derya has highest score for physical and instructional attractiveness and motivation (Table 5). These results seem to be consistent with previous analysis result.

Table 5
Mean ranks of academicians for scale scores

	Faculty	Mean Rank
Social	Ayşe	169,48
	Yusuf	147,54
	Ekrem	68,32
	Selim	159,90
	Derya	145,58
	Emre	146,48
	İnci	96,42
	Nedret	138,34
Physical	Ayşe	179,32
	Yusuf	140,58
	Ekrem	95,93
	Selim	153,47
	Derya	196,15
	Emre	120,54
	İnci	76,73
	Nedret	141,49

Instructional	Ayşe	130,65
	Yusuf	154,45
	Ekrem	80,58
	Selim	140,41
	Derya	170,23
	Emre	142,98
	İnci	101,08
	Nedret	157,31
Motivation	Ayşe	140,62
	Yusuf	149,10
	Ekrem	84,93
	Selim	155,27
	Derya	172,65
	Emre	167,83
	İnci	67,50
	Nedret	140,44

In order to understand attraction concept in education process, we calculated a coefficient of correlation between the different subscales (Social Attraction, Physical Attraction, Instructional Attraction and Motivation). The results can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6
The relationship between subgroups

		Social	Physical	Instructional	Motivation
Social	Pearson Corr.	1	,558[**]	,624[**]	,638[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000
Physical	Pearson Corr.	,558[**]	1	,566[**]	,640[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,000
Instructional	Pearson Corr.	,624[**]	,566[**]	1	,809[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		,000
Motivation	Pearson Corr.	,638[**]	,640[**]	,809[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	

The results showed that instructional attraction scores were highly correlated with motivation scores (Pearson correlation, r=0.80, <p=0.001). The students reported instructional attraction; they reported being motivated more with course and learning. Pearson correlation between social and physical attraction (r=0.558), social and instructional attraction (r=0.624), social attraction and motivation (r=0.638), physical and instructional attraction (r=0.566), physical attraction and motivation (r=0.640) were too high (p<0.001). There is strong relation among social, physical and instructional attraction and motivation. Furthermore, the relationship between instructional attraction and motivation was remarkable.

Regression analyses were performed in order to understand influence of attraction subgroups to motivation. The results are given in Table 7. The model refers to motivation when instructional, physical and social attraction used as predictors. R square is a measure of how much of the variability in the outcome is accounted for by the predictors.

Table 7
The power of attraction subgroups to explain motivation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,846[a]	,715	,712	7,30503	1,757

R^2 value is 0.712, which means that instructional, physical and social attraction account for 71% of variance in motivation scores. According to the results, the power of motivation of three subscale groups (Social Attraction, Physical Attraction, and Instructional Attraction) is 71%.

Regression analyses were performed again in order to understand influence of every attraction subgroup to motivation. The results are given in Table 8. The Model 1 refers to motivation when instructional attraction used as predictor. The Model 2 refers to motivation when physical attraction used as predictor. And the Model 3 refers to motivation when social attraction used as predictor.

Table 8
The power of every attraction subgroup to explain motivation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,809[a]	,655	,654	8,00395	1,640
a. Predictors: (Constant), Instructional b. Dependent Variable: Motivation					
2	,640[a]	,410	,407	10,47393	1,854
a. Predictors: (Constant), Physical b. Dependent Variable: Motivation					
3	,638[a]	,408	,405	10,49126	1,676
a. Predictors: (Constant), Social b. Dependent Variable: Motivation					

For Model 1 R^2 value is 0.655, which means that instructional attraction account for 65% of variance in motivation scores. The power of influence motivation of instructional attraction is 65%. The power of influence motivation of physical attraction is 41% ($R^2=.410$) and the power of influence motivation of social attraction is 40% ($R^2=.408$). According to results, instructional attraction is the most influent attraction subgroups to explain motivation.

The power of motivation ~~of~~ on social, physical, and instructional attraction subscale groups was 71%. When this value is compared with the power of instructional attraction to influence motivation (65%), it is seen that instructional attraction is an important quality to determine motivation.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study demonstrate that attraction subgroups change according to academicians' titles and academicians themselves but it depends on qualities of people. There is very strong correlation between social, physical, instructional attraction and motivation. Although the relation of all subgroups is strong, the relation between instructional attractiveness and motivation is striking.

The results of the study demonstrate that instructional, physical and social attractions explain 71% of motivation. On the other hand, instructional attraction explains 65% of motivation alone. It is a high rate and confirms the other results. These results alone imply that attractiveness determines motivation but instructional attractiveness is more important variable for motivation.

It should be noted that this is an independent study conducted in one faculty. Although the results seem to be consistent with the findings of previous research in related areas, further research should be carried out in other institutions of education to reach more powerful conclusions.

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