

A SURVEY STUDY ON STUDENTS' SENSE OF EMPOWERMENT IN AN  
ENGLISH PREPARATORY PROGRAM AT A STATE UNIVERSITY

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **A SURVEY STUDY ON STUDENTS' SENSE OF EMPOWERMENT IN AN ENGLISH PREPARATORY PROGRAM AT A STATE UNIVERSITY**

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The purpose of the study was to reveal to what extent the English Preparatory Program students in a state university perceived themselves empowered and to find out whether their empowerment perceptions differed regarding their gender and achievement. Additionally, the study aimed to explore the factors enabling student empowerment and the barriers to it from students' perspective. The study attempted to shed light on what kind of actions could be taken through curricular and extra-curricular activities to improve students' empowerment perceptions.

For this purpose, a cross-sectional survey research design was employed through "Student Empowerment Questionnaire" (SEQ) developed by the researcher. The Cronbach's Alpha for the whole scale was found .91 while the reliability coefficients for each subscale ranged between .75 and .94. The questionnaire was administered to 366 students in cluster randomly selected classes at an English Preparatory Program.

The findings indicated a 'moderate' empowerment level based on the students' overall mean scores obtained from SEQ. Regarding gender, there was not a statistically difference between the overall SEQ mean scores of males and females. However, students' overall empowerment mean scores differed significantly among achievement groups. In the subscales of SEQ, only achievement variable had a significant effect on Choice, Impact and Academic Self-efficacy.

The content analysis results regarding the enablers and barriers of student empowerment, the themes of 'teacher-student relations' and 'instruction' were identified as the current enablers while the themes of school location, school administration, teachers, curricular and extra-curricular activities and resources were stated as the current barriers.

**Keywords:** Empowerment, Student Empowerment, Learner Empowerment, Higher Education.

## ÖZ

### TÜRKİYE’DEKİ BİR DEVLET ÜNİVERSİTESİNİN İNGİLİZCE HAZIRLIK PROGRAMINDAKİ ÖĞRENCİLERİN GÜÇLENME ALGISI ÜZERİNE BİR ANKET ÇALIŞMASI

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Bu çalışma, bir devlet üniversitesindeki İngilizce Hazırlık Programı öğrencilerinin güçlenme algılarını ortaya koymayı amaçlamıştır. Aynı zamanda, güçlenme algılarının cinsiyet ve başarı değişkenleri açısından farklılık gösterip göstermediği incelenmiştir. Bunlara ek olarak, araştırmada, öğrencinin güçlenmesini sağlayan etkenler ve buna yönelik engellerin öğrencilerin perspektifinden keşfedilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu çalışma ile, öğrencilerin güçlenme algılarını iyileştirmek için müfredat ve ders dışı etkinlikler yoluyla ne tür eylemlerin gerçekleştirilebileceğine ilişkin ışık tutulmaya çalışılmıştır.

Bu amaçla, araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen “Öğrenci Güçlenmesi Anketi” ile kesitsel anket araştırma deseni kullanılmıştır. Anketin Cronbach alfa değeri .91 olarak bulunmuştur. Alt ölçeklerin güvenilirlik kat sayılarının ise .75 ile .94 arasında olduğu



belirlenmiştir. Geliştirilen bu anket, İngilizce Hazırlık Programının rastgele seçilen sınıflarındaki 366 öğrenciye uygulanmıştır.

Bulgular, anketin genelinden elde edilen puan ortalamalarına göre öğrencilerin ‘orta düzey’ bir güçlenme seviyesine sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Cinsiyet değişkenine göre kadın ve erkek öğrenciler arasında güçlenmeye ilişkin genel puan ortalamalarında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark bulunmazken, başarı değişkenine göre gruplar arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir farkın olduğu gözlenmiştir. Anketin alt ölçeklerinde ise Seçim, Etki ve Akademik Öz yeterlik boyutları üzerinde başarı değişkeninin anlamlı bir etkisi olduğu saptanmıştır.

Öğrencilerin güçlenmesini sağlayan ve engelleyen etkenleri saptamaya yönelik içerik analizi sonuçlarına göre, mevcut 'öğretmen-öğrenci ilişkileri' ve 'öğretim' temaları güçlenmeye katkı sağlarken; okulun konumu, okul yönetimi, öğretmenler, okul kaynakları, müfredat ve ders dışı etkinlikler temalarının güçlenmeyi engellediği ortaya konmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Güçlenme, Öğrenci Güçlenmesi, Öğrenen Güçlenmesi, Yüksek Öğretim.

*To my dearest family and my lovely students*

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter aims to present a general overview of the study. After providing some background information, the purpose and the significance of the study are discussed in detail. The last part presents the operational definitions of the terms used in this research.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Empowerment has become a widely used term in various scientific fields such as management, community psychology, sociology and education. The empowerment studies in educational setting had its origins in the organizational management research which focused on the relationship between employer and employees and searched for ways to produce high quality work (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Spreitzer, 1995; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Being inspired by these studies, educationalists also conceptualized empowerment in the instructional context and aimed to gain academic success by performing empowering practices (Frymier & Shulman, 1994; Frymier et al., 1996; Frymier & Houser, 2009; Schrodt et al., 2008; Schultz & Shulman, 1993).

Empowerment in education is defined as a philosophy opposed to the traditional bureaucratic paradigm which promotes hierarchy in the system and assigns more power to the authority by ignoring student voice (Shulman & Luechauer, 1991). Although the traditional bureaucratic system has been adopted by many schools, the current visions of this century supports the empowerment of students for the future (Maehr & Midgley, 1996) through a process in which students are involved in decision making processes by having a voice in school related matters and they are taught social skills like leadership and collaboration (Sullivan, 2002). This paradigm shift is necessary and can be successful in condition that schools internalize the values of

empowerment philosophy as a school policy before practicing it (Duhon-Haynes, 1996). The main understanding of this new paradigm is based on respecting students and trusting their capability and competence to take control of their learning. After adopting empowerment philosophy with its values, the schools need to identify the disempowering factors and replace them with the enablers promoting intrinsic motivation to learn, self-efficacy in general and academic domains and ownership (Shulman & Luechauer, 1991).

Besides academic concerns, another reason for the growing emphasis on student empowerment might be the fact that empowered students are more likely to have an impact on their individual, social and political worlds (Banks, 1991). In that sense, higher education institutions are expected to be the places where young adults are equipped with necessary skills that will lead to social and political improvements in their environment. This positive change can be achieved through curricular and extra-curricular practices that will help students accomplish certain empowered outcomes.

Although the empowered outcomes being the consequences of empowerment processes are context specific (Zimmerman, 1990) and may differ in different educational contexts, the most common empowered outcomes proposed in literature as the evidence of empowerment consist of some intrapersonal outcomes such as competence, self-determination, impact and voice, interpersonal skills like leadership and cooperation, interactional outcomes such as critical awareness and behavioural outcomes like participation in school practices (Kirk, 2012). It is possible to achieve these outcomes only if the school implements empowering practices consciously and permanently in the empowerment process (Ashcroft, 1987).

Although earlier empowerment studies in education only focused on the students' sense of empowerment in the classroom context and how it affected their learning or academic achievement (Frymier & Shulman, 1994; Frymier et al., 1996; Frymier & Houser, 2009; Schrodt et al., 2008), student empowerment refers to more than that as it is significant for students' personal, intellectual and educational development (Duhon-Haynes, 1996). In this sense, higher education institutions have a

responsibility for preparing students for active participation in both school and society by helping them to be productive members. Moreover, students also need to know how to empower others in order to be able to survive in today's organizations and this can be achieved through creating an open and collaborative environment in which both faculty and students embrace empowerment as an educational vision and mission (Shulman & Luechauer, 1991).

The small body of empowerment literature in education comprises some student empowerment studies which conceptualized empowerment as a motivation based construct and mostly focused on its relation to academic success and some similar self-constructs (Çakır & Erdoğan, 2014; Çakır, 2015; Diaz et al., 2016; Frymier & Shulman, 1994; Frymier et al., 1996; Frymier & Houser, 2009; Kirk et al., 2016; Mohaiyadin et al., 2013; Schrodts et al., 2008; Schrodts & Finn, 2012; Schultz & Shulman, 1993; Zraa et al., 2011). However, these studies were restricted to the classroom environment and mainly investigated learners' sense of empowerment in relation to classroom related factors such as teacher behaviours and use of power in the classroom. Based on the results, some instructional implications and practices were recommended regarding teacher-student relations in the classroom context. Therefore, the results and implications provided by these studies can be considered to be very limited to understand the nature of student empowerment and its dimensions.

Although there is a small number of studies extending the context to school wide with a broader point of view and aiming to understand the nature of empowerment from students' perspective (Aloysius, 2013; Back, 2014; Bruntona & Jeffrey, 2014; Kirk, 2012; McQuillan, 2005; Sullivan, 2002), these researches were carried out either in the primary or secondary education context or mainly targeted minority students building on Freire's ideas. Since the context and population of each study was different, they proposed different ideas on the nature and dimensions of empowerment due to its context-based construct (Zimmerman, 1995). Therefore, student empowerment in higher education still remains as a field to be investigated.

Most of the empowerment studies in educational settings have investigated students' sense of empowerment by adopting the empowerment theories in the field of psychology. Since the main purpose is to measure the perceptions of students on empowerment, these theories in psychology have served as a guidance for student empowerment studies in education. Recognizing the context-driven nature of empowerment, there has been a very few efforts to develop a new scale measuring students' sense of empowerment particularly in ethnically diverse educational settings based on the empowerment theories in psychology (Back, 2014; Frymier et al., 1996). However, there is still a need for developing a valid and reliable measure in order to explore the present empowerment perceptions of students and also to evaluate the effectiveness of empowering practices or interventions in the empowerment process.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to reveal to what extent the English Preparatory Program students in a state university perceive themselves empowered and to find out whether their empowerment perceptions differ in terms of their gender and language achievement scores. Additionally, the study aims to explore the factors enabling student empowerment and the barriers to it from students' perspective. The results attempt to shed light on what kind of actions can be taken through curricular and extra-curricular activities in order to improve students' empowerment perceptions.

In this regard, the research questions are as follows:

1. To what extent do the students studying at an English Preparatory Program of a state university feel themselves empowered?
2. Do the students' empowerment levels significantly differ in terms of gender and achievement?
3. Do the students' perceptions in the subdimensions of empowerment significantly differ in terms of gender and achievement?

4. What factors do students perceive as enablers of and barriers to their empowerment?

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

Although empowerment studies were initially carried out in organizational research (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990), it has been examined in the instructional context as well (Çakır & Erdoğan, 2014; Çakır, 2015; Diaz et al., 2016; Frymier et al., 1996; Frymier & Houser, 2009; Frymier & Shulman, 1994; Kirk et al., 2016; Mohaiyadin et al., 2013; Schrodt et al., 2008; Schrodt & Finn, 2012; Schultz & Shulman, 1993; Zraa et al., 2011). These studies mainly focused on learner empowerment rather than student empowerment by restricting the concept to the classroom setting. However, in the context of higher education, studying student empowerment only in the classroom context may not provide adequate information as their empowerment perceptions are likely to be influenced by some other factors. Therefore, this study aims to reveal to what extent the English Preparatory Program students feel themselves empowered in the study context by utilizing a new scale developed for higher education context by the researcher. Since there is a lack of measure to assess students' sense of empowerment, it is likely to contribute to the literature with this newly constructed scale.

Additionally, this study aims to explore the nature of empowerment, its dimensions, the enablers and the barriers in the process from students' point of view. The data obtained from focus groups and open-ended survey questions will contribute new insights and perspectives to the concept of student empowerment.

Lastly, this study attempts to shed light on what kind of actions can be taken through curricular and extra-curricular activities in order to improve students' empowerment perceptions in the study context and some educational implications will be recommended based on the study results.

## 1.4 Definitions of Key Terms

The operational definitions for the terms used in this study are provided below.

*Student empowerment:* Student empowerment is a process that provides opportunities and conditions by which students gain the required skills and motivation to succeed academically, have a voice in both setting their learning goals and institutional matters, and also build strong and supportive relationships within the school.

*General self-efficacy:* General self-efficacy refers to one's generalized competence belief in his abilities (Chen et al., 2001).

*Academic self-efficacy:* Academic self-efficacy signifies one's confidence in performing a given academic task successfully (Schunk, 1991).

*Impact:* Impact refers to one's belief that his actions or ideas will influence or make a difference in his environment (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

*Choice:* Choice signifies one's sense of having a voice in his environment and taking responsibility for his actions (Kirk, 2012; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

*Facilitating others' empowerment:* Facilitating others' empowerment refers to one's ability and tendency to empower others by providing them with supports to participate more (Christens, 2012).

*Critical awareness:* It refers to one's awareness of problems and also power structures within his environment (Zimmerman, 1995).

*Problem solving competence:* Problem solving competence refers to one's belief and trust in his abilities to solve existing problems in his environment (Heppner & Baker, 1997).

*Participation:* Participation refers to one's actual participatory behaviours in school's curricular and extra-curricular activities and governance (Kirk, 2012; Zimmerman, 1995).

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, it is aimed to provide a theoretical background for the concept of empowerment and student empowerment in particular by reviewing all relevant studies in literature. After introducing the concept in general, the relation between power and empowerment is discussed and then the existing concepts of empowerment are presented through a review of studies from various fields. Empowerment in the educational context is discussed in the third part with relevant studies restricted to the classroom setting. The efforts for distinguishing empowerment from other similar constructs are presented in the following part. The next part mainly presents the studies that conceptualize student empowerment from a broader perspective and discusses it as a philosophy, process and outcome. The last part provides a brief summary of this chapter.

#### **2.1 The Concept of Empowerment**

Empowerment is a term that has been used in a wide range of scientific field such as community psychology, business management, education, women studies and sociology (Lincoln et al., 2002). Because of its use in a large variety of social science fields without a precise definition, some researches called the term as a ‘buzzword’ referring to different conceptions in each study (Rogers et al., 1997). However, a clear understanding on empowerment concept is essential within the framework of this study. To this aim, various conceptualizations of empowerment existing in the small but growing body of empowerment literature will be discussed by providing some examples for empowerment studies in education and other fields. This will lead the researcher to provide a well-formulated definition for student empowerment and its dimensions.

While most of the empowerment studies mainly have focused on the sense of empowerment underlining its psychological aspect, a few studies have also discussed the relation of power and empowerment in their conceptualization attempts. Since power is one of the concerns in the educational setting, it is necessary to examine the concepts of power and empowerment before discussing empowerment in the instructional context.

### **2.1.1 Power and Empowerment**

In general sense, if power means authority, empowerment may refer to giving power. In this sort of conceptualization, empowering is defined as delegating authority (Burke, 1986). However, this point of view was questioned by some empowerment researchers. According to Conger and Kanungo (1988), the fact that delegating authority with subordinates would empower subordinates was questionable. They conceptualized power in the motivational sense and defined empowerment as enabling power rather than delegating it. They emphasized the importance of subordinates' feelings and asserted that empowerment could not be achieved without improving their sense of self-efficacy.

Likewise, Thomas and Velthouse (1990) conceptualized power as 'energy' and empowerment as 'energizing'. They defined empowerment as a motivation-based construct that was made up of some certain cognitive dimensions.

Zimmerman (1995), known for his psychological empowerment theory, distinguished power from empowerment by underlining the fact that empowerment embodies sense of control, critical awareness and participation while power only suggests authority. He asserted that having an authority or power is not essential to feel empowered. Gruber and Trickett's (1987) study results supports this idea. The study found that although the parents and students in an alternative school were not given a real power to make changes in the school and the final decisions were made by the school authorities, they felt themselves empowered because of their belief in influencing school policy. Based on this example, Zimmerman stated that being more informed,



more skilled and more involved in decision-making process is essential for empowerment rather than having actual power in a particular context (1995).

Sullivan's study (2002) aimed to understand the nature of empowerment and its relation to three forms of power which were namely power-over as a negative form, power-to and power-with as two positive forms of power as previously proposed by Ashcroft (1987). Power-over relationship was the one in which one side is dominated by the other. In power-with relationships, both sides are equal. Power-to, on the other hand, is related to one's perception on his capability to act. Based on the study results, Sullivan stated that in the classroom context, students having both power-to and power-with senses were more likely to be more empowered. Kreisberg (1992) had also investigated the nature of power and its relationship to empowerment by highlighting the difference between power-with and power-over.

Sharing power has been a concern and discussed in the educational setting. For instance, according to Foucault (1980), power did not refer to a top-down form of control or a system of domination in which one group exercises power over the other group. The system of power was like a spider web formed the relations within a context. Freire (1970), a representative of critical pedagogy, also emphasized the equality between teacher and student by being opposed to traditional 'banking education' in which students were passive receivers of knowledge.

To sum up, the concept of power has been discussed in literature from various point of views and each concept of power has provided a basis for defining what empowerment means and how it can be achieved.

### **2.1.2 Efforts of Conceptualizing Empowerment**

Most of the earliest empowerment studies were carried out in the context of workplace and mainly focused on the managerial practices rather than the perceptions of workers. Some managerial practices were suggested to increase the effectiveness and to provide high quality work. However, in the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century some researchers

focused on the psychological aspect of empowerment by trying to understand the cognitive process of the concept.

Conger and Kanungo (1988) were one of those highlighting the role of workers' perceptions within the work context. In their research they intended to conceptualize the term 'empowerment' by recognizing the lack of literature on the concept. They defined empowerment as a motivation-based process through which self-efficacy perceptions of the members in an organization were to be supported. They asserted that this could be achieved through determining and removing the factors of powerlessness.

Building on the ideas of Conger and Kanungo (1988), Thomas and Velthouse (1990) conceptualized empowerment as an intrinsic task motivation. According to them, the concept of power referred to energy and empowering the workers was energizing them to produce high quality work. To this aim, Thomas and Velthouse (1990) proposed a cognitive model of empowerment. They identified four types of task assessment that needed to be considered to empower workers. One of these task assessments determining workers' motivation was competence. It referred to the person's belief in accomplishing a task. Meaningfulness, on the other hand, was related to the task's relevancy to the person's goals and his fulfilment in it. Impact was defined as the person's belief that his action would change the situation or make a difference. Lastly, choice referred to one's self-determination by controlling and taking responsibility of the task. This cognitive model provided a basis for some empowerment studies in education because of the relationship between learning and motivation.

As psychological empowerment gained importance in the organizational research, the need for a reliable and valid measure was apparent to assess the empowerment levels of workers. Spreitzer (1995) contributed to the literature by developing a scale measuring psychological empowerment of employees in the context of workplace. The researcher adopted the definition of Thomas and Velthouse (1990) and explained the term as a motivation based construct having four dimensions, namely meaning, competence, impact and self-determination. Spreitzer (1995) also proposed a

nomological network that included antecedents and consequences of empowerment. In the proposed network, the antecedents were the work context and the individual traits specified as self-esteem and locus of control. The consequences, on the other hand, was proposed to be effectiveness and innovative behaviour. Spreitzer (1995) tested the reliability and validity of the scale by conducting a study among middle class and lower class employees. The results indicated evidence for its internal consistency and validity to be used in the field of organizational management research.

Zimmerman (1995) also proposed a nomological network for psychological empowerment which was referring to the individual level of analysis of empowerment. The theory is based on the assumption that psychological empowerment, being not a static trait, changes continuously over time. Another assumption is that empowerment appears in different forms depending on the population and context as Rappaport stated before (1984). Hence, empowerment was conceptualized as a dynamic contextually driven construct.

In his theory of psychological empowerment, Zimmerman (1995) underlined the distinction between empowering processes and empowered outcomes. According to his theory, empowering processes refer to those through which people are provided with opportunities to influence, control and gain control over their lives. Empowered outcomes, on the other hand, are the results of those efforts put in the empowering process. Because of context dependency of the construct, it was highlighted that the empowering practices or interventions in the process of empowerment and the empowered outcomes to be achieved at the end would differentiate across different contexts and population. For this reason, constructing a global measure would not be appropriate to assess empowerment. However, Zimmerman (1995) suggested to construct a scale based on the specific demands and the characteristics of a population in a certain context to find out more about how empowering the contexts are and to assess the efficiency of certain interventions performed for enhancing empowerment.

Zimmerman's (1995) nomological network for psychological empowerment consists of three components which are intrapersonal, interactional and behavioural. The

intrapersonal component refers to a person's self-perceptions such as efficacy, control, competence and motivation to achieve and influence the things in different spheres of life. These perceptions serve as key elements leading to engage in behaviours to achieve desired outcomes. The interactional component, on the other hand, refers to a person's cognitive understanding and learning about his own context. It is considered as a bridge between the intrapersonal and behavioural components. This component of empowerment involves critical awareness which refers to one's understanding his own context as proposed by Freire (1973), his knowledge and abilities to achieve desired outcomes. Decision-making, problem-solving, and leadership skills are identified as some examples for these skills. Lastly, the behavioural component of empowerment involves some actions or behaviours to be achieved as a result of empowering practices or interventions in the process. These behaviours mainly reflect active participation and being involved in collaborative works depending on the context and population characteristics.

Zimmerman (1995) underlined the multidimensional structure of empowerment and the importance of evaluating empowerment as a whole by taking all three components together because of their interrelatedness. The relationship between intrapersonal and behavioural component had been tested in a study conducted by Zimmerman et al. (1992) and the results had supported this proposition. However, the interactional component had not been included in the study. For this reason, Zimmerman suggested further research that would account three components of empowerment together.

While most of the empowerment measures solely aimed to measure intrapersonal dimension of empowerment (Spreitzer, 1995; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990), Speer and Peterson (2000) developed a multidimensional scale for community organizing context. This scale involved all three dimensions of psychological empowerment as previously proposed by Zimmerman (1995) as intrapersonal, interactional and behavioural components. In this research, the components of empowerment were identified as emotional, cognitive and behavioural based on existing studies. Each dimension was represented by some subscales adapted from other related scales in literature. The subscales of emotional dimension were Perceived Leadership

Competence and Political Efficacy. The cognitive dimension was measured by the subscales of Power Developed through Relationship, Political Functioning and Shaping Ideology. Lastly, the behavioural dimension was a single factor structure. The scale involved 27 items and was piloted among 974 randomly selected participants in community-organizing context. The analysis results provided enough evidence for its validity and reliability indicating a moderate correlation between the factors.

Building on Zimmerman's nomological network (1995), some studies on psychological empowerment have been carried out to test its validity and to contribute to his theory. Christens's work is one of these studies aiming to extend Zimmerman's theory (2012). Christens proposed that psychological empowerment was made up of four components, namely intrapersonal component referring to the emotional dimension, interactional component referring to the cognitive dimension, behavioural component and interpersonal component referring to the relational dimension of empowerment. Christens stated that since empowerment was context specific, the relations in any context were required to be considered while evaluating psychological empowerment. The researcher identified five elements of relational component of empowerment. These elements were collaborative competence, bridging social divisions, facilitating others empowerment, network mobilization, and passing on a legacy.

The literature review yielded some attempts aiming to operationalize a relevant definition for empowerment in different contexts. For instance, Rogers et al. (1997) aimed to provide a definition for empowerment and a valid scale that could be used in mental health research. Unlike other empowerment studies, the researchers worked collaboratively with the participants to define empowerment and its dimensions rather than solely building on the existing literature on psychological empowerment. The definition of empowerment and the attributes of an empowered mental health user were determined by a board made up of 10 leaders of consumer movement. The board members were asked to define empowerment and its dimensions in relation their context. Based on their definition, 48 items were generated for the scale. It was administered among 100 participants who were the consumers of self-help programs.

The factor analysis results yielded five factors named as self-efficacy / self-esteem, power / powerlessness, community activism / autonomy, optimism / control over the future, and righteous anger. After necessary analyses, 28 items were determined to be retained in the latest version of the scale. The overall empowerment scores were analysed in relation to some demographic variables, quality of life, income, traditional mental health services and community activism. The results indicated a positive correlation between empowerment and quality of life, income and community activism while it was negatively correlated with traditional mental health services. The demographic variables, on the other hand, were not found to be related to empowerment.

Another research aiming to understand the nature of empowerment was carried out by Greasley et al. (2008). They conducted a qualitative study to understand empowerment from the perspective of employees. It was asserted that most of empowerment studies in the workplace were performed based on the ideas and definitions of management rather than the employees. However, how employees perceive empowerment was likely to differ from management and it would not appropriate to evaluate the employees' level of empowerment by a measure constructed in the light of management opinions. Therefore, the aim of the study was to understand the nature of empowerment from employees' point of view. To this aim, 45 interviews were conducted with 15 employees from construction sector. Personal responsibility and control over the work were the most reported issues emerged in the interviews. Some other related constructs such as problem solving, decision making, influence and willingness were also underlined by the participants. According to the researchers, it was remarkable that although most of the academic papers discussed the importance of power in relation to empowerment, the participants in this study did not refer to the concept of power while describing empowerment. However, they emphasized the importance of decision making and autonomy. According to the analysis results, the employees felt themselves empowered to some extent while they demanded more control, autonomy and responsibility for decision making.

Although the abovementioned studies are all related to the concept of empowerment in the fields of organizational research and psychology, they provide a basis for how to explore the nature of empowerment identify its dimensions.

## **2.2 Empowerment in Educational Context**

Although the concept empowerment has widely been studied in the workplace context to investigate the employer-employee relationship, it has also been one of the concerns of education since 1990s. Educationalists has studied empowerment in the instructional setting and investigated it in relation to several variables.

The small body of literature comprises empowerment studies most of which focused on empowerment as an educational outcome and aimed to measure it (Çakır & Erdoğan, 2014; Çakır, 2015; Diaz et al., 2016; Frymier & Shulman, 1994; Frymier et al., 1996; Frymier & Houser, 2009; Kirk et al., 2016; Mohaiyadin et al., 2013; Schrodt et al., 2008; Schrodt & Finn, 2012; Schultz & Shulman, 1993; Zraa et al., 2011). A few of these studies intended to explore the nature of empowerment and its dimensions in the instructional context (Aloysius, 2013; Back, 2014; Bruntona & Jeffrey, 2014; Kirk, 2012; McQuillan, 2005; Sullivan, 2002). These studies mainly investigated learner empowerment in relation to various variables and provided some implications for instructional setting to achieve certain empowerment outcomes. Most of these studies used the term ‘learner empowerment’ by conceptualizing empowerment as a motivational construct (Frymier & Shulman, 1994; Frymier et al., 1996) and restricting it to the classroom environment. On the other hand, there was a small number of studies extending the context to school wide with a broader point of view and using the term ‘student empowerment’ instead of learner empowerment (Aloysius, 2013; Back, 2014; Bruntona & Jeffrey, 2014; Kirk, 2012; McQuillan, 2005; Sullivan, 2002). However, the literature review of empowerment studies in education has indicated the fact that the terms of learner empowerment and student empowerment has been used as interchangeable. For this reason, the following parts initially aim to review education-related empowerment studies carried out within the classroom context and then present the studies that explored student empowerment from a broad perspective.

### **2.2.1 Empowerment in the Classroom**

The earliest empowerment studies in the instructional context emerged in the very beginning of 1990s. One of these researches that provided a basis for most of other studies was conducted by Frymier et al. (1996). In this study the researchers adopted Conger and Kanungo's (1988) concept of empowerment which was defined as an organization's effectiveness and they proposed that the classroom could also be considered as a kind of organization and its effectiveness could be increased through empowerment of learners. As there was no available empirically formulated definition for learner empowerment, Frymier and Shulman (1994) first strived to provide a definition for learner empowerment. They conceptualized empowerment as an intrinsic motivation construct as it had been proposed by Thomas and Velthouse (1990) who had identified the cognitive elements of empowerment as competence, meaningfulness, impact and choice. Frymier and Shulman (1994) also agreed with Glasser (1990) about the similarity in the relationship between teacher-student and manager-employee due to the motivational base of empowerment.

The initial study for developing a learner empowerment scale was conducted as an extended work of Schultz and Shulman (1993) on empowerment in corporate organizations. Frymier and Shulman (1994) adapted the scale which was developed and administered in the classroom setting for the first time by Schultz and Shulman (1993). Based on Thomas and Velthouse's ideas on cognitive elements of empowerment, Schultz and Shulman's (1993) job empowerment scale consisted of four dimensions which were named as competence, meaningfulness, impact and choice. However, the results of factor analysis on the adapted scale indicated three dimensions of empowerment. The dimension of choice did not appear as a factor in the study conducted among college students by Frymier and Shulman (1994). The contextual difference between an educational setting and a workplace was proposed as the reason of this differentiation in the scale construction. Additionally, after an in-depth examination of the scale items, Frymier et al. (1996) realized that some items were assessing empowering practices rather than students' feeling of being empowered. Therefore, they decided to revise some items in the scale by underlining



the distinction between the expressions of 'empowering' and 'empowered'. It was emphasized that learners could feel empowered through experiencing empowering classroom practices. That is, while these practices would be described as empowering, being empowered was related to the learner's sense of empowerment. For this reason, the scale should have consisted of the items measuring how empowered learners were feeling rather than how empowering the classroom practices were.

The revised scale consisted of 38 Likert type items and was piloted among college students to ensure its construct validity (Frymier et al., 1996). The results indicated the existence of three dimensions which were named as competence meaningfulness and impact. Competence was defined as the student's sense of efficacy while performing a task. Meaningfulness was related to the relevancy of the content and a student's sense of satisfaction with the content or task in terms of his goals. Impact, on the other hand, referred to a student's sense of control and influence over his learning experiences and his belief for making a difference. According to Frymier et al.'s (1996) conceptualization of empowerment, a student's sense of competency in fulfilling a task, having a feeling of control over his learning and sense of satisfaction with the content would result in high quality of learning (Frymier et al., 1996).

Frymier et al. (1996) also aimed to investigate the relationship between students' sense of learner empowerment and some other concepts which were determined as motivation, teacher immediacy, relevance and learning. The findings suggested a positive correlation between empowerment and state motivation rather than trait motivation. That is, the empowerment level of the students could be affected by the learning environment or the conditions. Additionally, the results showed that teacher immediacy referring to a teacher's relational closeness to students had a correlation with learner empowerment. Both verbal and nonverbal immediacy were found to be positively correlated with learner empowerment. Thus, it was suggested that teacher's communication behaviours had a significant effect on students' sense empowerment (Frymier et al., 1996). The results also indicated a positive correlation between learner empowerment and relevance of the content or the task. Therefore, it was asserted that the teacher's efforts for relating the content or the task to the needs and goals of the

students would result in a higher empowerment level. Lastly, the findings also indicated that affective learning and the learning indicators prepared by the researchers (Frymier et al., 1996) were positively correlated with learner empowerment. Hence, it was suggested that more empowered students would be more successful in their academic studies.

Frymier and Houser (2009) extended their research on learner empowerment by examining the role of student characteristics and teacher behaviours. The aim was mainly to investigate the extent learner empowerment was predicted by these two variables. The student characteristics comprised of temperament and learner orientation while teacher behaviours consisted of teacher's nonverbal immediacy and clarity. A number of 397 university students participated in the study by responding the online survey which involved the scales measuring their sense of empowerment, perceptions on teacher's nonverbal immediacy and clarity, assessing their learner orientation and temperament. According to the results of hierarchical regression analysis, teacher behaviours were the primary predictors of learner empowerment while student characteristics had little effect on it.

Another study on learner empowerment was conducted by Schrodt et al. (2008). The researchers studied learner empowerment and teacher evaluation in relation to different forms of teacher power in higher education context. The aim was to test the hypothesis that learner empowerment was likely to be a mediator of teacher power and teacher evaluation. The sample of the study comprised of 1,416 college students taking communication courses at different universities in the United States. Learner Empowerment Scale (Frymier et al., 1996), Teacher Power Use Scale (Schrodt et al., 2007) and a departmental evaluation form were administered to gather data. Then structural equation modelling analysis was performed to test the hypothesis. The results indicated that learner empowerment was not a mediator of teacher power and instructor evaluation of the students. However, there was a positive correlation between learner empowerment and teacher evaluation. It was also found that referent and reward power as two prosocial forms of teacher power and legitimate power being an antisocial form significantly predicted learner empowerment. On the other hand,

teacher evaluation was predicted by referent, expert and coercive teacher power. Thus, referent power was the predictor of both learner empowerment and teacher evaluation. Regarding these results, it was suggested that learner empowerment could be enhanced if the instructor had an open and approachable attitude towards students by avoiding a superior one, showed commitment to them and motivated students intrinsically by recognizing and praising their efforts.

There were some other researches that mainly focused on the relationship between learner empowerment and the role of teacher behaviours on it. One of them was conducted by Schrodts and Finn (2012). Learner empowerment was examined in relation to students' perceived understanding, teacher clarity, nonverbal immediacy. The sample of the study consisted of 261 university students taking basic communication course. They were asked to respond Learner Empowerment Scale (Frymier et al., 1996), Teacher Clarity Short Inventory (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1998), Behavioral Indicators of Immediacy Scale (Richmond et al., 1987) and Students' Perception of Instructor Understanding Scale (Schrodts & Finn, 2012). After performing structural equation model, it was found that students' perceived understanding as a mediator was positively correlated with teacher clarity and nonverbal immediacy and it positively enhanced learner empowerment. According to the researchers, this positive correlation implied that when students had a positive perception on teacher's clarity and nonverbal immediacy, this resulted in students' perceived understanding and feeling of being empowered.

Student empowerment in relation to teacher behaviour was also studied by Çakır (2015) in higher education context. The purpose of the study was to investigate how authoritative approaches of the instructors predicted learner empowerment. A number of 322 university students selected through non-random sampling participated in the study. This quantitative study comprised of two scales measuring students' sense of learner empowerment and authoritative attitudes of their instructors. Teacher Democratic Attitudes Scale (Duman & Koç, 2004) was administered to explore how the students perceived their instructors' authoritative behaviours. The Turkish version of Learner Empowerment Scale (LES) which was adapted by Çakır and Erdoğan

(2014) from its original version (Frymier et al., 1996) was employed to gather data. The adapted scale had been piloted among a sample of university students ( $n = 271$ ) to ensure its construct validity through exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). According to EFA results, the adapted scale demonstrated three factors, namely Impact ( $\alpha = .90$ ), Competency ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and Meaningfulness ( $\alpha = .90$ ) as in the original version after the elimination of 12 items because of cross loading. Thus, the latest version of the scale consisted of 23 items. The CFA results also supported the validity of the scale for Turkish culture. Lastly, the Cronbach's Alpha was found to be .94 for the whole scale. In this study, the conceptualization of learner empowerment as a motivational construct (Frymier et al., 1996) was adopted by Çakır (2015). Authoritative teachers, on the other hand, were defined as those creating a learning environment where students adjust the classroom rules and regulate their behaviour through explaining the rationale for these rules (Snowman & Biehler, 2003). According to the results of multiple regression analysis, learner empowerment was predicted by authoritative teacher behaviours. Regarding the three dimensions of learner empowerment, authoritative approach accounted for larger variance in meaningfulness dimension (48%). It was concluded that teachers' positive instructional practices were likely to enhance students' sense of empowerment.

A mixed method study was conducted among undergraduate students who were English language learners (ELL) and English-speaking students pursuing their academic studies at university (Diaz et al., 2016). The study was mainly on teacher power and its impact on learner empowerment according to two groups of students. The aim was to explore how these students perceived teacher power and its effect on their sense of learner empowerment. The quantitative data were collected through Learner Empowerment Scale (Frymier et al., 1996) and The Teacher Power Use Survey (TPUS) (Schrodt, Witt & Turman, 2007). The qualitative data consisted of in-depth interviews with selected 20 ELL students. The Learner Empowerment scale involved three sub-scales as competence, impact and meaningfulness. The results indicated a significant impact of teacher power on the students' sense of learner

empowerment. Regarding teacher power having five types as coercive, expert, legitimate, referent and reward (Schrodt et al., 2008), the results showed that while expert, referent and reward types of power had a positive contribution to learner empowerment, coercive and legitimate types of power negatively contributed to it. Similarly, the themes emerging from the content analysis were identified as the characteristics of a good teacher, the characteristics of a bad teacher and what teacher should do. The sub-themes under these identified themes also supported the results of the quantitative data analysis. According to the students, a good teacher was the one who encouraged, motivated, listened and understood them by being strict and fair at the same time. On the other hand, a bad teacher was described as being close-minded, having a negative attitude in his language and actions and avoiding interaction with students. The analysis results also showed that ELL students had significantly lower sense of academic competence compared to English-speaking students. This idea was also supported by the qualitative data obtained from interviews. ELL students identified language and cultural differences as hindering factors of empowerment and their academic success.

Some researchers investigated student empowerment in relation to academic achievement and instructional practices. One of these studies was conducted in Malaysia with a sample of accounting students ( $n = 232$ ) in order to find out the relationship between students' empowerment perceptions, academic performance in accounting and their accounting technical skills (Mohaiyadin et al., 2013). It was a quantitative study in which the data were collected through a questionnaire consisting of a scale for empowerment (Frymier et al., 1996) and a scale for accounting technical skills. The results did not indicate a correlation between students' empowerment perceptions and their accounting performance. However, students' performance was found to be correlated with their accounting technical skills. When the empowerment scores of male and female students were compared, it was seen that their perceptions of empowerment did not significantly differ from each other. Likewise, the results indicated no significant difference among the levels of grade point averages (GPA).

A mixed study was also conducted among accounting students ( $n = 162$ ) in a college in Australia (Zraa et al., 2011). The aim was to explore whether the students' sense of empowerment was associated with their course perceptions, academic achievement scores and the type of instruction in the classroom. The quantitative data were collected by Learner Empowerment Scale (Frymier et al., 1996) and the scale of Students Perceptions of Accounting Course (Geiger & Ogilby, 2000). The qualitative data were obtained from classroom observations and interviews with students and lecturers. The analysis on the quantitative data indicated a positive correlation between the students' course perceptions and their sense of empowerment. That is, the students having positive attitudes towards the accounting course felt more empowered. Likewise, a significant relation was found between learner empowerment and instruction type. The analysis on the qualitative data revealed the fact that the students had higher empowerment scores in the classrooms where the teacher was a facilitator promoting group works. Their sense of impact was significantly higher than the students being taught by traditional instruction methods. Lastly, the final grades of the students were analysed to investigate its association with empowerment. According to the results, academic achievement was not correlated with learner empowerment. That is, the students having a high sense of empowerment did not do well in the exams while those having high academic achievement scores did not perceive themselves much empowered.

Student empowerment was also conceptualized within critical pedagogy perspective. An action study conducted among seventh grade EFL students ( $n = 30$ ) aimed to promote student empowerment through collaborative learning practices of dialogical approach (Contreras León, & Chapetón Castro, 2017). In this study, it was aimed to transform the traditional banking of education into the dialogical education which rejected the teacher's role of transferring knowledge and supported the equality in the interaction between teacher and student for social construction of knowledge (Freire, 2002). From this perspective, social awareness and personal growth were asserted as the aims of student empowerment process. The analysis results of the qualitative data showed that collaborative learning practices performed in this action study helped the

students realize their potentials and realities. It was proposed that the democratic practices in the classroom, group works, the relevancy of the content and the balance in the interaction between teacher and student all contributed to the students' sense of autonomy, leadership, social awareness and citizenship. Hence, student empowerment could be achieved through collaborative learning practices of critical pedagogy.

Another study built on Freire's ideas on the transformed roles of student and teacher was conducted by Kirk et al. (2016) to identify the individual and classroom predictors of student empowerment. Based on the previous results on classroom predictors (Kirk, 2012), teacher-student relationship categorized as trust, communication and alienation was tested as one of these predictors. It was found that higher level of learner empowerment assessed by Frymier et al.'s Learner Empowerment Scale (1996) was correlated with the relationship characterized by trust. Teacher power categorized as referent and coercive was also examined to test if learner empowerment could be predicted by this factor. The results indicated a correlation between teacher's use of referent power and higher level of empowerment. Lastly, students' sense of community in class was analysed and found that higher empowerment level was associated with students' positive sense of community. In short, empowered students were those who had a positive and equitable teacher-student relationship and higher sense of community in class. When individual and classroom predictors were analysed by hierarchical regression in order to find out which predicted student empowerment more, the results indicated that classroom factors accounted for 40% of the variance in student empowerment and could predict beyond individual factors. Additionally, students' participation in school activities and their self-reported grades were analysed as behavioural and academic indicators of empowerment. According to the results, there was a significant difference between the students having higher empowerment levels and lower empowerment levels in terms their reported grades and number of participation in school activities.

All these studies discussed above considered learner empowerment as a learning outcome and assessed it within the classroom context. The factors influencing the level of empowerment were also identified through both qualitative and quantitative data.

The interaction between teacher and student appeared to be the most common factor empowering and disempowering the students.

### **2.2.2 Empowerment and Related Constructs**

In most of the studies discussed in the previous part, the concept of empowerment was considered as a motivational construct (Frymier et al., 1996; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). However, some researchers thought that the distinction between empowerment and other related constructs such as motivation, autonomy, interest, self-efficacy, self-determination, competence was not clear (Brooks & Young, 2011; Mailloux, 2006; Weber & Patterson, 2000). Lee and Koh (2001) proposed that it was not appropriate to use the term of empowerment as a substitute for some self-related constructs since the concept of empowerment embodied the relationship between a supervisor and a subordinate unlike from other self-constructs. For this reason, the scope of empowerment was to be determined by providing a clear distinction between empowerment and other self-constructs so that the term would not be a buzzword because of its imprecise definition and its confusion with other similar constructs. They emphasized the uniqueness of empowerment and stated that the identification of the distinctions was necessary for the theoretical conceptualization of empowerment and its practical usage.

In the instructional context, autonomy was one these constructs studied in relation to learner empowerment. A study was conducted among nursing students to find out the relationship between learner empowerment and autonomy which were identified as two priorities of nursing education (Mailloux, 2006). A number of 198 nursing students in the USA participated in the research and the data were collected through selected scales measuring the students' sense of learner empowerment and autonomy. According to the results, students' sense of learner empowerment had a positive effect on their sense of autonomy. Thus, it was concluded that the more students felt empowered, the more they were autonomous.

Motivation was another construct examined in relation to empowerment. Frymier et al. (1996) had conceptualized empowerment as a broader concept of motivation and



had found out the correlation between empowerment and state motivation rather than trait motivation. However, Brooks and Young (2011) asserted that this relation needed to be examined as these two constructs overlapped each other. Therefore, they investigated the association between learner empowerment and motivation based on Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-determination Theory. Deci and Ryan defined self-determination as being intrinsically motivated and later proposed basic human needs which were autonomy, competence and relatedness (2002). Thomas and Velthouse (1990) had proposed the dimensions of empowerment by building on self-determination theory of Deci and Ryan (1985). As Frymier et al.'s conceptualization of learner empowerment (1996) was based on Thomas and Velthouse's cognitive elements of empowerment identified as meaningfulness, competence, impact and choice, Brooks and Young (2011) decided to examine the relationship between the concepts of motivation and empowerment. They conducted a study among 419 university students by administering the multidimensional Situational Motivation Scale (SIMS) (Guay et al., 2000) and Learner Empowerment Scale (Frymier et al., 1996). The results indicated a high correlation between the dimensions of motivation and learner empowerment. While the dimensions of learner empowerment were positively correlated with intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation dimensions were found to be negatively correlated with all dimensions of learner empowerment (Brooks and Young, 2011). It was concluded that the conceptualization of empowerment as a broader version of motivation by Frymier et al. (1996) was supported by these results.

The relationship between the concept of interest and empowerment was studied by Weber and Patterson (2000), who considered empowerment as an ambiguous concept because of its abstractly defined nature. They pointed out the conceptual overlap between the constructs of interest and empowerment. According to them, the dimensions of interest proposed as meaningful content, learner's involvement and his prior knowledge by Schiefele (1991) and Mitchell (1993) were similar to the dimensions of learner empowerment proposed as meaningfulness, impact and competence by Frymier et al. (1996). Therefore, Weber and Patterson (2000)

conducted a study to provide a clear understanding of the association between these two concepts. To this aim, they administered two scales measuring students' interest and learner empowerment. The results supported their claim by indicating a significant positive correlation between these concepts.

To sum up, the studies on empowerment in relation to autonomy, motivation and interest indicated that learner empowerment was positively correlated with all these constructs. It was concluded that learner empowerment could be enhanced through providing learning experiences that would provoke students' sense of autonomy, motivation and interest in the instructional setting.

### **2.3 Student Empowerment Studies from a Broader Perspective**

While most of empowerment studies in educational context were restricted to the classroom ignoring other contextual factors that would be effective in student empowerment, only a few researches strived to understand the nature of empowerment and to identify the contextual factors and their roles in student empowerment. These studies mainly focused on student empowerment rather than learner empowerment by approaching the issue from a broad perspective based on various theories.

One of the studies aiming to explore the nature of student empowerment was conducted by Sullivan in a primary school classroom (2002). The data obtained through ethnographic techniques such as interviews, field notes and classroom observations were analysed by content analysis. Based on the results, Sullivan defined student empowerment as a fragile and fluid concept since it did not seem static and required consistent effort of the teacher. The researcher proposed two dimensions of empowerment, namely intrapersonal and interpersonal. She explained intrapersonal empowerment as the capability of the student to be aware of his academic needs and goals and their ability to pursue them. Interpersonal empowerment, on the other hand, was related to the student's pursuit of social needs and goals. Sullivan concluded that both dimensions were essential for student empowerment (2002).

Another extended research on student empowerment was conducted by McQuillan (1995). He defined student empowerment as a collaborative process that schools promote conditions in which students gain the power needed to meet their individual needs and work with others to achieve collective goals. A theoretical conception of student empowerment proposed by McQuillan (2005) involved academic, political, and social dimensions of empowerment which were considered to be interrelated. Each dimension was derived from the study in which interviews and observations were conducted in two high schools for examining the student empowerment efforts of the schools through instructional, curricular and extracurricular practices. By relying on Cummins' (1986) ideas on empowered students and the findings of the study conducted in two schools, McQuillan (2005) defined the academic empowerment as a student's sense of confidence and motivation to succeed academically and control over setting their own learning goals with higher level cognitive skills. The political empowerment of students, on the other hand, referred to a student's sense of power and influence within school and having a say in institutional matters. According to McQuillan (2005), since these two dimensions of empowerment occurred in a context, it was inevitable to ignore the social dimension of empowerment as being one dimension of empowerment. It was proposed that social empowerment was enacted through promoting a supportive relation and a dialogue based on respect and trust among students and institutional agents. McQuillan (1995), embracing the ideas of Cummins (1986), who defined empowerment as a "mediating construct influencing academic performance and as an outcome variable itself", conceived empowerment as "means to an end as well as an end in and of itself". That is, empowerment was considered as both a process (Kirk, 2012; Zimmerman, 1995) and an outcome (Maton, 2008; Zimmerman, 1995).

The literature review on student empowerment yielded some researches carried out among minority students and international students recognizing the fact that these students' experiences in empowerment processes differ from the local students because of some contextual factors affecting their sense of empowerment.

One of these studies was a qualitative one conducted among the international student of a higher education institution in Malaysia (Aloysius, 2013). The aim of the study was to understand how the international students perceive the concept of empowerment and how their level of empowerment affected their performance at school. The participants ( $n = 8$ ) selected through purposive sampling were interviewed and the data obtained were analysed by content analysis. According to the results, the participants did not feel themselves empowered due to some problems in their relations with the staff. The cultural differences and the management policies were identified as disempowering factors. The students also underlined the importance of autonomy and being involved in decision making process as enablers of empowerment.

Another study aiming to find out the factors affecting empowerment of international students ( $n = 196$ ) was conducted among university students in New Zealand (Bruntona & Jeffrey, 2014). The students were sent an online survey which consisted of the sub-scales for belongingness, perceived relevance, cultural distance and prior knowledge. The multiple regression analysis results indicated that the most influential variable on empowerment was the prior knowledge measured by a language test. The analysis on the qualitative data collected through survey showed that the poor interaction with staff and local students was stated as an important factor for empowerment by the participants since it was believed to influence their sense of belongingness.

Another research on student empowerment was carried out among minority students in an institution of higher education (Back, 2014). The study aimed to define student empowerment from the perspectives of racial/ethnic minority students and to develop a student empowerment measure. Some themes were identified based on the data obtained from the with minority students. Subsequently, these themes served a basis for generating items for the newly developed scale. As Zimmerman had proposed in his empowerment framework, three levels of empowerment emerged which were named as individual level, university level and societal level. Based on the factor analysis results, four factors of student empowerment scale were identified as Supportive University Environment, Self-Efficacy/Control, Student Racial/Ethnic

Identity, and Financial Confidence. The study highlighted the importance of contextual factors on empowerment by focusing on the students' perspectives.

Empowering setting was another concern that led to more extended researches in which contextual factors were taken into consideration in order to create empowered students. Since empowered outcomes could be achieved through empowering processes which took place in an empowering setting (Maton, 2008), identifying the characteristics of an empowering environment emerged as a necessity.

As an attempt to provide necessary information about student empowerment in relation to school climate, critical pedagogy and empowering settings, Kirk (2012) conducted a case study in an urban high school. Based on the data obtained from interviews with the students and the staff, participant observation and focus groups, they proposed a student empowerment model in which some certain classroom and school characteristics were identified together with empowered outcomes from three dimensions, namely intrapersonal, interactional and behavioral. Regarding the empowering classroom characteristics, teacher belief in student success, positive sense of community, equitable teacher-student roles, engaging classroom practices and shared decision making were identified by the proposed model as a result of the qualitative data analysis. The school-wide characteristics, on the other hand, were identified as positive traditions, valued student leadership, embracing cultural diversity, adequate resources, teacher empowerment and staff sense of community (Kirk, 2012). According to this model, empowered outcomes were made up of intrapersonal, interactional and participatory behaviors as it had been proposed by Zimmerman's psychological empowerment theory (1995). Intrapersonal component of empowered outcomes included competence, impact, meaning and self-determination as proposed by Thomas and Velthouse (1990). Interactional component, on the other hand, involved awareness, academic skills, bonding and connectedness. Lastly, participatory behaviors consisted of attendance, student initiated dialogue, activity participation and governance as proposed by Finn (1989). Subsequently, the model was partly tested in a study conducted by Kirk et al. (2016). The aim was to find out how much individual, classroom, school characteristics predicted student empowerment level.

The results showed that empowered students were those who had a positive and equitable teacher-student relationship and higher sense of community in class. Additionally, a significant difference was found between the students having higher empowerment levels and lower empowerment levels in terms their reported grades and number of participation in school activities.

#### **2.4 Student Empowerment as a Philosophy**

The empowerment studies in the management and education literature have indicated the existence of a paradigm shift from traditional practices to the empowering one in order to achieve high quality work (Shulman & Luechauer, 1991). However, putting some empowering actions into practice without internalizing the understanding of the philosophy of empowerment does not adequately result in empowerment of the subordinates. Student empowerment needs to be considered as a philosophy (Duhon-Haynes, 1996) that schools have to develop a deep understanding before performing it. This is because it is considered as a paradigm shift from traditional bureaucratic system to a new one which prioritizes students' productivity and active participation (Shulman & Luechauer, 1991). Ashcroft (1987) also discusses empowerment as a philosophy and asserts that this may be challenging for teachers to change their traditional understanding and adopt this new paradigm. Empowerment as a philosophy is based on trust and belief in students' potential to take control of their learning and puts emphasis on students' involvement in teaching-learning process (Shulman & Luechauer, 1991). As it was stated by McQuillan (2005), empowerment can be enacted successfully in condition that we change our beliefs and values regarding the role of the student in the education system, not solely changing the traditional practices.

#### **2.5 Student Empowerment as a Process and Outcome**

Empowerment has been discussed as a process and an outcome in various study fields. Zimmerman (1995) emphasizes these two aspects of empowerment by making a clear distinction between them. According to him, empowering processes refer to those through which people are provided with opportunities to influence, control and gain

control over their lives. Empowered outcomes, on the other hand, are the results of those efforts in the empowering process. Since it is a context specific construct, empowering practices or interventions in the process of empowerment and empowered outcomes are likely to vary across different contexts and population (Rappaport, 1984; Zimmerman, 1995).

Empowerment is described as an iterative process having no beginning and end (Alsop et al., 2006) and contextual reflecting the characteristics of the setting and population. In the educational setting, empowerment process is an on-going process linking the characteristics of the environment to the empowered outcomes. (Kirk, 2012). This process needs to be consistent and conscious to accomplish empowered outcomes (Ashcroft, 1987). Through this process, students have a positive self-image and competence in decision making (Denti, 2012), take responsibility of their learning with an intrinsic motivation (Shulman & Luechauer, 1991)

As discussed earlier, empowered outcomes accomplished as a result of a successfully managed empowering process differ according to the context. However, Zimmerman proposes that these outcomes occur in three dimensions, namely intrapersonal, interactional and behavioural. Based on Zimmerman's theory, Kirk (2012) identifies the empowered outcomes in the educational context. According to their model, the intrapersonal outcomes are likely to involve competence, impact, meaning, self-determination while the interactional outcomes consist of awareness, academic skills and connectedness. Based on Finn's (1989) participation types, the behavioural outcomes include attendance, cooperation, participation, student-initiated dialogue and governance (Kirk, 2012).

In order to assess the effectiveness of the empowerment process, the empowered outcomes are to be evaluated regarding all three dimensions (Zimmerman, 1995). The empowered outcomes identified in a particular context can be assessed by a measure specifically developed according to the population and setting of the study (Zimmerman, 1995). In this study, the empowered outcomes to be measured by a

newly developed scale will be determined by consulting the students in the study context and the existing literature.

## **2.6 Summary of the Literature Review**

As literature review indicates, the term of empowerment has been studied in various scientific fields including education. The empowerment studies in education as listed in Table 2.1 have mostly benefitted from the studies in organizational research and conceptualized the term as a motivation-based construct having multi-dimensions. The idea was that students' high sense of competence to fulfil a task, feeling of impact on the learning environment, being involved in decision making process and being satisfied with the relevancy of the content was likely to result in academic success or high quality work. Most of these studies as have investigated learner empowerment in relation to various variables in the classroom context and provided instructional implications to achieve certain empowerment outcomes. In these studies, learners' sense of empowerment has been mostly discussed in relation to teacher-student relationship and teacher's communication behaviours by putting an emphasis on the intrapersonal outcomes of empowerment from a psychological perspective.

On the other hand, a few studies in educational context have intended to explore the nature of empowerment from a broader point of view. Building on Freire's critical pedagogy, most of these studies were conducted among ethnically diverse or minority groups in different educational settings. They aimed to find out these students' perceptions on empowerment and the existing barriers to it. Unlike from the studies which defined empowerment as a motivation-based construct and simply focused on the intrapersonal dimension of empowerment, in these studies student empowerment was examined from more than one dimension. While some of these studies investigated students' sense empowerment in terms of academic, social and political dimensions, some others discussed it from intrapersonal, interpersonal, interactional and behavioural dimensions. However, the main focus was on students' perceptions on empowerment regarding their academic competence, involvement in decision



making process, impact on issues of learning process, participation in activities and connectedness to the school community.

Empowerment has been also discussed as a philosophy, a process and an educational outcome. As a philosophy, empowerment was described as a new paradigm based on sharing power with students and their active involvement in learning process. This requires school principals and teachers to trust students with the belief that they have necessary competence to take responsibility to control the learning process. The empowering practices in the empowerment process are to be provided after developing a deep understanding on the concept of empowerment. Empowerment as an educational outcome can be achieved through empowering practices in the process.

The measurement of empowerment is another concern in various study fields. In educational setting, most of the studies have assessed intrapersonal dimension of empowerment within the classroom context by using one existing scale in literature. Recognizing the context-driven nature of empowerment, there has been a very few efforts to develop a new scale measuring students' sense of empowerment particularly in ethnically diverse educational settings. However, there is still a need for developing a valid and reliable measure in order to explore the present empowerment perceptions of students and also to evaluate the effectiveness of empowering practices or interventions in the empowerment process.

Table 2.1

*Student Empowerment Studies Covered in Literature Review*

Author	Method	Data Collection Tool	Participants
Frymier et al. (1996)	Survey	Questionnaire	Undergraduate Students
Frymier & Houser (2009)	Survey	Questionnaire	Undergraduate Students
Sullivan (2002)	Qualitative	Interview Field Notes Classroom Observation	Primary School Students
Schrodt et al. (2008)	Survey	Questionnaire	Undergraduate Students
Schrodt & Finn (2012)	Survey	Questionnaire	Undergraduate Students
Çakır & Erdoğan (2014)	Survey	Questionnaire	Undergraduate Students
Çakır (2015)	Survey	Questionnaire	Undergraduate Students
Diaz et al. (2016)	Mixed Method	Interview Questionnaire	Undergraduate Students
Mohaiyadin et al. (2013)	Survey	Questionnaire	Undergraduate Students
Zraa et al. (2011)	Mixed Method	Observation Interview Questionnaire	Undergraduate Students
Kirk et al. (2016)	Survey	Questionnaire	High School Students
Weber & Patterson (2000)	Survey	Questionnaire	Undergraduate Students
Mailloux (2006)	Survey	Questionnaire	Nursing Students
Brooks & Young (2011)	Survey	Questionnaire	Undergraduate Students
McQuillan (1995)	Case Study	Interview Classroom Observation Document Analysis	High School Students
Kirk (2012)	Case Study	Interview Focus Groups Observation	High School Students
Aloysius (2013)	Qualitative	Interview	International Students
Bruntona & Jeffrey (2014)	Survey	Questionnaire	International Students
Back (2014)	Mixed Method	Questionnaire Interview	Minority Students

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

This chapter presents the research design, research questions, research variables, participants, sampling technique, data collection tools and procedure, the data analyses used in the study. Finally, the limitations and assumptions of the study are discussed at the end of this chapter.

#### 3.1 Research Design

The main purpose of the study is to examine the empowerment levels of university students studying at an English Preparatory Program. For this purpose, a cross-sectional survey research design was employed as it provides data about current attitudes, opinions or beliefs of a group (Creswell, 2012). In cross-sectional survey, data are collected at one point in a time from the sample through questionnaires, scales and interviews (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2015). In this study, the researcher developed the “Student Empowerment Questionnaire” (SEQ) and administered it cross-sectionally among randomly selected 17 classes in an English preparation program in a state university to reveal to what extent students ( $n = 366$ ) perceive themselves empowered.

The overall process followed in the research design is demonstrated in Figure 3.1.

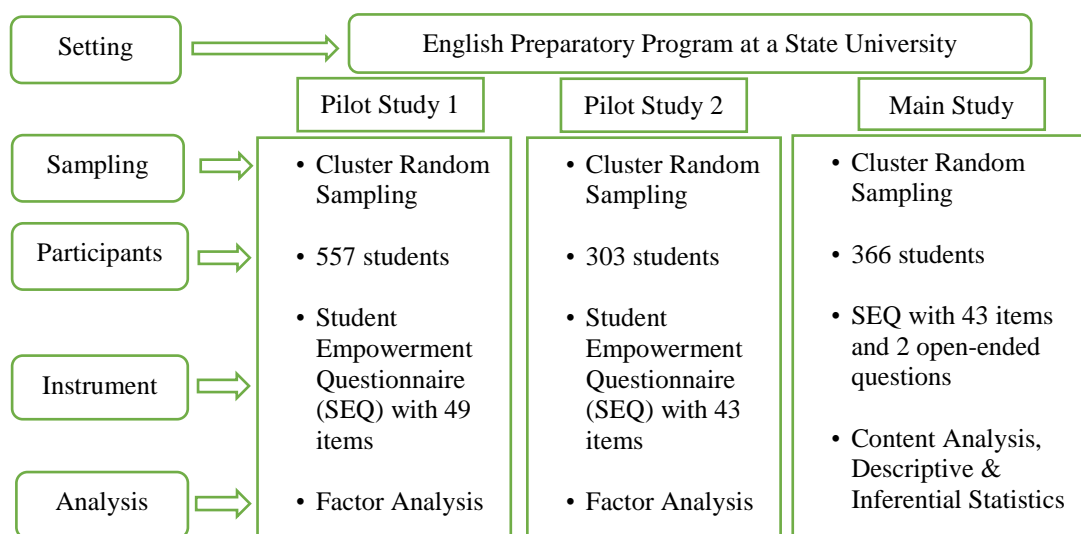


Figure 3.1. The flowchart for research design

### 3.2 Research Questions

The research questions of the study are as follows:

1. To what extent do the students studying at an English Preparatory Program of a state university feel themselves empowered?
2. Do the students' empowerment levels significantly differ in terms of gender and achievement?
3. Do the students' perceptions in the subdimensions of empowerment significantly differ in terms of gender and achievement?
4. What factors do students perceive as enablers of and barriers to their empowerment?

### 3.3 Research Variables

This section introduces the research variables and the operational definitions of the terms.

*Gender:* It is one of the independent variables of the study. It is a discrete variable having two levels as male and female. The measurement is on a nominal scale as it classifies individuals into two categories.

*Achievement:* This independent variable corresponds to the end of module scores the students got at the end of the last module they completed. The level of measurement is ordinal as the achievement levels of students are ranked as *i)* low, *ii)* moderate and *iii)* high achievers depending on their end of module scores. Those having a score between 0-64 were determined as low achievers since these scores were below the required score of '65' to pass the modules. The scores between 65-84 corresponded to moderate achievers while those having the scores of 85-100 were considered as high achievers who have a chance to complete the preparatory program earlier.

*Student Empowerment Level:* It is a continuous variable. It is the dependent variable of the study. It is measured by the Student Empowerment Questionnaire, a self-developed instrument by the researcher. The student empowerment level refers to the students' overall sense of empowerment measured by eight sub-scales. The questionnaire consisted of 43 items on a six-point scale and 2 open-ended questions. The level of measurement for this variable was interval. The mean score was calculated to determine the overall empowerment level of each participant. The mean score was generated out of 6. The levels of the participants were identified as 'low', 'low to moderate', 'moderate', 'moderate to high' and 'high' based on the selected formula in which the difference between the minimum and the maximum score is divided by the number of groups (Tekin, 1996).

### **3.4 Data Collection Instrument**

The data collection instrument was a questionnaire constructed by the researcher and it consisted of two sections. The first section was designed to provide demographic information of the participants. The second section, on the other hand, involved 43 items aiming to determine the students' empowerment levels and two open-ended questions to reveal more in-depth information about the factors affecting students' empowerment. The developmental process of the instrument and the necessary

analyses conducted for assuring its validity and reliability are provided in the following sections in detail.

### **3.4.1 Demographic Information**

The first section of the instrument was prepared to describe the characteristics of the participants and to gather information in relation to certain background variables. This section included questions asking for each participant's gender, nationality, faculty, type of accommodation, language proficiency level and achievement score.

### **3.4.2 Student Empowerment Questionnaire (SEQ)**

Student Empowerment Questionnaire (SEQ) is a multidimensional instrument constructed by the researcher with the purpose of examining the students' sense of empowerment in the context of the study. The instrument consisted of 43 closed-ended questions on a six-point scale ranging between 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Strongly Agree'. It also involved two open-ended questions to find out the factors enabling student empowerment and the barriers to it from the students' perspective. The following section presents the procedures followed in the instrumentation process in detail.

#### **3.4.2.1 Instrument Development**

The guidelines proposed by DeVellis (1995) were followed in the instrument development process. The steps followed during instrumentation are demonstrated in Figure 3.2.

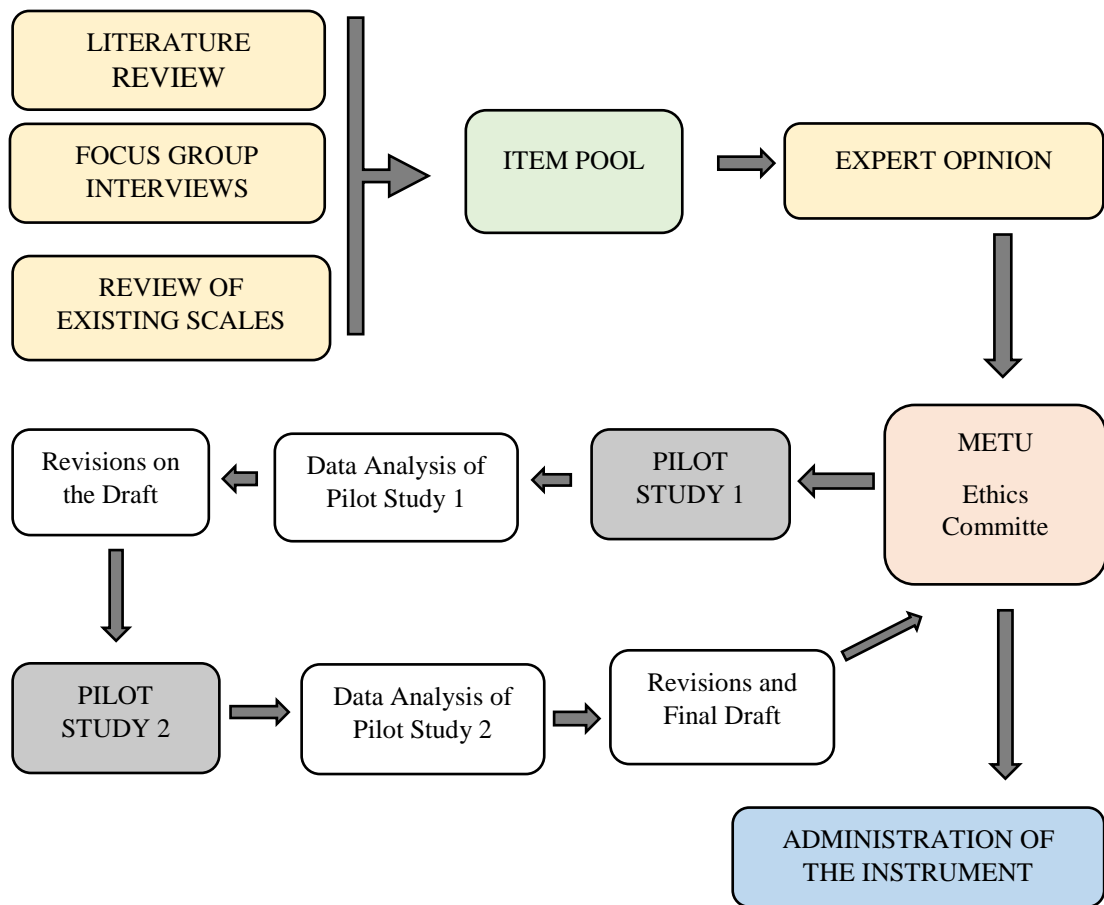


Figure 3.2. The flowchart for instrumentation process of SEQ

According to DeVellis (1995), the first step in scale development is to determine clearly what is intended to be measured. In order to understand the nature of student empowerment, recognize its boundaries and provide a well-formulated definition for the construct, the related studies in literature were reviewed as an initial step.

Since empowerment is a concept deriving from different fields such as psychology, business and management, all related studies were reviewed to explore its nature (Block, 1987; Christens, 2012; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Greasley et al., 2008; Matthews, Diaz & Cole, 2002; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Zimmerman, 1995). Besides, the studies on empowerment in the instructional context were examined to determine its boundaries and provide a definition that would serve as a basis for the scale (Frymier et al., 1996; Frymier & Houser, 2009; Kirk, 2012; Kirk, et al., 2016;

McQuillan, 1995; Schrodt et al., 2008; Sullivan, 2002; Weber, Fornash, Corrigan & Neupauer, 2003; Weber & Patterson, 2000). Among all these studies, Zimmerman's study on psychological empowerment was found to be the most comprehensive one (Zimmerman, 1995). It provided a theoretical basis for the concept of empowerment and its dimensions while constructing the scale. Although most of the empowerment studies in instructional context (Frymier et al., 1996; Frymier & Houser, 2009; Weber, Fornash, Corrigan & Neupauer, 2003; Weber & Patterson, 2000; Schrodt et al., 2008) were related to learner empowerment rather than student empowerment, McQuillan's qualitative study (2005) proposed a theoretical conception of student empowerment with its academic, political, and social dimensions. Also, Kirk (2012) contributed to the limited source of literature with his study on student empowerment and empowering setting on the concept. These two studies provided a good source to comprehend the nature of the concept and its dimensions.

Secondly, the literature was reviewed for the existing scales measuring empowerment. While most of the scales were constructed for assessing the empowerment levels of employees in the workplace (Matthews, Diaz & Cole, 2002) and mental health service users (Rogers, Chamberlin, Ellison & Crean, 1997), there was only one scale measuring empowerment in the instructional context, namely Learner Empowerment Scale (Frymier et al., 1996). This scale was used in most of the studies conducted in the instructional context. Although the scale aimed to measure the empowerment levels of learners in the classroom context, it provided a source for generating items for the Student Empowerment Questionnaire (SEQ).

Lastly, two focus group interviews were conducted to explore the concept of empowerment from students' perspective since it is possible to mention the existence of empowerment only if the individual feels himself empowered (Dainty et al., 2002). The focus group allows the researcher to find out the perspectives of the students on a construct and the interaction among the participants help them develop new connections between the concepts (Williams & Katz, 2001). Each group consisted of nine volunteer students selected through convenient sampling. Both focus group interviews took place in a classroom setting on two different days of November. Each



interview lasted about one hour and was audio recorded for transcription. The students were asked some questions investigating their perception of empowerment, its dimensions and the affecting factors. Some of these questions were as follows; “What do you understand by the term student empowerment?”, “What are the attributes and behaviours of an empowered student?”, “What factors can play a role in student empowerment?” and “How empowered do you feel yourself?”.

The recordings were transcribed and coded manually by content analysis. The findings obtained from this qualitative data both confirmed some findings in the literature and contributed new insights and perspectives to the concept of student empowerment.

Although none of the participants were familiar with the empowerment concept, they tried to describe it by focusing on some constructs related to empowerment. Their responses to define empowerment shed a light on the empowerment process and empowerment outcomes.

Firstly, the participants were asked about the attributes of an empowered student. Their responses to this question mainly revealed some intrapersonal outcomes of empowerment (Zimmerman, 1995). Some students underlined the feeling of being successful and sense of determination to overcome the problems or challenges. To illustrate, the students stated;

An empowered student is self-confident. When you believe in yourself, you can achieve everything...I believe in myself and ... I'm aware of my potential. I never give up. I do my best to reach my aim. (NA, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

I feel myself empowered. My target was to enter this university and I did it. I saw that I could achieve when I really wanted to do. That's why I keep on trying my best for my goals. When I face a challenge, I try to overcome it. I just focus on my target so I feel empowered. (İB, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

Additionally, the construct of academic self-efficacy which could be gained through experiencing success and being aware of their capacities in their academic studies were pointed out as essential to feel empowered as a student. One student said;

When I do well in the exams here... This strengthens my belief that I can do better. Although some skills are very difficult for me, I try hard. I know what to do to improve

myself. But... some of my friends don't have such a belief so they even don't try. (SK, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

These attributes of an empowered student stated by the participants were similar to the Zimmerman's psychological empowerment theory (1995) in which intrapersonal empowerment outcomes involved an individual's sense of control, domain specific self-efficacy and competence.

In addition to this, some participants emphasized that an empowered student had a competence to solve his problems and a potential to lead others. Problem solving competence and leadership competence were considered as two of the interactional empowerment outcomes according to psychological empowerment theory proposed by Zimmerman (1995). To illustrate these points, they said;

We have lots of problems in school life...here...but an empowered student knows how to solve them... This student knows the steps to follow, where to go and who to consult. (BS, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

If you're an empowered student, you must be a leader. You must have the spirit of leadership. For example; when there is a problem in the school, you go to the school principals and ask for solution... or you organize events in social clubs. (EÖ, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

Afterwards, the participants were asked for explaining the existing factors that enabled them to feel empowered as a student and the barriers hindering it. They identified school principals, teachers, curriculum and location of the school as the main factors affecting student empowerment.

The most common idea stressed by the participants was about being respected by the teachers and school principals. They pointed out that they needed to have a voice in school matters. One participant focused on how it was important for them to be trusted and respected by the teacher and said;

I believe that our teachers and principals must listen to us and respect our ideas. They need to know what the majority thinks about school matters. This would make us feel empowered. (AK, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

We have lots of complaints here... We wanted to tell them to the school principals, but nobody listened to us. While we were trying to find solutions to the problems, they didn't care us. They should have listened to us. (NA, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

The participants also emphasized that they would feel empowered if they had a choice in academic and school related matters. One student said;

The school principals should have close relations with students. We sometimes feel uncomfortable when we express our ideas. They should take us serious and our choices should be taken into consideration in school related matters. They should make us feel confident. (MR, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

Also, the role of the program applied in the school was considered as an important factor in student empowerment. Some participants stated that they sometimes had the feeling that what they were taught in English Preparatory Program would not be useful for their academic studies. They emphasized that they should have had a voice in the program. One student said;

While designing the program, our opinions should be taken into consideration. Sometimes I get bored in the class because some topics are silly. Also, there are lots of exams here. I don't understand why we take lots of tests. They want to assess... It's OK but... They can do it in different ways. (EÖ, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

Hence, the students' emphasis on the idea of being respected, listened and trusted by teachers and school principals in various matters related to school was parallel to the concepts of "impact" and "choice" stated as the intrapersonal components of empowerment by Thomas and Velthouse (1990). The Learner Empowerment Scale developed by Frymier et al. (1996) had also included these two dimensions.

The participants also underlined the importance of social empowerment of students together with their academic development. They emphasized how they could learn more from each other through social activities.

For instance... We get more information for our career in social clubs than the courses. For instance, I am a member of several social clubs in the university. Last week we attended the e-trade summit. We met some people coming from big companies like N11. They made a speech to us and informed us a lot. In this sense, we feel more empowered when we get in touch with people in our interested area so... An empowered student feels more empowered as he participates in such activities. (EG, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

When we take part in such activities, we discover our talents. When you join a social club, you can have a chance to organize and lead an event. This way you feel great because you experience the feeling of achieving something in your life. (AK, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

It was found out that the students needed to see some role models that would inspire them for achieving their career goals and this kind of connection was to be provided by school administration according to the participants.

There are some students who are not able to join social clubs because of various reasons. I think this should be organized by the school as a part of our education here so that more students can benefit from such organizations. Representatives of different sectors can be invited here and inform us of the qualities required in the sector. (MR, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

Our school principals need to provide some social activities for us. For instance, we only learn English in this school, but we need to learn more as a prep student to be equipped with some skills that are required for real life. The university isn't a place where we can learn only about our academic areas or take the exams to pass. We feel empowered when we improve ourselves academically and socially so... We should attend some social activities and seminars. (AK, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

Besides, the learning environment was discussed as an important part of empowerment. Most of them agreed on the idea that the campus life was essential to reach the opportunities to feel empowered. They explained how the campus life could empower students and made complaints about the location of the school. One of the participants said;

I don't feel much empowered as a student. The only thing we do is to come to school, take the courses and then leave as soon as possible. It is mostly related to the location of the school. Our school isn't in a campus. If we were in the campus, we might not feel like that. (EÖ, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2018)

These responses of the participants in focus groups provided a basis to understand the nature of student empowerment, its outcomes and the factors enabling and hindering it. Based on the data obtained from two focus groups and the existing studies in literature, it became possible to formulate a definition for student empowerment. In this study, student empowerment is defined as a process providing opportunities and conditions by which students gain the required skills and motivation to succeed academically, have a voice in both setting their learning goals and institutional matters, and also build strong and supportive relationships within the school.

Table 3.1 demonstrates the empowered student outcomes based on inductive content analysis of focus group interviews. The outcomes were categorized under certain

themes, each of which corresponds to one of four dimensions of empowerment found in literature (Christens, 2012; Kirk, 2012; Zimmerman, 1995).

Table 3.1

*The Empowered Student Outcomes Based on Focus Groups*

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Sub-dimensions</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
Intrapersonal Dimension	General Self-efficacy	Having a belief in one's ability to begin and complete an action
	Academic Self-efficacy	Having a belief in overcoming problems Having a positive attitude toward performing a given academic task
	Impact	Having a belief in completing a task successfully Having a belief in making difference in school related issues
	Choice	Having an impact on school practices Having a say in school related matters Being involved in decision making
Interpersonal Dimension	Facilitating Others' Empowerment	Helping others by providing them with necessary support Guiding and encouraging others in the process of empowerment
Interactional Dimension	Critical Awareness	Being aware of the problems around Being aware of the power structures in the school
	Problem Solving Competence	Having a belief in solving problems Being aware of the steps to be followed
	Leadership	Having necessary skills to lead a group Taking the responsibility of representing a group
Behavioural Dimension	Participation	Becoming a member of social clubs Participating in school activities Taking a part in collaborative activities Leading or representing student groups in school related matters

The items for each sub-scale were generated or adapted from both existing scales in literature (Chen et al., 2001; Çakır & Erdoğan, 2014; Ekici, 2012; Frymier et al., 1996; Sagone & Caroli, 2014; Sahin et al., 1993; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Yıldırım & İlhan, 2014) and the outcomes obtained from the focus group interviews. Based on the outcomes demonstrated in Table 3.1, 55 items were generated for the scale. After completing item generation, the Student Empowerment Questionnaire (SEQ) was examined by three experts specialized in curriculum and instruction. They were asked for commenting on the format of the scale, the selected rating scale and the content to

increase the face and content validity. The instrument was also checked by a small group of students to assess the items' readability and clarity. In accordance with the experts' feedback, six items were eliminated since they were similar with each other or not clear enough. Consequently, the latest version of the questionnaire consisted of 49 items and two open-ended questions.

After obtaining required ethical permission by the Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee (see Appendix C), the administration of the school where the data would be collected was informed about the study and asked for their approval to apply the instrument. Before collecting data for the main study, the instrument was to be piloted to assess its construct validity and reliability. The detailed information regarding the pilot studies are in discussed in the following sections.

#### **3.4.2.2 Pilot Study I for Validity and Reliability of SEQ**

The initial pilot study was conducted among the students from randomly selected classes which were not included in the main study. As it was recommended by Everitt (1975) and Nunnally (1978), the number of participants for Exploratory Factor Analysis was determined to be 10 times as large as the number of items in the questionnaire ( $n = 557$ ). Through random cluster sampling, five elementary level ( $n = 97$ ), 20 pre-intermediate level ( $n = 422$ ) and two intermediate level classes ( $n = 37$ ) were selected for the pilot study. The data were collected by the researcher within the class hours in the first week of March. After being informed about the aim of the study, the questionnaire was administered to volunteer students.

Prior to running Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to assess the construct validity of the instrument, certain assumptions were checked through SPSS 20 METU Version. These assumptions were the existence of metric variables, having no univariate outliers in dataset, correlation above .30 among items, sampling adequacy, displaying univariate and multivariate normality (Hair et al, 2010).

Regarding the first assumption of EFA, the SEQ involved a six-point scale and the mean score obtained from the questionnaire was a continuous variable generated out

of six. Therefore, the metric variable assumption was confirmed as the level of measurement was interval. Secondly, the standardized scores, box plots and histograms were examined to check the absence of univariate outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Although the standardized scores of 12 cases out of 557 were found to be above 3.29, they were not considered as serious when they were checked through histograms and box plots. Additionally, the correlation matrix was inspected to check if the correlation coefficient was above .32 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013) and it was seen that each item correlated with at least one item with a coefficient of .30. Barlett's test of sphericity also indicated that the correlation matrix was significantly different from the identity matrix ( $\chi^2 (1176) = 8803.045, p < .05$ ). In terms of sampling adequacy, the Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin value was found to be .82 which was above the criterion value of .60 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013) and indicated a great value in terms of sampling adequacy according to Field (2009).

After that, the skewness and kurtosis values, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results, histograms and Q-Q plots were examined for each item to check the assumption of univariate normality. The results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test were found to be significant indicating non-normality. However, these tests are too sensitive in large size of sampling (Field, 2009). On the other hand, skewness and kurtosis values were between the boundaries of -3 and +3 indicating normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In addition to this, histograms and Q-Q plots did not indicate serious non-normality that would violate the assumption.

The assumption of multivariate normality, on the other hand, was checked by Mardia's test result which was found to be significant indicating the violation of normality ( $b2p = 2914.43, p < .001$ ). Therefore, Principal Axis Factoring with oblique rotation was selected to extract the factors since it was likely to have a relationship among the expected factors (Costello & Osborne, 2005).

After performing EFA with Principal Axis Factoring and Direct Oblimin rotation technique, the retained number of factors were determined through the inspection of Eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and Catell's Scree test plot. Based on Eigenvalues greater

than 1.0, the number of retained factors was 12 which was more than expected number of factors and explained 57% of the total variance (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2

*Eigenvalues, Percentages of Variance, and Cumulative Percentages for Factors of SEQ*

Factor	Eigenvalue	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	7.40	15.11	15.11
2	3.88	7.93	23.05
3	2.81	5.74	28.80
4	2.52	5.15	33.95
5	2.08	4.24	38.20
6	1.71	3.49	41.69
7	1.63	3.34	45.04
8	1.38	2.83	47.87
9	1.33	2.71	50.59
10	1.22	2.49	53.08
11	1.13	2.30	55.39
12	1.06	2.16	57.55

However, keeping in mind that Kaiser's criterion tends to overestimate the number of factors to retain (Field, 2005), Catell's Scree test plot was also examined to identify the number of factors. As it can be seen in the scree plot in Figure 3.3, the curve began to straighten in the 10<sup>th</sup> point displaying the existence of 10 factors.



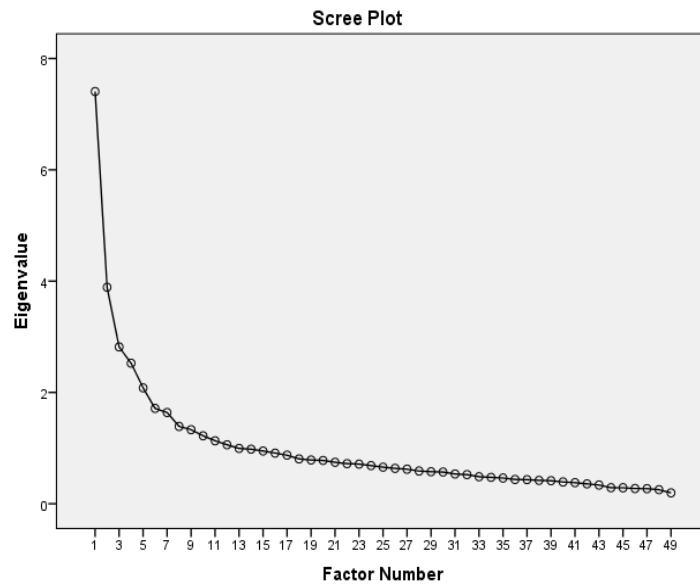


Figure 3.3. Scree plot based on the data

Consequently, the pattern matrix was examined to see the factor loadings of each item and to find out which of them were freestanding or cross loading. The items having a factor loading of .30 and above were determined to be significant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The pattern matrix is given in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

*Factor Loadings of the items in SEQ*

Items	Factor Loadings											
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12
Item 5	.59											
Item 3	.55											
Item 4	.48											
Item 2	.47											
Item 9	.35											
Item 1	.30											
Item 44		.86										
Item 45		.73										
Item 42		.70										
Item 46		.69										
Item 43		.68										
Item 47		.52										
Item 49		.43										
Item 28			.74									
Item 29			.73									

Table 3.3 (continued)

Items	Factor Loadings											
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12
Item 31			.70									
Item 30			.67									
Item 32			.40									
Item 33			.35									
Item 18				.71								
Item 22				.65								
Item 17				.62								
Item 23				.46								
Item 19				.44						.34		
Item 36					.70							
Item 35					.61							
Item 37					.57							
Item 34					.51							
Item 40						.66						
Item 39						.42						
Item 26							.78					
Item 27							.69					
Item 48							.31					
Item 38								.94				
Item 41								.54				
Item 8									.67			
Item 10									.59			
Item 12									.51			
Item 13									.44			
Item 6									.36			
Item 7	.32								.35			
Item 20										.69		
Item 21										.58		
Item 11												
Item 15											.77	
Item 16				.36							.51	
Item 14											.48	
Item 25				.32								.47
Item 24												.39

Note. Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Direct Oblimin.

As it can be seen in the pattern matrix (Table 3.3), the first factor, explaining 15% of total variance, consisted the expected items related to General Self-efficacy except for item 9 which was expected to be related to Academic Self-efficacy in the intrapersonal dimension of empowerment. Therefore, it was decided to revise the item for the second piloting so that it might appear in the factor of Academic Self-efficacy. The second factor, on the other hand, included the items which were reflecting the behavioural

dimension of empowerment while the items related to Awareness formed the third factor as it was expected. The fourth factor involved some of the items measuring both Impact and Choice. Some other items related to Impact and Choice sub-scales were loading on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> factors. For this reason, the researcher decided to revise the items between 15 and 25 to remove this ambiguity. In addition to this, item 19 was eliminated as it was cross loading to both the fourth and the tenth factors. The fifth factor consisted of 4 items measuring the Problem-Solving Competence. The sixth factor, on the other hand, involved only two items (item 39 and item 40) which were related to Leadership Competence while it was expected to include at least 3 items. Since a factor with only two items would not be reliable, item 39, 40 and 41 were eliminated from the scale before performing the second piloting. Thus, the questionnaire did not include any items for assessing leadership. In the seventh factor, there were 3 items (item 26, 27 and 48) related to Facilitating Others' Empowerment. However, it was seen that item 48 ("I help my school friends with their studies and other issues") was measuring more than one aspect. Therefore, this item was divided into two separate items for the second piloting. Additionally, item 11 was eliminated from the scale since it had a factor loading below .30. Apart from these, some of the reversed items (item 3, 21, 23, 32, 39, 40) were rewritten in their affirmative forms for the next piloting as they were thought to cause confusion while responding the scale. Lastly, the ninth factor involved the items measuring Academic Self-efficacy as being a part of intrapersonal dimension of empowerment.

To sum up, there were 7 items (item 8, 11, 14, 19, 39, 40 and 41) eliminated from the scale while one more item was added to the scale and some items were revised for the second piloting. The latest version of the questionnaire consisted of 43 items after these revisions. Since it was likely to observe a change in the construct of the scale because of the revisions and eliminations of some items, it was decided to conduct a second pilot study for the questionnaire.

### 3.4.2.3 Pilot Study II for Validity and Reliability of SEQ

The second pilot study was conducted to assess the construct validity and reliability of the scale's latest version after making some revisions. As it was recommended by Gorsuch (1983), the number of participants for EFA was determined to be at least five for each item ( $n = 303$ ). The sample for the second pilot study consisted of the students from randomly selected four elementary level ( $n = 102$ ), nine pre-intermediate level ( $n = 152$ ) and two intermediate level classes ( $n = 49$ ) which were not included in the main study. The data were collected by the researcher within the class hours in the first week of April.

Before performing EFA to assess the construct validity of the instrument, certain assumptions (Hair et al, 2010) were checked via SPSS 20 METU Version.

Regarding the first assumption of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), the SEQ, being a six- point scale and having an interval measurement, is considered as a metric variable. The absence of outliers is the second assumption to be checked through examining standardized scores, box plots and histograms. The standardized scores were found to be below 3.29 indicating the absence of outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Thirdly, the correlation matrix was inspected prior to EFA (see Appendix E). Each item was correlated at least one other item in the scale with at least a correlation coefficient of .32 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Accordingly, the results of Barlett's test of sphericity indicated that the correlation matrix was significantly different from the identity matrix ( $\chi^2(903) = 7442.695, p < .05$ ). The Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin value indicating the sampling adequacy was found to be .86, which is above the criterion value of .60 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Hence, the sampling size was adequate for running EFA.

Besides, the assumption of univariate normality was checked by examining the skewness and kurtosis values, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results, histograms and Q-Q plots. Although the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were found to be significant indicating non-normality as they are too sensitive in large size of sampling (Field, 2009), skewness and kurtosis values for each

item were between the boundaries of -3 and +3 indicating normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Additionally, histograms and Q-Q plots did not indicate a serious non-normality that would violate the assumption.

Consequently, the multivariate normality was checked by Mardia's test result. According to the test result, the normality assumption was violated ( $p < .001$ ). For this reason, Principal Axis Factoring was selected in order to extract the factors. Since the factors might be correlated (Costello & Osborne, 2005), oblique rotation was selected for rotating the factors.

After performing EFA with Principal Axis Factoring and Direct Oblimin rotation technique, the retained number of factors were determined through the inspection of Eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and Catell's Scree test plot. Based on Eigenvalues greater than 1.0, the number of retained factors was nine and explained 66% of the total variance (Table 3.4), which was more than 40% as a rule of thumb (Blunch, 2008).

Table 3.4

*Eigenvalues, Percentages of Variance, and Cumulative Percentages for Factors of SEQ*

Factor	Eigenvalue	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	10.02	23.30	23.30
2	4.11	9.56	32.87
3	3.10	7.22	40.09
4	2.98	6.94	47.04
5	2.26	5.27	52.31
6	1.84	4.28	56.59
7	1.67	3.90	60.49
8	1.39	3.25	63.74
9	1.11	2.59	66.34

As Kaiser's criterion tends to overestimate the number of factors to retain (Field, 2005), Catell's Scree test plot was also examined to identify the number of factors. The scree plot in Figure 3.4 displayed the existence of nine factors.

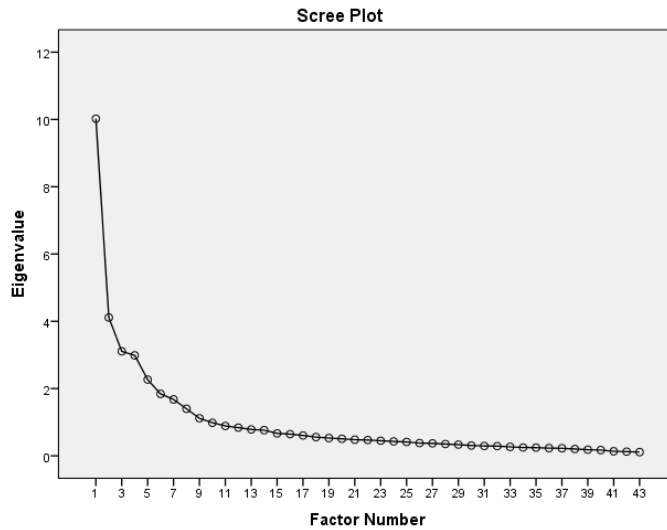


Figure 3.4. Scree plot based on the data

The factor loadings of each item in the pattern matrix were also examined to find out the number of factors and if any items were freestanding or cross loading. The items with a factor loading of .30 and above were determined to be significant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The factor loadings of the items ranged from .33 to .94. Although the pattern matrix initially demonstrated nine factors, it was seen that item 26 was cross loading to the fourth factor related to Critical Awareness with a loading of .35 and was freestanding in the ninth factor at the same time. Since this item was conceptually related to Critical Awareness, it was accepted under the fourth factor, so that the scale consisted of 8 factors in the final structure. Likewise, item 18 was cross loading to the second and the seventh factors with a loading of .40 and .44. Because of its conceptual relation, the item was decided to be accepted under the seventh factor which involved items related to the Choice subscale. The pattern matrix given in Table 3.5 demonstrates the latest construct of the questionnaire which consisted of eight factors explaining 63% of the total variance.

Table 3.5

*Factor Loadings of the items in SEQ*

Items	Factor Loadings							
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8
Item 39	.94							
Item 38	.89							
Item 37	.84							
Item 40	.81							
Item 43	.73							
Item 41	.72							
Item 42	.56							
Item 16		.77						
Item 21		.72						
Item 17		.70						
Item 20		.69						
Item 19		.65						
Item 7			.71					
Item 10			.69					
Item 6			.55					
Item 11			.49					
Item 8			.48					
Item 9			.35					
Item 28				.84				
Item 27				.83				
Item 29				.76				
Item 30				.66				
Item 31				.63				
Item 26				.33				
Item 22					.77			
Item 25					.75			
Item 24					.66			
Item 23					.65			
Item 35						.79		
Item 34						.74		
Item 33						.68		
Item 32						.41		
Item 14							.80	
Item 13							.69	
Item 15							.68	
Item 12							.51	
Item 18		.40					.44	
Item 4								.70
Item 1								.67
Item 2								.67
Item 5								.56
Item 3								.50

Table 3.5 (continued)

Items	Factor Loadings							
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8
Eigenvalues	10.02	4.11	3.10	2.98	2.26	1.84	1.67	1.39
% of variance	23.30	9.56	7.22	6.94	5.27	4.28	3.90	3.25

As it can be seen in the pattern matrix (Table 3.5), the first factor, explaining 23% of total variance, consisted of 7 items related to participatory behaviours measuring behavioural dimension of empowerment. The second factor explaining 9% of the total variance included 5 items measuring the students' sense of impact on school related matters. The third factor with 7% of variance involved 6 items assessing the participants' academic self-efficacy. The fourth factor explaining 6% of the total variance consisted of 6 items measuring the extent of awareness for school related issues. The fifth factor explaining 5% of the total variance included 4 items measuring to what extent the participants facilitate others' empowerment. The sixth factor with 4% of variance consisted of 4 items assessing the students' sense of competence for solving school related problems. The seventh factor involved 5 items that measure the students' sense of having a choice for both academic and school related issues and explained 3% of the total variance. Lastly, the eighth factor explaining 3% of the total variance included 5 items measuring the participants' general belief in coping with real life matters. The factors as the sub-scales of the SEQ are summarized in Table 3.6.



Table 3.6

*Factor Loadings for Each Sub-scale of SEQ*

Factors	Sub-scales	Items	Factor Loadings
Factor 1	Participation	Item 39	.94
		Item 38	.89
		Item 37	.84
		Item 40	.84
		Item 43	.81
		Item 41	.73
		Item 42	.72
		Item 36	.56
Factor 2	Impact	Item 16	.77
		Item 21	.72
		Item 17	.70
		Item 20	.69
		Item 19	.65
Factor 3	Academic Self-efficacy	Item 7	.71
		Item 10	.69
		Item 6	.55
		Item 11	.49
		Item 8	.48
		Item 9	.35
Factor 4	Critical Awareness	Item 28	.84
		Item 27	.83
		Item 29	.76
		Item 30	.66
		Item 31	.63
		Item 26	.33
Factor 5	Facilitating Others' Empowerment	Item 22	.77
		Item 25	.75
		Item 24	.66
		Item 23	.65
Factor 6	Problem Solving Competence	Item 35	.79
		Item 34	.74
		Item 33	.68
		Item 32	.41
Factor 7	Choice	Item 14	.80
		Item 13	.69
		Item 15	.68
		Item 12	.51
		Item 18	.44
Factor 8	General Self-efficacy	Item 4	.70
		Item 1	.67
		Item 2	.67
		Item 5	.56
		Item 3	.50

To sum up, the SEQ is comprised of 8 subscales with a total of 43 items. Sample items for each subscale include “I take an active role in a project / organization at the university” (participation, item 39); “I have an impact on school-wide decisions” (impact, item 21); “I think I’m a successful student” (academic self-efficacy, item 8); “I am aware of the problems at school” (critical awareness, item 26); “I support my schoolmates in course related issues” (facilitating others’ empowerment, item 24); “I know what I need to do to solve my problems at school” (problem solving competence, item 35); “I have a say to determine what kind of activities will be done in class” (choice, item 15); “I try until I reach my goals” (general self-efficacy, item 5).

Consequently, the Cronbach’s Alpha results were examined with the purpose of assessing the internal consistency of the instrument (Table 3.7). The reliability coefficients for each subscale were found to be .81 for General Self-efficacy, .75 for Academic Self-efficacy, .80 for Choice, .85 for Impact, .84 for Facilitating Others’ Empowerment, .85 for Critical Awareness, .80 for Problem Solving Competence, .94 for Participation. The overall scale, on the other hand, had a coefficient of .91 indicating a high Cronbach’s Alpha value.

Table 3.7

*Cronbach Alpha Values for Subscales of SEQ*

Factors	Cronbach’s Alpha	Number of items
Participation	.94	8
Impact	.85	5
Academic Self-efficacy	.75	6
Critical Awareness	.85	6
Facilitating Others’ Empowerment	.84	4
Problem Solving Competence	.80	4
Choice	.80	5
General Self-efficacy	.81	5

### 3.5 Population and Sample

The target population of the study was English preparatory program students ( $N = 1350$ ) studying at a state university in Turkey. These students are enrolled in English

medium departments of Engineering, Arts and Science, Economics and Administrative Sciences Faculties and take one-year compulsory English program if they do not have the required language skills measured by the proficiency exam at the beginning of the academic year. They are required to complete the English Preparatory Program successfully to be able to proceed on their academic studies. Those who are enrolled in Turkish-medium departments are also admitted to the program depending on the capacity determined by the school administration. All students in the program are placed in four different modules according to their language proficiency levels assessed by the English Proficiency Test at the beginning of the academic year. The students have to get the minimum score of 65 to pass each module and take the proficiency exam in June.

The sample size was determined based on the idea that it would represent the population at a 95% level of confidence with a 5% margin of error according to the formula provided by Dillman (2000). Since there was a large number of clusters in the target population, a cluster random sampling was utilized to select the sample of the study ( $n = 366$ ). In cluster random sampling, groups are selected randomly rather than individuals and this makes the process less-time consuming (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2015). Through a random cluster sampling, four elementary level classes ( $n = 89$ ), 11 pre-intermediate level classes ( $n = 236$ ) and two intermediate level classes ( $n = 41$ ) were selected by considering their proportion in the population to maintain the representativeness. As there were not any starter level classes in the data collection period, the classes at this level were not able to be included in the study. Consequently, 366 students participated in the study from randomly selected 17 classes.

Table 3.8

*Frequency Distribution of the Participants*

	Frequency ( <i>f</i> )	Percent (%)
Gender		
Female	167	45.6
Male	199	54.4
Nationality		
Turkish Citizen	363	99.2
Non-Turkish Citizen	3	0.8
Accommodation		
Dormitory	211	57.7
With family	140	38.3
With friends in a flat	11	3.0
Alone in a flat	4	1.1
Faculty		
Engineering	135	36.9
Arts and Science	33	9.0
Economics and Administrative Sciences	194	53
Other	4	1.1
Language Proficiency Level		
Elementary	89	24.3
Pre-intermediate	236	64.5
Intermediate	41	11.2
Achievement Score		
0-64	59	16.1
65-84	259	70.8
85-100	48	13.1

As it was summarized in Table 3.8, 54.4% of the sample were male ( $n = 199$ ) and 45.6% were female ( $n = 167$ ). 99% of the participants were Turkish citizens while only three students were not. Additionally, 57.7% of the participants ( $n = 211$ ) were staying in dormitory, 38.3% of them ( $n = 140$ ) were living with their families, 11 students (3%) were sharing a flat with friends and only 4 students (1.1%) were living alone. Regarding their faculties, 53% of the students were ( $n = 194$ ) enrolled in the Faculty Economics and Administrative Sciences, 36.9% of them ( $n = 135$ ) were from the Faculty of Engineering. While 9% of the participants were enrolled in the Faculty of Art and Science, only 4 students (1.1%) were from Turkish-medium departments. As for the language proficiency levels of the participants, pre-intermediate level students constituted 64.5% of the sample ( $n = 236$ ), 24.3% of the participants ( $n = 89$ ) were from elementary level and 11.1% of them ( $n = 41$ ) had intermediate level of

English. Lastly, the achievement scores were examined and found out that the students completing the last module with a score between 0-64 formed 16.1% of the sample ( $n = 59$ ). 70.8% of the participants ( $n = 259$ ) completed the last module with a score between 65-84 while 13.1% of them ( $n = 48$ ) had a score between 85-100 in the last module.

### **3.6 Context of the Study**

Since empowerment is a context specific construct (Zimmerman, 1995), it is necessary to provide information related to the context of the study in order to be able to reach more meaningful conclusions at the end of the research.

This study was conducted in the School of Foreign Languages of a state university. It is located in a district of a city in the northwest of Turkey. The school was in the main campus until its movement to the new building in a separate campus. The new campus involves two buildings one of which is still under construction. The students residing in the main campus commute to the school by public buses. A few students stay in the state dormitory near the school.

The school offers one-year compulsory English program for the students enrolled in English medium departments of Engineering, Arts and Science, Economics and Administrative Sciences Faculties if they do not have the required language skills measured by the proficiency exam at the beginning of the academic year. The students have to complete the English Preparatory Program successfully to be able to proceed on their academic studies. All students in the program are placed in four different modules according to their language proficiency levels assessed by the English Proficiency Test at the beginning of the academic year. The students have to get the minimum score of 65 to pass each module and take the proficiency exam in June.

The school aims to equip the students with necessary language skills by providing both general and academic English courses. The latest curriculum implemented by the school was developed in 2016 by a group of language instructors specialized in curriculum development and instruction. During the development process, the

curriculum planners held several interviews and focus groups with the students and the academic staff to determine their needs and expectations. Since then it is revised every year based on the feedback of the students and teachers obtained through questionnaires and interviews.

### 3.7 Data Collection Procedure

After conducting the second pilot study for assessing the construct validity and reliability of SEQ, the questionnaire took its final form to be administered for the main study. After getting the necessary permission from METU Human Subjects Ethics Committee (see Appendix D), the data for the main study were collected in the first two weeks of May, 2019. The classes selected for the pilot study were excluded for the main study. The students ( $n = 366$ ) from randomly selected 17 classes took part in the study. The researcher visited the selected classes in class hours and informed the students of the study. The students who were volunteer to participate signed the Subject Consent Form and then responded to the instrument.

Table 3.9 demonstrates the time schedule of the study.

Table 3.9

*Time Schedule of Data Collection Process*

Focus Groups	November, 2018
Item Generation	December, 2018
Expert Consultation and Cognitive Interview	January, 2019
METU Ethics Committee Approval	February, 2019
Pilot Study 1	March, 2019
Pilot Study 2	April, 2019
Main Study	May, 2019

### 3.8 Data Analysis

The analyses of the main data were conducted in relation to the research questions of the study. As for the first research question aiming to explore to what extent the students perceived themselves empowered, descriptive statistics was performed to

describe both the demographic characteristics of the participants and their sense of empowerment. The frequencies and the values for mean and standard deviation were provided in relation to certain characteristics of the participants and their level of empowerment.

Additionally, the study aimed to find out if the empowerment levels of the students significantly differed in terms certain background variables. To this aim, inferential statistical analyses were performed to reveal any differentiation among the groups according to gender and achievement variables. Firstly, the overall mean scores of SEQ were examined in relation to the gender of the students. To this aim, independent samples t-test was run after checking certain assumptions (Field, 2009). Then the overall student empowerment mean scores were examined to find out whether there was a significant difference among the groups in relation to their achievement scores. After performing certain analyses to check the assumptions (Field, 2009), one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed on the data to explore if overall student empowerment mean scores were significantly affected by achievement variable. Regarding the subscales of SEQ, two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to find out if gender and achievement had a significant impact on the dimensions of empowerment.

Finally, the qualitative data obtained from two open-ended questions in the questionnaire were analysed by content analysis. The responses were coded manually and then categorized under certain themes. This provided in-depth information about the enablers and barriers in relation to the student empowerment.

### **3.9 Internal and External Validity**

External validity is concerned with the generalizability of the study results since the sample selected for the study may not represent the population because of utilized sampling techniques (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2015). In this respect, the results of this study can be generalized to the school population since the sample of the study were selected by cluster random sampling and included a large number of classes with a detailed description of characteristics of the participants.

As for the internal validity, the data were collected by the researcher herself to control any threat that could emerge due to data collector characteristics when there are more than one data collector. Additionally, the condition for data collection was kept the same for all participants by collecting the data in the classroom setting within class hours to control any location threat.

### **3.10 Limitations of the Study**

This study has a limitation that can be considered as a threat to the internal validity of the study. Since the data collector was the researcher working as an instructor in the institution, the participants might prefer to give more socially acceptable answers rather than being honest because of various concerns such as privacy or social desirability. In order to control this threat, the researcher informed the participants about the confidentiality of the study and underlined the significance of being sincere while responding to questions.

### **3.11 Assumptions of the Study**

The study had certain assumptions in data collection process. The condition for data collection was kept same for all participants. Additionally, the participants responded the items sincerely without being affected by each other.



## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study in detail. The first part involves the descriptive statistics results regarding the first research question aiming to explore the empowerment levels of the students in an English Preparation Program. The inferential statistics results based on some demographic variables are presented in the second part. The next part presents the content analysis results of two open-ended questions regarding the enablers and barriers to student empowerment. Finally, the last part provides the summary of the results.

#### **4.1 Descriptive Statistics for Students' Sense of Empowerment**

The study mainly aims to reveal to what extent the university students in an English Preparatory Program perceive themselves empowered. In accordance with this research question, descriptive statistics analysis was employed on the quantitative data obtained from the SEQ. Mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values were calculated on IBM SPSS METU Version 20.

As it was explained earlier in the instrumentation process, the SEQ consisted of 8 subscales with a total of 43 closed-ended questions on a six-point scale ranging as 'Strongly Disagree', 'Disagree', 'Partially Disagree', 'Partially Agree', 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree'. The mean score for each scale was calculated to determine the overall empowerment mean score. The scores between the value of 1.00 - 2.00 were identified as 'low', 2.01 - 3.00 as 'low to moderate', 3.01 - 4.00 as 'moderate', 4.01 - 5.00 as 'moderate to high' and 5.01 - 6.00 as 'high' based on the formula in which the difference between the minimum and the maximum score is divided by the number of groups to be performed (Tekin, 1996).

According to the descriptive statistics results given in Table 4.1, the overall mean value was found to be 3.76 ( $SD = .54$ ) for the whole group ( $n = 366$ ). This value corresponds to a ‘moderate’ empowerment level.

Table 4.1

*Descriptive Statistics Results for Overall SEQ Mean Scores*

	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Overall SEQ Scores	366	3.76	3.54

The dimensions of student empowerment were measured by 8 sub-scales in the SEQ. According to the results given in Table 4.2, the mean values obtained from each sub-scale ranged between 4.70 and 2.55. The participants had the highest mean value for Awareness ( $M = 4.70$ ,  $SD = .91$ ) and the lowest mean value for Impact ( $M = 2.55$ ,  $SD = .79$ ). The sub-scale of Participation indicated the highest standard deviation ( $SD = 1.14$ ) while it was the lowest in General Self-efficacy scale ( $SD = .68$ ). The scales of Critical Awareness and Facilitating Others’ Empowerment had the same standard deviation ( $SD = .91$ ).

When the mean values of each sub-scale were examined in depth, it was found that General Self-efficacy scores of the participants was higher ( $M = 4.66$ ,  $SD = .68$ ) than their Academic Self-efficacy scores ( $M = 4.52$ ,  $SD = .72$ ). On the other hand, the participants had lower mean values for the sub-scales of Choice ( $M = 2.79$ ,  $SD = .83$ ),

Participation ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ) and Problem Solving Competence ( $M = 3.82$ ,  $SD = .99$ ) than the scale of Facilitating Others’ Empowerment ( $M = 4.38$ ,  $SD = .91$ ).

Table 4.2

*Descriptive Statistics Results for the Subscales of SEQ*

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Critical Awareness	4.70	.91
General Self-efficacy	4.66	.68
Academic Self-efficacy	4.52	.72
Facilitating Others' Empowerment	4.38	.91
Problem Solving Competence	3.82	.99
Participation	2.97	1.14
Choice	2.79	.83
Impact	2.55	.79

The descriptive statistics analyses measuring mean and standard deviation for each item in the SEQ (Table 4.3) indicated that item 21 'I have an impact on school-wide decisions' ( $M = 1.90$ ) had the lowest mean value of all the items in the SEQ. On the other hand, the highest mean was found to be in item 9 'I believe I can be successful if I study hard' ( $M = 5.22$ ).

When the mean values of the items in each sub-scale were examined separately, it was found that item 3 'I am successful in achieving my goals' had the lowest mean value ( $M = 4.34$ ) while item 2 'I don't give up easily when I face challenges' had the highest mean ( $M = 4.94$ ) in General Self-efficacy scale. In Academic Self-efficacy scale, the lowest mean was seen in item 11 'I know what I need to do in preparing for the exams' ( $M = 4.12$ ) and the highest mean was found in item 9 'I believe I can be successful if I study hard' ( $M = 5.22$ ). Regarding the scale of Choice, item 18 'I choose the subjects to be included in the course content' had the lowest mean ( $M = 2.19$ ) and item 12 'I determine the topic of any project or task' had the highest mean with a value of 3.48. In the sub-scale of Impact, the lowest mean was found in item 21 'I have an impact on school-wide decisions' ( $M = 1.90$ ) and the highest mean value was seen in item 16 'I contribute to the course with my active participation' ( $M = 3.03$ ). Among four items in the scale of Facilitating Others' Empowerment, item 25 'I help my schoolmates with daily matters' ( $M = 4.70$ ) indicated the highest mean while the lowest one was found in item 22 'I try to support my schoolmates to improve themselves in their interested areas. ( $M = 4.70$ ). In the scale for Critical Awareness, item 26 'I am aware of the

problems in the school' had the highest mean value ( $M = 5.16$ ) and item 30 'I care about the students' problems with the school' had the lowest mean value ( $M = 4.33$ ). Regarding the sub-scale of Problem Solving Competence, the highest mean value was found in item 34 'I find the cause of any problems I have at school' ( $M = 4.05$ ) while the lowest mean was seen in item 32 'I find the authorities to solve the problems I face at school' ( $M = 3.49$ ). Lastly, in the sub-scale for Participation, item 40 'I assume the leadership of a project / organization at the university' had the lowest mean score ( $M = 2.62$ ) and item 38 'I attend seminars and conferences at the university' had the highest mean value ( $M = 3.28$ ).

Table 4.3

*Descriptive Statistics Results for SEQ Items*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
<b>General Self-efficacy</b>				
Item 1	4.90	.93	1.00	6.00
Item 2	4.94	.92	1.00	6.00
Item 3	4.34	.89	1.00	6.00
Item 4	4.38	.94	1.00	6.00
Item 5	4.74	.93	1.00	6.00
<b>Academic Self-efficacy</b>				
Item 6	4.57	1.16	1.00	6.00
Item 7	4.40	1.02	1.00	6.00
Item 8	4.25	1.00	1.00	6.00
Item 9	5.22	1.12	1.00	6.00
Item 10	4.53	1.06	1.00	6.00
Item 11	4.12	1.10	1.00	6.00
<b>Choice</b>				
Item 12	3.48	1.23	1.00	6.00
Item 13	3.29	1.26	1.00	6.00
Item 14	2.71	1.24	1.00	6.00
Item 15	2.28	1.05	1.00	6.00
Item 18	2.19	1.08	1.00	6.00
<b>Impact</b>				
Item 16	3.03	1.14	1.00	6.00
Item 17	2.90	1.10	1.00	6.00
Item 19	2.06	.99	1.00	5.00
Item 20	2.85	1.13	1.00	6.00
Item 21	1.90	.99	1.00	6.00
<b>Facilitating Others' Empowerment</b>				
Item 22	4.15	1.17	1.00	6.00
Item 23	4.21	1.13	1.00	6.00
Item 24	4.45	1.03	1.00	6.00
Item 25	4.70	1.05	1.00	6.00
<b>Critical Awareness</b>				
Item 26	5.16	1.00	1.00	6.00
Item 27	4.85	1.05	1.00	6.00

Table 4.3 (continued)

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
Item 28	4.86	1.13	1.00	6.00
Item 29	4.58	1.25	1.00	6.00
Item 30	4.33	1.34	1.00	6.00
Item 31	4.39	1.31	1.00	6.00
<b>Problem Solving Competence</b>				
Item 32	3.49	1.29	1.00	6.00
Item 33	3.94	1.28	1.00	6.00
Item 34	4.05	1.21	1.00	6.00
Item 35	3.80	1.29	1.00	6.00
<b>Participation</b>				
Item 36	3.24	1.37	1.00	6.00
Item 37	3.02	1.49	1.00	6.00
Item 38	3.28	1.43	1.00	6.00
Item 39	2.82	1.41	1.00	6.00
Item 40	2.62	1.40	1.00	6.00
Item 41	2.99	1.33	1.00	6.00
Item 42	3.09	1.35	1.00	6.00
Item 43	2.71	1.33	1.00	6.00

Additionally, the data were analysed by sorting the groups in terms of some independent variables. As it can be seen in Table 4.4, the overall mean values for students' sense of empowerment are presented by gender. According to the results, female students ( $n = 167$ ) had higher sense of empowerment ( $M = 3.82$ ,  $SD = .52$ ) than males ( $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = .54$ ) with a close standard deviation value.

Table 4.4

*Descriptive Statistics Results for Overall SEQ Scores by Gender*

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Females	167	3.82	.52
Males	199	3.71	.54

The descriptive statistics results were also examined in terms of the achievement scores of the participants (Table 4.5). While low achievers ( $n = 59$ ) having a score between 0-64 had the lowest mean for overall student empowerment ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = .61$ ), high achievers ( $n = 48$ ) had the highest mean value ( $M = 3.97$ ,  $SD = .46$ ) indicating a 'moderate' empowerment level.

Table 4.5

*Descriptive Statistics Results for Overall SEQ Scores by Achievement*

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
0-64 (Low Achievers)	59	3.75	.61
65-84 (Moderate Achievers)	259	3.73	.53
85-100 (High Achievers)	48	3.97	.46

**4.2 Inferential Statistics for Students' Sense of Empowerment**

The study employed inferential statistics analyses to answer one of the research questions aiming to find out whether there was a significant difference in the students' overall empowerment scores in terms of some independent variables determined as gender and academic achievement scores. To this aim, an independent samples t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were run after checking certain assumptions (Field, 2009). Regarding the subscales of SEQ, two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to find out if gender and academic achievement had a significant impact on the dimensions of empowerment. The results of the analyses are presented in 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 in detail.

**4.2.1 Analyses on Overall Mean Scores of SEQ for Gender**

One of the research questions was to investigate if the students' overall sense of empowerment significantly differed in terms of their gender. To this aim, the independent samples t-test was performed to compare the students' overall empowerment mean scores according to the gender variable. After checking certain assumptions, the overall mean scores obtained from SEQ were analysed to reveal any meaningful difference between male ( $n = 199$ ) and female participants ( $n = 167$ ).

**4.2.1.1 Assumption Check for Independent Samples t-Test Analysis**

Prior to performing the independent samples t-test, the assumptions of independent observation, normality and homogeneity of variance were checked beforehand (Field,

2009). To begin with, the assumption of independent observation was met since the data were randomly and independently sampled. That is, each case in the dataset was representing a different participant. Then the normality was checked by examining skewness and kurtosis values, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results, histograms and Q-Q plots. Skewness and kurtosis values for overall mean scores of SEQ for both groups were found to be between -3 and +3 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Next, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results for overall mean scores of SEQ were examined. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results were found to be non-significant ( $p > .05$ ) indicating normality for overall SEQ scores of both groups. When histograms and Q-Q plots for overall mean scores of SEQ were examined for each group, it was seen that the data points were close to the diagonal line and histograms demonstrated almost normal distribution. Overall, the assumption of normality was not violated.

Finally, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was checked through Levene's Test. The test result for overall SEQ scores indicated an equal variance between the groups ( $F = .577, p > .05$ ) and it was concluded that that the assumption was not violated (Field, 2009).

Consequently, it became possible to run the independent samples t-test analysis since all the assumptions were met by the data set.

#### **4.2.1.2 Independent Samples t-Test Results on Overall Mean Scores of SEQ for Gender**

The independent samples t-test was performed to explore whether there was a significant difference in the overall mean scores of SEQ in terms of gender variable. As it can be seen in Table 4.6, the test results indicated that there was not a statistically difference between the overall SEQ scores of males ( $M = 3.71, SD = .54$ ) and females ( $M = 3.82, SD = .52$ );  $t(364) = 1.87, p > .05$ . That is, gender did not have a significant effect on the overall mean scores of SEQ.

Table 4.6

*Independent Samples t-Test Results for Overall SEQ Scores by Gender*

	Gender	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
SEQ overall scores	Female	167	3.82	.52	1.87	.06
	Male	199	3.71	.54		

**4.2.2 Analyses on Overall Mean Scores of SEQ for Achievement**

One of the research questions was to investigate if the students' overall sense of empowerment significantly differed in terms of their achievement scores. For this purpose, one-way univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to compare the students' overall empowerment mean scores according to the achievement variable. After checking certain assumptions for one-way ANOVA, the overall mean scores obtained SEQ were analysed to reveal any meaningful difference between low ( $n = 59$ ), moderate ( $n = 259$ ) and high achievers ( $n = 48$ ).

**4.2.2.1 Assumption Check for One-way ANOVA**

The assumptions of random sampling, independent observation, normality and homogeneity of variance were checked before running one-way univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) (Field, 2009).

Firstly, the assumptions of random sampling and independent observation were met since the data were collected through cluster random sampling and the participants responded the questionnaire independently without being influenced by each other. Then the normality was checked through skewness and kurtosis values, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results, histograms and Q-Q plots. Skewness and kurtosis values for overall mean scores of SEQ regarding achievement groups were found to be between -3 and +3 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Next, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results for overall mean scores of SEQ were examined. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results were found to be non-significant ( $p > .05$ ) indicating a normal distribution for overall SEQ mean scores. Histograms



and Q-Q plots for overall scores of SEQ of achievement groups also demonstrated almost normal distribution. Overall, the assumption of normality was not violated.

Lastly, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was checked through Levene's Test. According to the test results, the assumption was not violated for overall SEQ mean scores of three achievement groups ( $F = .965, p > .05$ ).

As all the assumptions were met by the dataset, one-way ANOVA was carried out to make comparisons in the overall mean scores of SEQ regarding the students' achievement scores.

#### **4.2.2.2 One-way ANOVA Results on Overall Mean Scores of SEQ for Achievement**

One-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the effect of achievement on students' overall empowerment mean scores. Achievement, being one of the independent variables of the study, consisted of three groups as low achievers having a score between 0-64 ( $n = 59$ ), moderate achievers having a score between 65-84 ( $n = 259$ ) and high achievers whose scores were between 85-100 ( $n = 48$ ). The dependent variable was the overall SEQ scores of the low achievers ( $M = 3.75, SD = .61$ ), moderate achievers ( $M = 3.73, SD = .53$ ) and high achievers ( $M = 3.97, SD = .46$ ). The result was found to be significant,  $F(2, 363) = 3.968, p = .02$  (Table 4.7). That is, achievement had a significant effect on the students' overall mean scores of SEQ.

Table 4.7

*One-way ANOVA Results for Overall SEQ Scores by Achievement*

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>η<sup>2</sup></i>
Academic Achievement Groups	2.29	2	1.14	3.96	.02
Error	104.82	363	.28		
Total	107.12	365			

\* $p < .05$

The effect size of academic achievement on the overall mean scores of SEQ was assessed by  $\eta^2$ . It was found that the effect size, explaining 2% of the variance of the dependent variable, was small (Field, 2009).

Lastly, Scheffe test was performed as a post-hoc comparison since the sample sizes were not equal among groups (Table 4.8). According to the test results, overall SEQ mean scores of high achievers ( $M = 3.97$ ,  $SD = .46$ ) was significantly higher than moderate achievers ( $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = .53$ ) while there was no significant difference between low achievers ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = .61$ ) and moderate achievers ( $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = .53$ ) or between low achievers and high achievers.

Table 4.8

*Post-hoc Comparisons with Scheffe Test for Overall SEQ Scores*

	Academic Achievement	Academic Achievement	<i>MD</i>	<i>p</i>
Scheffe	Low achievers	Moderate achievers	.01	.97
		High achievers	-.21	.11
	Moderate achievers	Low achievers	-.01	.97
		High achievers	-.23*	.02
	High achievers	Low achievers	.21	.11
		Moderate achievers	.23*	.02

\* $p < .05$

#### 4.2.3 Analyses on the Subscales of SEQ for Gender and Achievement

One of the research questions of the study was to find out if gender and achievement had a significant impact on the dimensions of empowerment measured by eight subscales, namely General Self-efficacy, Academic Self-efficacy, Impact, Choice, Facilitating Others' Empowerment, Critical Awareness, Problem Solving Competence and Participation. To this aim, two-way (2x3) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to compare the differences in the students' scores for the subscales of SEQ scores regarding gender variable having two levels as male and female and achievement groups consisting of three levels as low, moderate and high achievers.

Since there were two independent variables determined as gender and achievement and eight dependent variables as the dimensions of empowerment, two-way MANOVA was selected as the most appropriate analysis to explore the effect of gender and achievement on empowerment dimensions considering the relationship between the dependent variables. Besides, this controlled the Type I error that was likely to inflate by performing multiple ANOVAs.

#### **4.2.3.1 Assumption Check for two-way MANOVA**

There are certain assumptions to be met before performing MANOVA. The assumptions of interval scale of measurement, independent observation, absence of univariate and multivariate outliers, absence of multicollinearity among dependent variables, multivariate normality and homogeneity of covariance and covariance matrix were checked before running two-way MANOVA (Field, 2009).

Firstly, the assumptions of interval scale of measurement and independent observation were met since the data were collected through six-point sub-scales and the participants responded the questionnaire independently without being influenced by each other. Then standardized scores were checked to detect any univariate outliers. The scores were not below or above the standardized score of 3.29 indicating the absence of univariate outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Additionally, the Mahalanobis distance ( $D^2$ ) was calculated in order to identify any multivariate outliers. Since 6 cases were found above the critical value of 26.13 ( $df = 8, p = .001$ ), they were removed from the dataset for further analysis.

Next, the absence of multicollinearity among dependent variables was checked through tolerance, Variation Influence Factor (VIF) values and correlation coefficients. Tolerance values were found above .20 ranging from .55 to .78 (Menard, 1995; as cited in Field, 2009). VIF values were ranging from 1.80 to 1.26, which were below the critical value of 10 (Myers, 1990; as cited in Field, 2009). Correlation coefficients were not above .90 (Field, 2009) ranging between .63 and .11. Overall, these results indicated no multicollinearity among the dependent variables.

The assumption of univariate normality was checked through skewness and kurtosis values, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results, histograms and Q-Q plots. Skewness and kurtosis values for eight sub-dimensions were found to be between -3 and +3 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Next, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results were examined for eight dependent variables. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test results were found to be significant ( $p < .05$ ) for the subscales. However, these tests are sensitive to the sample size; therefore, they work better for the sample sizes less than 25 per group (Field, 2009). When histograms and Q-Q plots for were examined, it was seen that the data points were close to the diagonal line and histograms demonstrated almost normal distribution. Overall, the assumption of univariate normality was not violated. Additionally, multivariate normality assumption was checked through Mardia's test and the result was found significant ( $p < .001$ ). Although this result indicated the violation of multivariate normality assumption, the analysis was continued due to the large sample size.

Finally, Levene's test results for the homogeneity of variance and Box's M test results for the homogeneity of covariance matrix were examined as the final step. Box's M test (217.150,  $p > .05$ ) was found nonsignificant, indicating equality of covariance matrices. Levene's test results were also found non-significant for each empowerment dimension except for Critical Awareness (Table 4.9). Since Levene's test results can be found significant in large samples, standard deviations should be considered to decide on the violation of equality of variance assumption (Field, 2009). Based on the close variances in Critical Awareness subscale, it was concluded that the assumption was not violated.

Table 4.9

*Levene's Test Results for Dimensions of Empowerment*

	<i>F</i>	<i>df1</i>	<i>df2</i>	<i>p</i>
General Self-efficacy	1.52	5	354	.18
Academic Self-efficacy	1.30	5	354	.26
Choice	.65	5	354	.65
Impact	1.82	5	354	.10
Facilitating Others' Empowerment	.48	5	354	.78
Critical Awareness	2.69	5	354	.02
Problem Solving Competence	1.51	5	354	.18
Participation	.65	5	354	.66

Overall, all the assumptions were met by the data set for conducting two-way MANOVA to explore the effect of gender and achievement on students' scores in the subscales of student empowerment.

#### 4.2.3.2 Two-way MANOVA Results on the Sub-scales of SEQ for Gender and Achievement

The mean scores for each subscale of student empowerment questionnaire were examined regarding gender and achievement variables (Table 4.10). According to the descriptive statistics results, while males had higher mean scores in the subscales of Academic Self-efficacy, General Self-efficacy, Impact and Choice, females' mean scores were higher in the subscales of Facilitating Others' Empowerment, Critical Awareness, Problem Solving Competence and Participation. The results also indicated that high achievers had higher mean scores than low and moderate achievers in all subscales except for Choice, Impact and Problem Solving Competence.

Table 4.10

*Descriptive Statistics for Subscales of SEQ by Gender and Achievement*

Variable	<i>Mean (SD)</i>		<i>Mean (SD)</i>		
	Female	Male	Low	Moderate	High
General Self-efficacy	4.67 (.61)	4.69 (.68)	4.69 (.72)	4.66 (.63)	4.77 (.65)
Academic Self-efficacy	4.49 (.68)	4.59 (.70)	4.20 (.63)	4.53 (.68)	4.98 (.60)
Choice	2.78 (.81)	2.82 (.84)	3.18 (.78)	2.70 (.82)	2.91 (.76)
Impact	2.51 (.78)	2.57 (.77)	2.83 (.94)	2.44 (.68)	2.75 (.89)
Facilitating Others' Empowerment	4.48 (.87)	4.30 (.89)	4.30 (.94)	4.37 (.89)	4.55 (.77)
Critical Awareness	4.87 (.81)	4.57 (.92)	4.63 (.97)	4.69 (.89)	4.90 (.65)
Problem Solving Competence	3.93 (1.0)	3.76 (.95)	3.90 (.97)	3.82 (1.0)	3.88 (.94)
Participation	3.08 (1.1)	2.91 (1.1)	3.02 (1.2)	2.95 (1.1)	3.17 (1.0)

In order to find out the effect of gender and achievement on the dimensions of empowerment, two-way MANOVA with Wilk's Lambda was performed since the result of Box's M test for homogeneity of covariance matrices was not significant.

As presented in Table 4.11, the results indicated a non-significant multivariate interaction between gender and achievement on the dependent variables,  $F(16, 694)$

= 1.33,  $p > .05$ , a nonsignificant multivariate main effect for gender,  $F(8, 347) = 1.06$ ,  $p > .05$ , and a significant multivariate main effect for academic achievement,  $F(16, 694) = 3.86$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .08$ , indicating a moderate effect (Cohen, 1988).

Table 4.11

*MANOVA and ANOVA Results for Gender x Achievement Effect on Student Empowerment Subscales*

Variable	MANOVA	ANOVA							
		D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8
Gender (G)	1.06	.64	1.11	.51	.033	1.12	1.90	4.54	.49
Achievement (A)	3.86*	.93	16.83**	8.85**	7.94**	1.24	1.80	.41	.77
G x A	1.33	1.31	.16	1.32	.61	.36	3.38	2.02	.30

Note.  $F$  ratio is Wilk's Lambda approximation.

D1= General Self-efficacy; D2= Academic Self-efficacy; D3= Choice; D4= Impact; D5= Facilitating Others' Empowerment; D6= Critical Awareness; D7= Problem Solving Competence; D8= Participation

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .006$

Furthermore, univariate ANOVA statistics were examined to ensure in which subscales of empowerment achievement groups significantly differed from each other. In order to avoid Type I error, Bonferroni correction was applied through dividing the alpha level (.05) by the number of dependent variables, which was eight dimensions of student empowerment. The new alpha level was adjusted as .006. Univariate ANOVA yielded a significant difference among achievement groups only in the subscales of Choice, Impact and Academic Self-efficacy. The  $F$  values considering these three dimensions might be given as;  $F_{academic\ self\ efficacy}(2, 354) = 16.83$ ,  $p < .006$ ,  $\eta^2 = .08$ ;  $F_{choice}(2, 354) = 8.85$ ,  $p < .006$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$ ;  $F_{impact}(2, 354) = 7.94$ ,  $p < .007$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$ . The effect sizes ranged from small to moderate according to partial  $\eta^2$  results (Cohen, 1988).

Consequently, post-hoc comparisons with Scheffe test were performed to reveal the source of difference among achievement groups regarding their mean scores in the subscales of Academic Self-efficacy, Choice and Impact. According to the results, high achievers' academic self-efficacy scores ( $M = 4.98$ ) were significantly higher

than moderate achievers ( $M = 4.53$ ) and low achievers ( $M = 4.20$ ). Also, the mean scores of moderate achievers were significantly higher than low achievers. Hence, all groups differed from each other in terms of their mean scores for Academic Self-efficacy. The results also suggested that low achievers' ( $M = 2.83$ ) and high achievers' mean scores ( $M = 2.75$ ) for Impact were significantly higher than moderate achievers' ( $M = 2.44$ ) while there was no significant difference between low and high achievers. In the subscale of Choice, low achievers ( $M = 3.18$ ) had significantly higher mean scores than moderate achievers ( $M = 2.70$ ) while there was no significant difference between low achievers and high achievers ( $M = 2.91$ ) or between moderate achievers and high achievers (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12

*Post Hoc Comparisons of the Subscales of SEQ for Achievement*

Group	Dimensions		
	Academic Self-efficacy	Impact	Choice
	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
Low achievers (1)	4.20	2.83	3.18
Moderate achievers (2)	4.53	2.44	2.70
High achievers (3)	4.98	2.75	2.91
Post hoc	3>2>1	1,3>2	1>2

*Note.* Post-hoc shows only significant differences

### 4.3 Content Analysis for Student Empowerment Enablers and Barriers

One of the research questions of the study was to reveal the factors affecting student empowerment from the perspective of students. It was aimed to find out the enablers and the barriers to the student empowerment. To this aim, two open-ended questions were asked in the questionnaire. As it was thought that the participants might not have had any knowledge of the concept, the definition of student empowerment was provided in the questionnaire with necessary instructions that would guide the students while responding to the questions. The participants were told to read the definition of student empowerment and then answer them according to it. The questions were as follows:

1. As a student, what school practices or conditions do you think enable your empowerment?

2. What school practices or conditions do you think are the barriers to your empowerment?

The responses given to these two questions were transferred to Excel. Each response was labelled by certain codes and these codes later emerged as themes and sub-themes by content analysis (Creswell, 2007). The results showed that students had more to say about the barriers than the enablers in relation to the school practices. While most of the participants pointed out a lot of school practices hindering their empowerment, there was a small number of response explaining the current practices enabling student empowerment.

As demonstrated in Table 4.13, the themes of ‘teacher-student relations’ and ‘instruction’ were identified as the current enablers of student empowerment in the context of the study. Regarding teacher-student relations, some students explained how their relationship with teachers empowered them by some giving examples. According to the results, the empowering teacher-student relations were those in which teachers were open to dialogue, supported the students academically and socially, shared their power with students in decision making and served as a guide. The relationship was also characterized by mutual trust and understanding.

Additionally, some students stated that current practices in the classroom helped them feel empowered. According to them, the empowering classroom activities were those in which they were more active and had a chance to practice their language skills.



Table 4.13

*Themes and Sub-themes as Enablers of Student Empowerment*

Themes	Sub-themes	<i>f</i>
Teacher-student relations	academic and social support	15
	teacher as a guide	10
	sharing problems	7
	shared decision making	6
	mutual trust	6
Instruction	providing chance to practice language	11
	group works	8
	engaging classroom activities	5
	variety in classroom activities	4

After completing the content analysis for the current enablers of empowerment in the context of the study, the responses given to the second question were coded and categorized for certain themes (Table 4.14). The themes were identified as school location, school administration, teachers, curricular and extra-curricular activities and resources. Each theme consisted of the barriers to student empowerment from the students' perspective.

Regarding the frequency of the ideas, the students mostly explained how the location of the school affected their sense of empowerment. While some students made complaints of the transportation problems and how it negatively impacted their motivation, some of them complained of not being able to socialize because of lack of facilities within and around the school.

The practices of school administration were also stated as the barriers to student empowerment. The most common idea regarding this theme was that students were not involved in making decisions on school related issues. They emphasized that their ideas, demands and problems were neglected by the school principals. They expressed their feelings about how important to be respected by the school administration. Likewise, some type of teacher-student relations were also identified as a factor hindering student empowerment. The lack of respect to students, not sharing decision

making process were some of the most common attitudes described as the barriers to student empowerment. According to some students, having a close relationship with the teacher could make them feel empowered as they would not feel any hesitation while expressing their ideas.

Regarding the curricular and extra-curricular activities, the lack of social activities and organizations by which students would both learn about their interested areas and socialize were underlined as the barriers to feel socially empowered. Additionally, some students pointed out that the course content did not meet their needs as they did not align with their academic areas. Therefore, they stated that they should have been consulted while designing the program. Another point underlined in the responses was about the module system. The test anxiety was identified as one of the factors affecting their empowerment. They explained that the module system made them feel anxious about failing and this psychologically disempowered them.

Lastly, resources that were not available in the context of the study were identified as a factor hindering empowerment of the students. It was stated that there was no place to study in the building. Also, supplementary materials were found insufficient by some students. The physical problems such as class size and canteen were emphasized as barriers to empowerment.

Table 4.14

*Themes and Sub-themes Emerged as Barriers to Student Empowerment*

Themes	Sub-themes	<i>f</i>
School Location	Transportation problems	89
	Lack of facilities on the campus	53
	Poor facilities to socialize in the school surrounding	47
School Administration	Not involving students in decision making process	19
	Being indifference to students' demands	15
	Disregarding students' ideas	14
	Neglecting students' problems	10
	Being inadequate to solve the existing problems	7
	Not supporting freedom of thought	7
Teachers	Not having a close relation with students	28
	Not respecting students' ideas	17
	Not involving students in making decisions	15
	Having poor motivation to teach	9
	Not open to diverse ideas	5

Table 4.14 (continued)

*Themes and Sub-themes Emerged as Barriers to Student Empowerment*

Curricular & Extra-Curricular activities	Lack of seminars or conferences	38
	Lack of social activities	26
	Not creating conditions to practice English outside the classroom	15
	Absence of student clubs	12
	Not preparing students for academic studies	10
	Students' not having a voice in content selection	7
	Test anxiety as a result of module system	7
Resources	Absence of a library to study	14
	Lack of supplementary materials	9
	Physical problems	4

#### 4.4 Summary of the Results

In the study, descriptive statistics, inferential statistics and content analysis were performed in order to answer the research questions. Regarding the first research question, the descriptive statistics results indicated a 'moderate' empowerment level for the whole group. Then some inferential statistics were employed to answer the sub-research questions of the study.

To begin with, the independent samples t-test was performed to explore whether there was a significant difference in the overall mean scores of SEQ in terms of gender variable. The t-test test results indicated that there was not a statistically difference between the overall SEQ mean scores of males and females. That is, gender did not have a significant effect on the overall mean scores of SEQ.

Secondly, one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the effect of achievement on students' overall empowerment mean scores. The result was found to be significant with a small effect size. In other words, achievement had a significant effect on overall mean scores of SEQ. According to Scheffe test results, overall SEQ mean scores of high achievers was significantly higher than moderate achievers while there was no significant difference between low achievers and moderate achievers or between low achievers and high achievers.

Thirdly, two-way MANOVA was performed in order to find out the effect of gender and achievement on the dimensions of empowerment, namely General Self-efficacy, Academic Self-efficacy, Choice, Impact, Facilitating Others' Empowerment, Critical Awareness, Problem Solving Competence and Participation. The results indicated a non-significant multivariate interaction between gender and achievement on the dependent variables, a nonsignificant multivariate main effect for gender and a significant multivariate main effect for achievement.

Then univariate ANOVA statistics were examined to ensure in which subscales of empowerment achievement groups significantly differed from each other. Univariate ANOVA yielded a significant difference among achievement groups only in the subscales of Choice, Impact and Academic Self-efficacy. Post-hoc comparisons with Scheffe test were performed to reveal the source of difference among achievement groups regarding their mean scores in the subscales of Academic Self-efficacy, Choice and Impact. According to the results, high achievers' academic self-efficacy scores ( $M = 4.98$ ) were significantly higher than moderate achievers ( $M = 4.53$ ) and low achievers ( $M = 4.20$ ). Also, the mean scores of moderate achievers were significantly higher than low achievers. Hence, all groups differed from each other in terms of their mean scores for Academic Self-efficacy. The results also suggested that low achievers' ( $M = 2.83$ ) and high achievers' mean scores ( $M = 2.75$ ) for Impact were significantly higher than moderate achievers' ( $M = 2.44$ ) while there was no significant difference between low and high achievers. In the subscale of Choice, low achievers ( $M = 3.18$ ) had significantly higher mean scores than moderate achievers ( $M = 2.70$ ) while there was no significant difference between low achievers and high achievers ( $M = 2.91$ ) or between moderate achievers and high achievers.

Regarding the content analysis results for two open-ended questions, the themes of 'teacher-student relations' and 'instruction' were identified as the current enablers of student empowerment while the themes of school location, school administration, teachers, curricular and extra-curricular activities and resources were stated as the current barriers to empowerment. Each theme consisted of sub-themes depicting

certain characteristics related to the identified factors promoting and constraining empowerment.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

This chapter aims to discuss the findings of the study with a critical point of view by comparing the results with the related literature and to suggest some implications for practice and recommendations for further research.

#### **5.1 Conclusion of the Results**

This study initially aimed to explore to what extent the students at an English Preparatory Program of a state university perceived themselves empowered. To this aim, a new scale was developed measuring student empowerment on intrapersonal, interpersonal, interactional and behavioural domains. In that sense, the results obtained from this study will contribute to the small body of literature comprising studies most of which only focused on the intrapersonal empowered outcomes within the classroom context. Although there was a limited number of student empowerment studies in literature to compare the findings of this study with other researches, some of the results were found to be consistent with previous studies. This study also provided new insights and perspectives to the concept of student empowerment.

Regarding the first research question aiming to find out the extent of the students' sense of empowerment, it was found that the students in the study context were 'moderately' empowered based on the overall student empowerment scores obtained from the newly developed questionnaire. Although this does not provide much information related to student empowerment, it helps us to get a general idea on the students' sense of empowerment and makes it possible to compare the results with other studies. Since the concept of empowerment is context specific and changes over time (Zimmerman, 1995), it is possible to improve students' moderate empowerment perceptions and create highly empowered students through a conscious and permanent

empowerment process which is discussed in detail in the following part with some suggestions for practical implications.

When the mean scores obtained from the subscales of Student Empowerment Questionnaire were examined, it was found that the students had relatively low scores in the subscales of Participation, Choice and Impact. This finding suggested that although the students had a higher sense in other subscales related to general and academic self-efficacy, problem solving competence, critical awareness and facilitating others' empowerment, their belief in having an influence on school related matters and having a voice in decision making processes within the school was not necessarily high. The participation subscale measuring the behavioural empowered outcomes also indicated a low participation in curricular and extra-curricular activities. One of the reasons may be the lack of such activities in the school. The responses given to the open-ended questions shed light on this finding. A broad discussion on this issue is provided in the part where the content analysis results of the open ended-questions are discussed in detail.

This study also aimed to find out if certain background variables determined as gender and achievement had an impact on the students' sense of empowerment and its dimensions. Regarding gender variable, it was found that there was no significant difference between male and female students in terms of their overall scores of student empowerment and its dimensions. When the literature was scrutinized for gender, it was seen that this variable was only included in the study conducted among accounting students ( $n = 232$ ) by Mohaiyadin et al. (2013) in order to explore their empowerment perceptions and its relationship with academic performance in accounting and accounting technical skills. The results indicated no significant difference between the empowerment scores of male and female students. Although there was a consistency in the results, it is necessary to underline the fact that the empowerment score obtained in Mohaiyadin et al.'s study (2013) was restricted to the intrapersonal domain of empowerment as it was measured by the scale developed Fyrmier et al. (1996). Therefore, there seems to be a need for more research on this area to reach more meaningful conclusions.

The study also aimed to find out if the students' empowerment scores significantly differed in terms of their achievements. According to the results, achievement had a significant effect on student empowerment. It was found that high achievers had significantly higher sense of empowerment. This result was consistent with Frymier et al.'s study (1996) which was conducted among undergraduate students by utilizing the learner empowerment scale and the scale of learning indicators. A positive correlation between learner empowerment and learning indicators was reported by Frymier et al. (1996) and it was suggested that more empowered students would be more successful in their academic studies. Kirk et al. (2016) also found a positive correlation between students' grades and learner empowerment scores. However, the studies conducted by Zraa et al. (2011) and Mohaiyadin et al. (2013) indicated contrary findings to the result of this study. Mohaiyadin et al.'s study (2013) conducted among accounting students ( $n = 232$ ) indicated no significant difference among GPA levels in terms of their perceptions of empowerment. Zraa et al. (2011) found a similar result and reported no correlation between learner empowerment and academic performance of accounting students. Although some of the studies on student empowerment provided similar results, it is necessary to emphasize that all these studies only measured the intrapersonal domain of empowerment by utilizing the Learner Empowerment Scale which included items restricted to the classroom context.

The results for the subscales of student empowerment in terms of achievement indicated a significant difference among the groups in the subscales of Academic Self-efficacy, Impact and Choice. Regarding the subscales of Impact and Choice, the results were found interesting. It was found that low achievers had significantly higher scores in these subscales. Although high achievers were expected to have higher sense of impact and choice, the finding was contrary to this. This can be related to teacher behaviour and power use in these classes but there is still need for further research to explore the underlying reason for this result.

On the other hand, in the subscale of Academic Self-efficacy, high achievers had significantly higher sense of self-efficacy than moderate achievers and low achievers. The moderate achievers had also significantly higher sense of academic self-efficacy



than low achievers. Hence, all groups differed from each other in terms of their mean scores for academic self-efficacy. This finding suggested that achievement leads to one's having a belief in accomplishing academic tasks. This result was in line with previous studies on academic self-efficacy and achievement (Ayoobiyan & Soleimani, 2015; Rahimi & Abedini, 2009).

The study lastly aimed to identify the factors promoting and constraining empowerment from the students' perspective. Identifying enablers and barriers in the study context was thought to be necessary to create an empowering educational setting. To this aim, two open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire with a given definition of student empowerment. The results showed that students had more to say about barriers than enablers in relation to the current school practices. While most of the participants pointed out a lot of school practices hindering their empowerment, there was a small number of responses explaining the current practices promoting student empowerment.

The content analysis results indicated two themes as enablers of empowerment from the students' point of view. The theme of 'teacher-student relations' and 'instruction' were identified as the current enablers of student empowerment in the context of the study. Regarding teacher-student interaction, the empowering teacher-student relations were those in which teachers were open to dialogue, supported the students academically and socially, shared their power with students in decision making and served as a guide. The relationship was also characterized by mutual trust and understanding. On the other hand, the teacher-student relation lacking these characteristics was identified as a barrier to empowerment.

These findings were consistent with the studies investigating student empowerment in relation to teacher's behaviours and teacher's power use in the classroom. To illustrate, in the studies conducted among undergraduate students by Frymier et al. (1996), Frymier and Houser (2009) and Schrodtt and Finn (2012), teachers' verbal and nonverbal immediacy were found to be positively correlated with students' sense of empowerment. That is, the students had higher empowerment perceptions when their

efforts or ideas were appreciated by the teacher in verbal or nonverbal communication types. The literature also supported the finding of this study regarding teacher's sharing power with students and involving them in decision making processes. In the study conducted by Çakır (2015), authoritative teacher behaviour creating a learning environment where students adjusted the classroom rules and regulated their behaviour through explaining the rationale for these rules was found to be a predictor of learner empowerment.

Another study conducted by Schrodt et al. (2008) also found that teacher's referent and reward power use as prosocial power forms and legitimate power use, being an antisocial power form, were the predictors of learner empowerment in the classroom setting. It was suggested that the instructor who had an open and approachable attitude towards students by avoiding a superior approach and provided intrinsic motivation by recognizing and praising their efforts could enhance learner empowerment.

The study conducted by Diaz et al. (2016) regarding the influence of teacher power on learner empowerment also found that expert, referent and reward types of teacher power had a positive contribution to students' empowerment while coercive and legitimate types of power had a negative impact on it. It was suggested that the students who were criticized, punished or humiliated by the teacher as being the only authority in the classroom perceived teacher power as coercive and legitimate and had lower sense of empowerment. On the contrary, the students who had a trust in teacher's intellectual knowledge, associated themselves with their teacher and had a belief of being awarded by the teacher perceived teacher power as expert, referent and reward and they had higher sense of empowerment in the classroom context.

Kirk (2012) also identified teacher belief in student success, equitable teacher-student roles and shared decision making as the characteristics of empowering classroom setting. Kirk et al. (2016) found that teacher-student relationship based on trust, equitable teacher-student roles and sense of belonging in class were positively correlated with learner empowerment.

In addition to teacher-student relation, the theme of instruction as an enabler of empowerment included the activities in which students were engaged in group works to practice their language skills. This finding was consistent with the study which investigated empowerment in relation to classroom instruction types (Zraa et al., 2011). A positive correlation was found between learner empowerment and the classroom instruction by which students were encouraged to participate in group works. These students had higher learner empowerment levels than those taught in traditional classrooms.

As for the barriers to student empowerment, school location, school administration, teachers, curricular and extra-curricular activities and resources were identified as the factors constraining students' sense of empowerment. Among these themes school location appeared as a newly found factor affecting empowerment perceptions of the students in literature. While some students made complaints of the transportation problems and how it negatively impacted their motivation, some of them complained of not being able to socialize because of lack of facilities within and around the school. Although some empowering school-wide characteristics were provided in literature (Kirk, 2012), the location of the school was not discussed as an empowering factor. This finding can be related to the context specific nature of empowerment. As it was mentioned in the first chapter of the study, the school was moved to its new location which was almost one hour away from the main campus last year. Therefore, the students mostly stated the problems related to the new location of the school. Besides transportation and physical problems, the lack of facilities to socialize was seen as a barrier to empowerment. This finding can be considered as an evidence for the existence of interpersonal or relational dimension of empowerment (Christens, 2012). As also proposed by McQuillan (2005), social empowerment is one of the dimensions of student empowerment and this can be achieved through school practices leading to strong and supportive relationships within the school. In that sense, the need for facilities where students could build connections with their peers supported the literature highlighting the existence and importance of relational or social dimension of empowerment.

The practices of school administration also emerged as a factor affecting students' sense of empowerment. Not involving students in making decisions on school related issues was considered as a barrier to empowerment from the students' perspective. It was also emphasized that their ideas, demands and problems were neglected by the school principals. The need to be heard and respected by the school administration was consistent with the other findings in literature related to school-wide factors affecting students' empowerment. To illustrate, the study conducted by Kirk (2012) to explore the features of an empowering setting identified similar school-wide characteristics such as valued student leadership and embracing diversity. Also adequate resources was identified by Kirk (2012) as an empowering school characteristic. Likewise, the absence of a library, lack of supplementary materials and some physical problems emerged as barriers to empowerment in this study. For this reason, it can be concluded that the access to resources is perceived as an enabler of empowerment from the students' point of view.

Regarding the curricular and extra-curricular activities, the lack of social activities and organizations were underlined as the barriers to feel socially empowered. This finding also supported the importance of social empowerment (McQuillan, 2005). This can be also considered as one of the reasons for relatively low scores in the subscale of Participation. The absence of curricular and extra-curricular practices through which students can socialize, work in cooperation and gain leadership skills might be the cause of low participation in school activities.

Furthermore, some students pointed out that the course content did not meet their needs as they did not align with their academic areas. Therefore, they stated that they should have been consulted in the process of program design. This finding was parallel to the political empowerment of students proposed by McQuillan (2005). Having a voice to determine the learning goals in the curriculum was suggested as an aspect of students' political empowerment. Likewise, the relevancy of course content was identified as a cognitive element of empowerment by Thomas & Velthouse (1990) and as a dimension of learner empowerment by Frymier et al. (1996). It was proposed that meaningfulness of the content or task would lead to one's satisfaction with the goal

and this relevancy might enhance empowerment. Therefore, it can be concluded that students' sense of impact on content selection or curriculum design are one of the factors promoting empowerment both from motivational and political perspectives.

To sum up, although the literature on student empowerment was too limited to make a comparison on the findings, some of the existing studies provided a consistency in the study results. In addition to this, the factors perceived as barriers or promoters of empowerment in the study context also supported the previous findings in literature.

## **5.2 Implications for Practice**

Student empowerment has become one of the concerns to be discussed in the educational setting not only for accessing academic success but also for students' individual, intellectual and educational development by creating an empowering learning environment. In this sense, higher education institutions are responsible for equipping young adults with necessary skills for their individual development leading to social and political improvements in their environment as well since empowered students are more likely to have an impact on their individual, social and political worlds (Banks, 1991). This positive change can be achieved through some empowering practices that will help students accomplish certain empowered outcomes. This part aims to suggest some implications for practice to create empowered students in an empowering educational setting.

Firstly, empowerment should be adopted as an educational philosophy being opposed to the traditional paradigm which promotes hierarchy in the system, attributes more power to the authority by ignoring student voice. The values of empowerment philosophy are required to be internalized before practicing it. These values are based on respecting students and trusting their capability and competence to take control of their learning. As a school policy, this understanding should be reflected on every educational practice.

After adopting empowerment philosophy with its values, schools need to identify the disempowering factors and replace them with the enablers promoting intrinsic

motivation to learn, self-efficacy in general and academic domains and ownership. The empowering process should involve empowering practices through which students are involved in decision making by having a voice in school related matters such as determining learning goals and curriculum design and engaged in curricular and extra-curricular activities. Through these practices, it can be possible to set up an environment supporting shared power and positive relationships. Implementing some curricular and extra-curricular activities in which students work collaboratively with their peers and even with the academic staff may contribute to create such an empowering environment.

As for the school administration, it should be responsive to the demands and expectations of students. Students should be involved in governance by having a voice in making decisions on school related issues. In the study context, a student representative committee can be formed in order to be able to identify the needs, demands and expectations of the students. This way the students may have higher sense of impact, choice and participation in the school. Their belief in making a difference with their ideas and actions will lead to high sense of empowerment.

In the classroom level, teachers are responsible for setting up an empowering learning environment. For this reason, teachers' empowerment emerges as another concern in student empowerment. An empowered teacher can empower students by sharing power with them, trusting their capability of taking responsibility, involving them in decision making processes, promoting intrinsic motivation to learn and improving their general and academic self-efficacy beliefs through student-centred activities. In this sense, teachers need to be trained in order to be able to create an open, collaborative and empowering environment.

To sum up, schools initially need to adopt empowerment with its values as a policy and then take actions that will promote students' empowerment through consciously and permanently implemented curricular and extra-curricular practices.

### **5.3 Recommendations for Further Research**

In this study, the aim was to explore to the students' empowerment perceptions and to identify the factors promoting and constraining their sense of empowerment in the school. To this aim, a survey research design was utilized to depict the students' current perceptions of empowerment and its dimensions. Although the study employed focus groups as a preliminary study for instrument development and addressed open ended questions to explore more about the concept, the study was a descriptive one and limited to the quantitative data obtained through the newly developed scale. In that sense, a qualitative study might be conducted to enhance richer in-depth data for the identification of an empowering school setting. The school policy, school and classroom level characteristics, curricular and extracurricular practices are required to be examined through observation, interviews and document analysis in order to explore the characteristics needed to create an empowering school environment.

This study findings showed that the school milieu may influence students' sense of empowerment; therefore, a qualitative research may be conducted in different contexts to explore more about other contextual, cultural, political or relational dimensions which may influence students' sense of empowerment.

In order to find out more about empowerment process, an experimental research might be conducted to check the efficiency of certain interventions given as empowering practices. Through this study, it would be possible to see if there occurs any change in control and experimental groups in terms their empowerment perceptions.

Additionally, a correlational study can be carried out to investigate the relationship between student empowerment and teacher empowerment. This way it can be found out if an empowered teacher is crucial for promoting student empowerment by creating empowering educational settings. Also, through an in-depth qualitative case study on how the school policy and its stakeholders empower both the teachers and the students would shed light to understand policy and practice in educational context.

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## APPENDICES

### A. RANDOMLY SELECTED ITEMS BY DIMENSION

#### ÖĞRENCİ GÜÇLENMESİ ANKETİ

Değerli Öğrencimiz,

Bu anket, üniversitede hazırlık öğrencisi olarak sizin kendinize ilişkin algıladığınız güçlenme düzeyinizi belirlemek için hazırlanmıştır. Elde edilen sonuçlar, bilimsel bir araştırma için kullanılacaktır.

Anket iki bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölüm katılımcı demografik bilgilerini, ikinci bölüm ise eğitiminizi sizi güçlendirme durumunu anlamaya yönelik maddeleri içermektedir. Anketteki tüm sorulara içtenlikle cevap vermeniz araştırmada doğru sonuçların alınması açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır. Dilediğiniz an anketi cevaplamayı bırakabilirsiniz.

Anketi cevaplama süresi yaklaşık 15 dakikadır. Tüm kişisel bilgiler araştırmacıda gizli tutulacak ve yanıtlarınız sadece araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecektir.

Sizlerin katılımı, bilimsel çalışmalarla hazırlık okulumuzdaki uygulamaları sizlerin güçlendirilmenizi sağlayacak şekilde düzenlememize yardımcı olacaktır.

Katılımınız için teşekkür ederim. Başarı dilekleriyle,

Öğretim Görevlisi Azer Güzeldereli

İletişim: [azer.guzeldereli@kocaeli.edu.tr](mailto:azer.guzeldereli@kocaeli.edu.tr)

#### BÖLÜM 1. DEMOGRAFİK BİLGİLER

Cinsiyetiniz:	<input type="checkbox"/> Kadın
	<input type="checkbox"/> Erkek
Hazırlık okulunda bulunduğunuz sınıf türü:	<input type="checkbox"/> Starter
	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary
	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-intermediate
	<input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate
En son bitirdiğiniz modüldeki genel not ortalamanız:	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 - 64
	<input type="checkbox"/> 65 - 84
	<input type="checkbox"/> 85 - 100

## BÖLÜM 2. ÖĞRENCİ GÜÇLENMESİ ANKETİ

Bu bölüm, üniversitede hazırlık öğrencisi olarak sizin kendinize ilişkin algıladığınız güçlenme düzeyinizi belirlemek amacıyla hazırlanan maddelerden oluşmaktadır. Belirtilen maddeler hakkındaki düşüncelerinizi en uygun tanımlayan kutucuğu işaretleyiniz.

- F1 Madde 38.** Üniversitede düzenlenen ilgi alanıma uygun seminer/konferanslara katılıyorum.
- Madde 40.** Üniversitede hazırlanan bir proje/organizasyonun liderliğini üstlenirim.
- F2 Madde 16.** Derse aktif katılımımla dersin işlenişini etkilerim.
- Madde 21.** Okul genelinde alınacak kararlarda etkim vardır.
- F3 Madde 9.** Çok çalışsam da başarılı olabileceğime inanmıyorum.
- Madde 11.** Sınavlara hazırlanırken nasıl bir yol izlemem gerektiğini biliyorum.
- F4 Madde 26.** Okuldaki sorunların farkındayım.
- Madde 30.** Öğrencilerin okulla ilgili sorunlarını önemsiyorum.
- F5 Madde 22.** Okul arkadaşlarımla ihtiyaç duydukları alanlarda kendilerini geliştirmeleri için çaba gösteririm.
- Madde 25.** Okul arkadaşlarıma ders dışı konularda yardımcı olurum.
- F6 Madde 32.** Okulda karşılaştığım sorunları çözecek kaynakları/mercileri bulurum.
- Madde 34.** Okulda karşılaştığım herhangi bir sorunun sebebini bulurum.
- F7 Madde 12.** Ödev / proje konusunu kendim belirlerim.
- Madde 18.** Ders içeriğinde yer almasını istediğim konuları seçerim.
- F8 Madde 2.** Zorluklarla karşılaştığımda kolay pes ederim.
- Madde 3.** Hedeflerime ulaşmada başarılıyım.

## B. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

### GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

Bu araştırma, ODTÜ Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim Bölümü Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Azer Güzeldereli tarafından Doç. Dr. Hanife Akar danışmanlığındaki yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek amacıyla hazırlanmıştır.

#### **Çalışmanın amacı nedir?**

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'deki bir devlet üniversitesinde İngilizce zorunlu hazırlık öğrenimi gören öğrencilerin kendilerine ilişkin algıladıkları güçlenme düzeylerini belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

#### **Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz?**

Araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ederseniz, sizden beklenen, ankette yer alan bir dizi soruyu derecelendirme ölçeği üzerinde yanıtlamanız ve üç açık uçlu soruyu kısaca cevaplandırmanızdır. Bu çalışmaya katılım ortalama olarak 15 dakika sürmektedir.

#### **Sizden Topladığımız Bilgileri Nasıl Kullanacağız?**

Araştırmaya katılım tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır ve sizden kimlik belirleyici herhangi bir bilgi istenmemektedir. Ankete verdiğiniz yanıtlar gizli tutulacak, sadece araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Sizden elde edilecek bilgiler araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecek ve bilimsel bir çalışmada kullanılacaktır. Sağladığımız veriler gönüllü katılım formlarında toplanan kimlik bilgileri ile eşleştirilmeyecektir.

#### **Katılımınızla ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler:**

Anket, kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz istediğiniz an anketi yanıtlama işlemi bırakabilirsiniz. Böyle bir durumda anketi uygulayan kişiye, anketi tamamlamadığınızı söylemeniz yeterlidir.

#### **Araştırmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz:**

Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz, ODTÜ Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim Bölümü öğretim üyelerinden Doç. Dr. Hanife Akar (E-posta: [hanif@metu.edu.tr](mailto:hanif@metu.edu.tr)) ya da yüksek lisans öğrencisi Azer Güzeldereli (E-posta: [azer.guzeldereli@metu.edu.tr](mailto:azer.guzeldereli@metu.edu.tr)) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

***Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum.***

(Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

İsim Soyad

Tarih

İmza

---/---/----

## C. METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE PERMISSION 1

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ  
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

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Sayı: 28620816 / 88

20 Şubat 2019

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgili: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç. Dr. Hanife AKAR

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Azer GÜZELDERELJ' nin "Türkiye'deki bir devlet üniversitesinin İngilizce Hazırlık Programında öğrencinin güçlendirilmesi üzerine bir anket çalışması" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 079-ODTÜ-2019 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Prof. Dr. Tolga GENÇÖZ

Başkan

Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL

Üye

Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR

Üye

Prof. Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI (M.)

Üye

Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK

Üye

Doç. Dr. Pınar KAYGAN

Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT

Üye

## D. METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE PERMISSION 2

UYELANALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ  
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
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SİRCİ: 28620016 / 211

10 Mayıs 2019

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç.Dr. Hanife AKAR

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Azer GÜZELDEREL'in "Bir Devlet Üniversitesinin İngilizce Hazırlık Programında Öğrencinin Güçlendirilmesi Üzerine Bir Anket Çalışması" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 199-ODTÜ-2019 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerimize sunarız.

  
Prof. Dr. Turan GENÇOĞLU  
Başkan

Prof. Dr. Tolga CAŖI

Üye



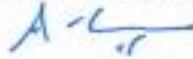
Doç.Dr. Pınar KAYGAN

Üye



Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT

Üye



Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ

Üye



Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Merve GÜNDÜZ

Üye



Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Süreyya Özcan KABASAKAL

Üye



## E. INSTITUTION APPROVAL

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 13/03/2019-E.5380



T.C.  
KOCAELİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğü



Sayı : 26853223-903.99/  
Konu : Öğr. Gör. Azer  
GÜZELDERELİ'nin Anket Talebi

### İLGİLİ MAKAMA

Yüksekokulumuz öğretim elemanlarından Öğr. Gör. Azer GÜZELDERELİ'nin Yüksekokulumuz Hazırlık Sınıfı öğrencilerine anket uygulama isteği Müdürlüğümüzce uygun görülmüştür.  
Bilgilerinizi arz ve rica ederim.

  
Öğr.Gör. Şule KILCI  
Yüksekokul Müdürü

#### Mevcut Elektronik İmzalar

ŞULE KILCI (Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğü - Yüksekokul Müdürü) 13/03/2019 14:40

Evrakı Doğrulamak İçin : [https://ebys.kocaeli.edu.tr/enVision/Validate\\_Doc.aspx?V=BE6LLAERR](https://ebys.kocaeli.edu.tr/enVision/Validate_Doc.aspx?V=BE6LLAERR)

Yüksekokul Sekreterliği: Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Atalar mahallesi Bağdat Caddesi No:83 Körfez/KOCAELİ  
Tel:0 262 527 40 00 Faks:0 262 527 40 02  
E-Posta :ydb@kocaeli.edu.tr Elektronik Ağ :<http://yabancidiller.kocaeli.edu.tr/>

Bu belge 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununun 5. Maddesi gereğince güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.









## G. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKE ÖZET

### TÜRKE'DEKİ BİR DEVLET ÜNİVERSİTESİNİN İNGİLİZE HAZIRLIK PROGRAMINDAKİ ÖĞRENCİLERİN GÜÇLENME ALGISI ÜZERİNE BİR ANKET ÇALIŞMASI.

#### Giriş

##### Araştırmanın Amacı ve Önemi

Eğitim alanında güçlendirme çalışmaları esasen örgütsel yönetim alanında yapılan araştırmalardan doğmuştur. Bu çalışmalardan esinlenen eğitimciler, güçlendirmeyi öğretim bağlamında kavramsallaştırmış ve öğrencilerin güçlenmesi sağlanarak akademik başarıyı yükseltmek amaçlanmıştır. Öğrencinin güçlendirilmesi kavramı eğitim felsefesi olarak sistemdeki hiyerarşiyi destekleyen geleneksel bürokratik paradigmaya karşı çıkan bir felsefe olarak tanımlanmıştır (Shulman & Luechauer, 1991). Her ne kadar geleneksel bürokratik sistem birçok okul tarafından benimsenmiş olsa da, bu yüzyılın mevcut vizyonları, karar verme süreçlerine öğrencileri de dahil ederek güçlenmelerini desteklemektedir (Maehr & Midgley, 1996).

Akademik kaygıların yanı sıra, öğrencinin güçlendirilmesine verilen önemin artmasının bir başka nedeni de, güçlendirilmiş öğrencilerin bireysel, sosyal ve politik dünyaları üzerinde daha güçlü bir etkiye sahip olmaları olabilir (Banks, 1991). Bu anlamda, yükseköğretim kurumlarının, genç yetişkinlerin çevrelerinde olumlu değişimlere yol açacak gerekli becerileri kazandırmaları beklenmektedir. Bu da öğrenci güçlenmesine katkıda bulunacak müfredat ve ders dışı uygulamalarla sağlanabilir.

Tüm bunlar göz önünde bulundurularak, bu çalışma ile, bir devlet üniversitesindeki İngilizce Hazırlık Programı öğrencilerinin kendilerini ne kadar güçlü algıladıklarını ortaya koymak ve güçlenme algılarının cinsiyet ve dil başarı puanları açısından farklılık gösterip göstermediğini bulmak amaçlanmıştır. Buna ek olarak, araştırmada, öğrencinin güçlenmesini sağlayan etkenler ve buna yönelik engellerin öğrencilerin perspektifinden keşfedilmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Çalışma, öğrencilerin güçlenme algılarını iyileştirmek için müfredat ve ders dışı etkinlikler yoluyla ne tür eylemlerin gerçekleştirilebileceğini aydınlatmaya çalışmaktadır.

Güçlendirme kavramı başlangıçta örgütsel araştırma alanında incelenmiş (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990) ve daha sonra öğretim bağlamında da çalışılmıştır (Çakır & Erdoğan, 2014; Çakır, 2015; Diaz ve diğerleri, 2016; Frymier ve diğerleri, 1996; Frymier & Houser, 2009; Frymier & Shulman, 1994; Kirk ve diğerleri, 2016; Mohaiyadin ve diğerleri, 2013; Schrodt ve diğerleri, 2008; Schrodt & Finn, 2012; Schultz & Shulman, 1993; Zraa ve diğerleri, 2011). Bu araştırmalar, güçlendirme kavramını yalnızca sınıf ortamı bağlamında inceleyerek öğrenci güçlenmesinden ziyade, öğrenen güçlenmesi üzerine odaklanmıştır. Ancak yükseköğretim bağlamında, üniversite öğrencilerinin güçlenme algılarını etkileyen çok çeşitli etmenler olabileceğinden, öğrenci güçlenmesi konusunu sadece sınıf ortamına sınırlayarak çalışmak yeterli bilgi sağlamayacaktır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma ile, araştırmacı tarafından yükseköğretim bağlamı için geliştirilen yeni bir ölçek aracılığıyla İngilizce Hazırlık Programı öğrencilerinin kendilerini ne kadar güçlü hissettiklerini ortaya çıkarmak amaçlanmıştır. Öğrencilerin güçlenme duygusunu değerlendirecek yükseköğretim bağlamına uygun mevcut bir ölçek bulunmadığından, geliştirilen Öğrenci Güçlenmesi Anketi (SEQ) ile literatüre katkı sağlanmaktadır. Ayrıca, bu çalışma güçlendirme kavramının doğasını ve boyutlarını öğrencilerin bakış açısından incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Odak gruplardan ve açık uçlu anket sorularından elde edilen bulgular, öğrenci güçlenmesi kavramına yeni boyutlar kazandırmaktadır.

Son olarak, bu çalışma, öğrencilerin çalışma bağlamındaki güçlenme algılarını iyileştirmek için müfredat ve ders dışı faaliyetler aracılığıyla ne tür eylemler gerçekleştirilebileceğine ilişkin ışık tutmaya çalışmaktadır.

## **Araştırma Soruları**

1. Bir devlet üniversitesinin İngilizce Hazırlık Programında okuyan öğrenciler kendilerini ne derecede güçlenmiş hissediyorlar?
2. Öğrencilerin güçlenme seviyeleri cinsiyet ve başarı değişkenlerine göre anlamlı bir farklılık gösteriyor mu?
3. Öğrencilerin güçlenmenin alt boyutlarına ilişkin algıları cinsiyet ve başarı değişkenlerine göre anlamlı bir farklılık gösteriyor mu?
4. Öğrencilere göre güçlenmelerini sağlayan ve kısıtlayan faktörler nelerdir?

## **Literatür Taraması**

Güçlendirme kavramı toplum psikolojisi, sosyoloji, yönetim, kadın çalışmaları ve eğitim gibi pek çok alanda çalışılmıştır (Lincoln ve diğerleri, 2002). Bu kavram üzerine yapılan ilk çalışmalar daha çok iş yerinde çalışanların güçlendirilmesine ilişkindir. Conger ve Kanungo (1988), çalışanların güçlenme algılarını araştıran ilk çalışmaları yapmış ve güçlendirmeyi motivasyon temelli bir kavram olarak tanımlamışlardır. Thomas ve Velthouse (1990), bu tanımlamadan yola çıkarak içsel motivasyon olarak kavramsallaştırdıkları güçlendirme konsepti için bilişsel bir model öne sürmüşlerdir. Bu model, eğitim alanında yapılacak güçlendirme çalışmalarına temel hazırlamıştır.

Zimmerman (1995) ise güçlendirimin bireysel boyutuna dair psikolojik güçlendirme kavramını alan yazına kazandırmıştır. Güçlendirme süreci ile güçlendirme çıktıları arasındaki ayırımın altını çizerek bireylerin psikolojik güçlenmelerinin bağlama ve evrene bağlı olarak değişiklik gösterebileceğini, bu sebeple de küresel bir ölçek geliştirmenin uygun olmayacağını öne sürmüştür. Bireylerin güçlenmeye dair algılarının zaman içinde iniş çıkışlar yapabileceğini, yani statik olmadığını, bu yüzden çeşitli uygulamalarla bu algının iyileştirilebileceğini savunmuştur. Zimmerman (1995) tarafından öne sürülen psikolojik güçlendirmeye ilişkin nomolojik ağ, içsel, ilişkisel ve davranışsal güçlenme çıktıları olmak üzere üç bileşenden oluşmaktadır. Bu

bileşenlerin birbiriyle ilişkili olduğunu ve her bir bileşen için belirlenecek güçlenme çıktılarının bulunulan bağlama göre değişebileceğini vurgulamıştır.

Eğitim alanında yapılan güçlendirme çalışmaları ise 90'lı yıllarda başlamıştır. Sınırlı sayıdaki bu çalışmaların çoğunluğu güçlendirme kavramını sınıf bağlamında inceleyerek öğrenenlerin güçlenme algısını saptamaya yönelik olmuştur. (Çakır & Erdoğan, 2014; Çakır, 2015; Diaz ve diğerleri, 2016; Frymier & Shulman, 1994; Frymier ve diğerleri, 1996; Frymier & Houser, 2009; Kirk ve diğerleri, 2016; Mohaiyadin ve diğerleri, 2013; Schrodts ve diğerleri, 2008; Schrodts & Finn, 2012; Schultz & Shulman, 1993; Zraa ve diğerleri, 2011). Az sayıdaki çalışmada ise öğretim ortamında güçlendirme kavramının doğasının ve boyutlarının keşfedilmesi amaçlanmıştır (Aloysius, 2013; Back, 2014; Bruntona & Jeffrey, 2014; Kirk, 2012; McQuillan, 2005; Sullivan, 2002).

Eğitim alanında güçlendirme kavramına ilişkin ilk çalışmalardan biri Frymier ve Shulman (1994) tarafından yapılmıştır. Conger ve Kanungo'nun (1988) güçlendirme tanımı üzerinden öğrenen güçlenmesini tanımlamaya çalışmışlardır. Frymier ve diğerleri (1996), güçlenmeyi içsel motivasyon olarak tanımlayan Thomas ve Velthouse'un (1990) güçlendirme modelinden hareketle öğrenenlerin güçlenme algılarını saptamak amacıyla bir ölçek geliştirmiştir. Çalışan-yönetici ilişkisini öğretmen-öğrenci arasındaki ilişkiye benzeterek sınıf içinde öğrencilerin güçlenme seviyelerini incelemeyi amaçlamışlardır. Geçerlik ve güvenilirlik çalışmaları da yapılan 38 maddelik bu ölçek, anlamlılık, yetkinlik ve etki boyutlarından oluşmaktadır. Alan yazında yapılan öğrenci güçlenmesi üzerine çalışmaların pek çoğunda bu ölçek kullanılmıştır.

Öğrenen güçlenmesinin öğretim ortamına ait çeşitli değişkenlerle ilişkisi de bazı çalışmalarda incelenmiştir. Bunlardan birkaçı öğretmenin güç kullanımı ve davranışları üzerine odaklanmıştır (Çakır, 2015; Diaz ve diğerleri, 2016; Frymier ve diğerleri, 1996; Frymier & Houser, 2009; Schrodts ve diğerleri, 2008; Schrodts & Finn, 2012). Yapılan çalışmalar genel olarak öğretmenin pozitif güç kullanımı, öğrencilere

olan yakınlığı ile öğrencilerin güçlenme algıları arasında olumlu bir ilişki olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Öğrencilerin güçlenme algıları ile başarıları arasındaki ilişki de bazı çalışmalarda incelenmiştir. Bazı çalışmalarda bu iki değişken arasında olumlu bir ilişki bulunurken (Frymier ve diğerleri, 1996) bazılarında ise böyle bir ilişki saptanmamıştır (Mohaiyadin ve diğerleri, 2013; Zraa ve diğerleri, 2011).

Güçlendirme kavramı alan yazındaki çoğu çalışmada motivasyon temelli bir kavram olarak tanımlanmış olmasına rağmen az sayıda çalışmada bu kavram farklı açılardan ele alınarak incelenmiştir. Bunun bir örneği Contreras León, & Chapetón Castro (2017) tarafından yapılan çalışmadır. Bu çalışmada öğrenci güçlendirilmesi eleştirel pedagoji perspektifinden ele alınmış ve bundan hareketle bir eylem çalışması yapılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonucunda sınıftaki demokratik uygulamaların, grup çalışmalarının, ders içeriğinin uygunluğunun ve öğretmen ile öğrenci arasındaki etkileşimin, öğrencilerin özerklik, liderlik, sosyal farkındalık ve vatandaşlık duygusuna katkıda bulunduğu öne sürülmüştür.

Bunlara ek olarak, güçlendirme kavramının diğer benzer konseptlerle olan ilişkisi de yapılan çalışmalar arasındadır. Güçlenme kavramının motivasyon, otonomi, ilgi, öz yeterlik, yetkinlik gibi konseptlerle bağlantısı ve onlardan farklılığı incelenmiştir (Brooks & Young, 2011; Mailloux, 2006; Weber & Patterson, 2000). Bu çalışmalardan elde edilen sonuçlarla güçlenme kavramı ile diğer konseptler arasında olumlu bir ilişkinin varlığı ortaya konmuştur.

Yukarıda bahsi geçen çalışmaların çoğunda güçlenme kavramının incelenmesi sınıf ortamıyla sınırlı tutulmuş, öğrenci güçlenmesinden ziyade öğrenen güçlenmesi üzerine çalışılmıştır. Alan yazında her ne kadar bu iki kavram birbirinin yerine kullanılmış olsa da öğrenci güçlenmesi sınıf ortamına sınırlandırılmadan daha geniş bir perspektiften ele alınmalıdır. Bu doğrultuda yapılan az sayıdaki çalışmalardan biri McQuillan'a aittir (1995). İki okulda yaptığı nitel araştırma sonucunda öğrenci güçlenmesini akademik, sosyal ve politik olmak üzere üç boyuttan oluşan bir kavram

olarak tanımlamıştır (2005). Güçlendirmenin hem bir süreç hem de sonuç olduğunu vurgulamıştır.

Eğitim alanındaki güçlendirme arařtırmalarının bir kısmı ise azınlık öğrencilerinin güçlenme algıları ve bunu etkileyen faktörler üzerine yapılmıştır (Aloysius, 2013; Back, 2014; Bruntona & Jeffrey, 2014). Bu çalışmalardan elde edilen bulgulara göre kültürel farklılıklar, okulun yönetim politikaları, dil yeterlikleri, azınlık öğrencileri ile okul çalışanları arasında ilişki, bu öğrencilerin güçlenme algılarını etkileyen faktörler olarak sunulmuştur.

Öğrencilerin güçlenmesini sağlayacak eğitim ortamının ne olduğu konusu da arařtırılmıştır. Öğrenci ve öğretmenlerle görüşme, odak grup ve gözlem yöntemleri kullanılarak öğrencileri güçlendiren okul ikliminin özelliklerini belirlemeye yönelik çalışma Kirk (2012) tarafından yapılmıştır. Elde edilen verilerden yola çıkarak ‘Öğrenci Güçlendirme Modeli’ öne sürülmüştür. Bu modelde belli başlı güçlendirme çıktıları ile sınıf ve okul karakteristiklerine yer verilmiştir. Öğretmenin öğrencilerinin başarısına dair inancı, eşitlikçi öğretmen-öğrenci rolleri, katılımı pekiştiren sınıf içi uygulamalar ve paylaşımcı karar verme gibi özellikler öğrenciyi güçlendiren sınıf karakteristikleri olarak belirlenmiştir. Öte yandan, okul genelindeki özellikler ise olumlu gelenekler, öğrenci liderliğine değer verilmesi, kültürel çeşitliliği benimseme, yeterli kaynakların sağlanması olarak belirlenmiştir.

Görüldüğü üzere, öğrenci güçlenmesi üzerine yapılan çalışmaların çoğunluğunda bu kavram motivasyon temelli bir konsept olarak ele alınmış ve sınıf ortamına indirgenerek incelenmiştir. Oysaki bu kavram, daha geniş bir perspektiften ele alınarak incelenmeli ve öğrenci güçlenmesi bütüncül bir yaklaşımla ele alınmalıdır. Bu kavramın doğası ve boyutları keşfedildikten sonra öğrencilerin güçlenme algılarını ölçebilmek için uygun bir ölçeğin geliştirilmesine ihtiyaç vardır.

## Yöntem

### Desen

Çalışmanın temel amacı, İngilizce Hazırlık Programında okuyan üniversite öğrencilerinin güçlenme seviyelerini incelemektir. Bu amaçla, bir grubun mevcut tutumları, görüşleri veya inançları hakkında veri sağladığı için kesitsel tarama araştırma deseni kullanılmıştır (Creswell, 2012). Kesitsel tarama araştırmasında, veriler örneklemeden anketler, ölçekler ve görüşmeler yoluyla tek seferde toplanır (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2015). Bu çalışmada, araştırmacı “Öğrenci Güçlenmesi Anketi” (SEQ) geliştirmiş ve Türkiye’deki bir devlet üniversitesinin İngilizce hazırlık programı öğrencilerinin güçlenme algılarını ortaya koymak için küme tipi rastgele örnekleme ile seçilen 17 sınıfta uygulamıştır.

### Örnekleme

Araştırmanın hedef evrenini, Türkiye'deki bir devlet üniversitesinde okuyan İngilizce hazırlık programı öğrencileri (N = 1350) oluşturmuştur. Hedef evrende çok sayıda küme bulunduğu için çalışmanın örneklemini seçmek için küme tipi rastgele örnekleme kullanılmıştır (n = 366). Bu tarz örneklemede, bireyler yerine gruplar rastgele seçilir ve böylece veri toplama süreci daha az zaman alıcı hale gelir (Fraenkel, Wallen ve Hyun, 2015). Bu örnekleme yöntemiyle tüm dil seviye gruplarının evrendeki oranları göz önünde bulundurularak dört başlangıç (n = 89), 11 orta (n = 236) ve iki orta-üstü (n = 41) olmak üzere üç dil seviyesinden 17 adet sınıf rastgele seçilmiştir.

### Veri Toplama Aracı

Öğrenci Güçlenmesi Anketi (SEQ), araştırmacı tarafından öğrencilerin güçlenme algısını belirlemek amacıyla oluşturulmuş çok boyutlu bir araçtır. Anket üç bölüme ayrılmıştır. İlk bölüm öğrencilerin demografik özelliklerini öğrenmeye yönelik birtakım sorular içermektedir. İkinci bölüm ise öğrencilerin güçlenme algılarını belirlemeye yönelik geliştirilen 43 kapalı uçlu sorudan oluşmaktadır. Katılımcıların,



anket sorularını “Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum” ve “Kesinlikle Katılıyorum” arasında deęişen altı puan aralığında cevaplamaları istenmektedir. Anketin son bölümü ise öğrencilerin bakış açısından öğrenci güçlenmesini sağlayan ve engelleyen faktörleri saptamak için iki adet açık uçlu sorudan oluşmaktadır. Ana veri toplanmadan önce anketin yapısal geçerlik ve güvenilirliğini yordamak amacıyla pilot uygulama yapılmıştır. Toplanan veri setine açımlayıcı faktör analizi uygulanmış ve güvenilirlik kat sayısı hesaplanmıştır. Analiz sonuçlarına göre anket sekiz boyuttan oluşmuş ve güvenilirlik kat sayısı .75 ile .94 arasında deęişiklik göstermiştir. Anketin genel güvenilirlik kat sayısı ise .91 olarak bulunmuştur.

### **Veri Toplama Süreci**

ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'ndan ve çalışmanın yapılacağı kurumdan gerekli izinler alındıktan sonra ilk pilot uygulama için veriler Mart 2019'da, ikinci pilot için ise Nisan 2019'da toplanmıştır. Pilot uygulamalar sonucunda son şeklini alan anket için tekrar ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kuruluna başvurulmuş ve gerekli izin alındıktan sonra ana veri Mayıs 2019'un ilk iki haftasında toplanmıştır. Pilot çalışma için seçilen sınıflar ana çalışmaya dahil edilmemiştir. Araştırmaya rastgele seçilen 17 sınıftan 366 öğrenci katılmıştır. Araştırmacı seçilen sınıfları ders saatlerinde ziyaret ederek öğrencileri çalışmanın amacı ve kapsamı hakkında bilgilendirmiştir. Gönüllü Katılım Formunu imzalayan öğrencilere anket verilmiş ve cevaplama süresi yaklaşık 15 dakika sürmüştür.

### **Veri Analizi**

Pilot uygulama ve ana çalışma sürecinde toplanan verilerin analizinde IBM SPSS 20 ODTÜ versiyonu kullanılmıştır. Pilot uygulama için veri seti üzerinde SPSS aracılığıyla açımlayıcı faktör analizi yapılmıştır. Çalışmanın araştırma sorularına ilişkin toplanan verilerin analizi için ise betimsel ve çıkarımsal analiz yöntemlerinden faydalanılmıştır. Katılımcıların demografik özelliklerini ve güçlenme algılarını tanımlamak için betimsel analiz yapılarak frekans, ortalama ve standart sapma deęerleri hesaplanmıştır. Öğrencilerin güçlenme seviyelerinin cinsiyet ve başarı deęişkenleri açısından anlamlı farklılıklar gösterip göstermediğini saptamak için ise

çıkarımsal analiz yapılmıştır. İlk olarak, anketin toplamından elde edilen genel ortalama puanlarını cinsiyet değişkenine göre incelemek için bağımsız örnekler t testi, başarı değişkeni için ise tek yönlü varyans analizi uygulanmıştır. Bu iki değişkenin anketin alt boyutları üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi olup olmadığını bulmak için ise iki yönlü çok değişkenli varyans analizi yapılmıştır. Son olarak, ankette açık uçlu iki sorudan elde edilen nitel veriler için içerik analizi kullanılmıştır. Bu sayede açık uçlu sorulara verilen cevaplar, manuel olarak kodlandıktan sonra belirli temalar altında kategorize edilmiştir.

### **Araştırma Sınırlılıkları**

Veri toplayıcının, araştırmanın yürütüldüğü kurumda eğitimci olarak çalışması, çalışmanın iç geçerliliğine tehdit olarak değerlendirilebilir. Böyle durumlarda katılımcılar gizlilik veya sosyal istenirlik gibi çeşitli kaygılar nedeniyle dürüst olmaktansa, sosyal olarak daha kabul edilebilir cevaplar vermeyi tercih edebilirler. Araştırmacı bu tehdidi kontrol altına almak için katılımcıları çalışmanın gizliliği hakkında bilgilendirerek sorulara samimi olarak cevap verilmesini sağlamaya çalışmıştır.

### **Bulgular**

Öğrencilerin güçlenmeye ilişkin algı seviyelerini belirlemeyi hedefleyen çalışmanın birinci araştırma sorusuna yönelik betimsel analizlerden elde edilen bulgular, öğrencilerin anket genelinde elde ettikleri ortalama değere göre “orta düzey” bir güçlenme seviyesine sahip olduklarını göstermiştir.

Öğrenci güçlenme seviyesinin cinsiyet ve başarı değişkenine göre anlamlı bir farklılık gösterip göstermediğini saptamak amacıyla yapılan çıkarımsal analiz sonuçlarına göre ise kadın ve erkek öğrenciler arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark bulunmazken, başarı değişkenine göre gruplar arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark olduğu saptanmıştır. Yapılan devam analizlerine göre yüksek başarılı öğrenciler ile orta başarılı öğrenciler arasında güçlenme seviyesi açısından istatistiksel olarak

anlamsal bir fark gözlenmesine rağmen diğer gruplar arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark bulunmamıştır.

Genel Öz-yeterlik, Akademik Öz-yeterlik, Seçim, Etki, Başkalarının Güçlendirilmesi, Eleştirel Farkındalık, Problem Çözme Yetkinliği ve Katılımdan oluşan öğrenci güçlenmesinin alt boyutlarında cinsiyet ve başarı değişkenlerinin etkili olup olmadığını saptamak için yapılan iki yönlü çok değişkenli varyans analizi sonuçlarından elde edilen bulgulara göre sadece başarı değişkeninin bu boyutlar üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi olduğu saptanmıştır. Bu farklılaşmanın hangi alt boyutlarda meydana geldiğini belirlemek amacıyla yapılan tek yönlü varyans analizine göre başarı değişkeninin Seçim, Etki ve Akademik Öz-yeterlik alt boyutlarında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir etkisi olduğu bulunmuştur. Akademik Öz-yeterlik, Seçim ve Etki alt boyutlarında başarı grupları arasındaki farklılaşmayı ortaya çıkarmak için yapılan karşılaştırma analizi sonuçlarına göre, yüksek başarılı öğrencilerin akademik öz yeterlik puanları, orta düzeyde başarılı olanlara ve düşük başarı gösterenlere göre anlamlı derecede yüksek bulunmuştur. Etki ve Seçim alt boyutlarında ise düşük başarılı öğrenciler ile yüksek başarılı öğrenciler arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunmazken, bu iki gruptaki öğrencilerin orta başarılı öğrencilere göre daha yüksek etki ve seçim algısına sahip oldukları gözlenmiştir.

Ankette yer alan iki açık uçlu soru ile öğrencilerin güçlenmesini sağlayan ve kısıtlayan etkenleri saptamaya yönelik içerik analizi sonuçlarına göre, mevcut 'öğretmen-öğrenci ilişkileri' ve 'öğretim' temaları güçlenmeye katkı sağlarken; okulun konumu, okul yönetimi, öğretmenler, okul kaynakları, müfredat ve ders dışı etkinlikler temalarının güçlenmeyi engellediği ortaya konmuştur.

## **Sonuç ve Öneriler**

### **Sonuç**

Bu çalışma, bir devlet üniversitesinin İngilizce Hazırlık Programındaki öğrencilerin güçlenme algılarını ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu amaçla yeni bir ölçek geliştirilmiştir. Çalışmadan elde edilen sonuçlar, çoğunluğunu yalnızca sınıf içi

bağlamda öğrenen güçlenmesine odaklanan çalışmaların oluşturduğu sınırlı literatüre katkıda bulunarak öğrenci güçlenmesi kavramına yeni bakış açıları kazandırmıştır.

Öğrenci güçlenmesi alan yazınında bu çalışmanın bulgularını diğer araştırmalarla karşılaştıracak sınırlı sayıda çalışma olmasına rağmen, bu çalışmadan elde edilen sonuçların bir kısmının önceki çalışmalarla tutarlı olduğu bulunmuştur. Bununla birlikte öğrenci güçlenmesi üzerine yapılan çalışmalarda daha önce elde edilmemiş veya incelenmemiş noktalar da saptanmıştır.

İlk araştırma sorusuna ilişkin olarak yeni geliştirilen anket vasıtasıyla elde edilen sonuca göre öğrencilerin güçlenme algı seviyelerinin ‘orta’ düzeyde olduğu belirlenmiştir. Daha önceki yapılan çalışmalarda güçlenme seviyesine dair herhangi bir saptama yapılmamış, yalnızca alt boyutlara ilişkin sonuçlar sunulmuştur. Bu bağlamda, öğrencilerin güçlenme algı seviyelerini önceki çalışmalarda elde edilen sonuçlarla karşılaştırmak mümkün olmamakla birlikte bu bulgu ile bundan sonra öğrenci güçlenmesi üzerine yapılacak çalışmalar için alan yazına katkı sağlanmıştır. Öğrencilerin ‘orta’ düzey bulunan güçlenmeye dair genel algısı her ne kadar çok fazla bilgi içermese de genel algı düzeyine hakim olmak açısından gereklidir. Güçlenme zaman içinde değişebilen bağlam temelli bir konsept olduğundan (Zimmerman, 1995) bu algı seviyesini yükseltmek bilinçli olarak uygulanan ve sürekliliği olan müfredat ve ders dışı etkinliklerle mümkündür.

Öğrenci Güçlenmesi Anketinin (SEQ) alt ölçeklerinden alınan ortalama puanlar incelendiğinde, Katılım, Seçim ve Etki alt ölçeklerinde öğrencilerin diğer alt boyutlara göre nispeten daha düşük puanlar aldıkları görülmüştür. Öğrenciler, Genel ve Akademik Öz Yeterlikler, Problem Çözme Yetkinliği, Eleştirel Farkındalık ve Başkalarının Güçlenmesine Yardımcı Olma boyutlarında yüksek algıya sahip olmalarına rağmen öğrencilerin okulla ilintili konularda etkili olma ve seçim yapabilme inançları ile ders içi ve ders dışı etkinliklere katılımları düşük bulunmuştur. Buna sebep olarak mevcut müfredat ve ders dışı faaliyetlerin öğrencilerin etki, seçim ve katılıma dair algılarını destekleyecek nitelikte olmaması gösterilebilir. Açık uçlu sorulardan elde edilen analiz sonuçları da bu değerlendirmeyi desteklemektedir.

Çalışmanın diğer bir amacı da öğrencilerin güçlenme algı seviyelerinin ve güçlenmenin alt boyutlarına ilişkin durumlarının cinsiyet ve başarı değişkenlerine göre incelenmesiydi. Cinsiyet değişkeninin öğrencilerin güçlenmeye dair genel algı seviyesinde ve güçlenmenin alt boyutlarında herhangi bir etkisinin olmadığı saptanmıştır. Alan yazında cinsiyet değişkenini inceleyen tek bir araştırmaya rastlanmıştır. Mohaiyadin ve diğerleri (2013) tarafından muhasebe öğrencilerinin güçlenme algıları ile akademik performansları arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmaya yönelik yapılan çalışmada benzer bir şekilde cinsiyet değişkeninin güçlenme algısı üzerinde anlamlı bir etkiye sahip olmadığı bulunmuştur.

Başarı değişkeninin öğrencilerin güçlenme algı seviyelerine etkisini incelemeye yönelik yapılan analizlerin sonucuna göre ise bu değişkenin istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark yarattığı saptanmıştır. Başarı grupları incelendiğinde başarılı öğrencilerin daha yüksek güçlenme algı seviyesine sahip olduğu belirlenmiştir. Bu sonuç, alan yazındaki bazı çalışmalarla tutarlılık gösterirken (Frymier ve diğerleri, 1996; Kirk ve diğerleri, 2016) bazı çalışmalarda farklı doğrultuda sonuçlar elde edilmiştir (Mohaiyadin ve diğerleri, 2013; Zraa ve diğerleri, 2011).

Öğrenci güçlenmesinin alt boyutları cinsiyet ve başarı değişkenine göre incelendiğinde, cinsiyet değişkeninin güçlenmenin alt boyutlarında anlamlı bir fark yaratmadığı, başarı değişkeninin ise Etki, Seçim ve Akademik Öz Yeterlik alt boyutlarında etkili olduğu belirlenmiştir. Yüksek başarılı öğrencilerin etki ve seçime ilişkin algılarının diğerlerine göre daha yüksek bulunması beklenirken düşük başarılı öğrenciler ile aralarında anlamlı bir fark olmadığı gözlenmiştir. Bunun nedeni buldukları sınıflardaki öğretmen davranışları ve öğretmenlerin güç kullanım şekli olabilmekle birlikte bu durumu açıklayabilmek için daha fazla araştırmaya ihtiyaç vardır. Akademik Öz Yeterlik boyutunda ise alan yazını destekler nitelikte sonuçlar edilmiştir (Ayoobiyan & Soleimani, 2015; Rahimi & Abedini, 2009). Başarı arttıkça akademik öz yeterlik algısında da anlamlı bir yükselme gözlenmiştir.

Çalışma, son olarak, öğrencilerin bakış açısından güçlenmelerini sağlayan ve sınırlayan faktörleri belirlemeyi amaçlamıştır çünkü öğrenciyi güçlendiren bir ortam

kurabilmek için öncelikle bu faktörlerin belirlenmesi gerekmektedir. Bu amaçla ankette yöneltilen iki açık uçlu sorunun içerik analizinden elde edilen sonuçlar mevcut okul uygulamaları ile ilgili güçlenmeyi engelleyen faktörlerin güçlendiren uygulamalardan daha fazla olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Katılımcıların çoğu, güçlenmelerini engelleyen birçok okul uygulamasına işaret ederken, öğrencinin güçlendirilmesini destekleyen mevcut uygulamalarla ilgili az sayıda yanıt verilmiştir. İçerik analizi sonuçları alan yazındaki bazı çalışmaları destekler niteliktedir (Çakır, 2015; Diaz ve diğerleri, 2016; Frymier ve diğerleri, 1996; Frymier & Houser, 2009; Schrodt ve diğerleri, 2008; Kirk, 2012; Kirk ve diğerleri, 2016; Schrodt & Finn, 2011). Mevcut ‘öğretmen-öğrenci ilişkileri’ ve ‘öğretim’ uygulamaları öğrencilerin güçlenmesini olumlu yönde etkileyen temalar olarak belirlenmiştir. Öğretmenlerin diyaloga açık olduğu, öğrencileri akademik ve sosyal olarak desteklediği, karar verme sürecinde öğrencilerle güçlerini paylaştığı ve rehberlik ettiği, karşılıklı güven ve anlayışla temellendirilen ilişkilerin öğrencileri güçlendirdiği, bu özelliklerden yoksun olan ilişkilerin ise güçlenmenin önünde bir engel olduğu belirlenmiştir. Öğretime ilişkin olarak alan yazındaki çalışmaya paralel olarak grup çalışmalarının güçlenmeyi destekleyen bir faktör olduğu saptanmıştır (Zraa ve diğerleri, 2011).

Öğrencilerin perspektifinden güçlenmelerini kısıtlayan faktörler ise mevcut okul konumu, okul yönetimi, öğretmenler, kaynaklar, müfredat ve ders dışı etkinlikler olarak belirlenmiştir. Alan yazında öğrenci güçlenmesini etkileyen faktörler incelendiğinde bu çalışmada ortaya çıkan ‘okul konumu’ teması yeni bir etken olarak değerlendirilebilir. Bunun nedeni araştırmanın yapıldığı okulun kendine özgü bağlamsal durumu olabilir. Okulun konumuna bağlı olarak öğrencilerin sosyalleşebilecekleri yeterli alanların olmaması öğrencilerin bakış açısından güçlenmelerine engel olarak görülmüştür. Bu da Christens (2012) ve McQuillan (2005) tarafından öne sürülen güçlenmenin sosyal boyutuyla örtüşmektedir. ‘Okul yönetimi’ ve ‘kaynaklara erişim’ temaları ise Kirk (2012)’in çalışmasında saptanan okul karakteristikleri ile paralellik göstermiştir. Okul yönetimince öğrencilerin talep ve ihtiyaçlarının dikkate alınmaması ve fikirlerinin yeteri kadar önemsenip saygı duyulmaması öğrencilerin güçlenmesini engelleyen mevcut özellikler olarak

bulunmuştur. Ayrıca okulun fiziki sorunları ve buna bağlı olarak bazı bilgi kaynaklarına erişimde yaşanan sıkıntılar da güçlenmeyi engelleyen faktörler olarak belirlenmiştir. Bunlara ek olarak, mevcut müfredat ve ders dışı etkinliklerin öğrencilerin güçlenmesini desteklemediği ortaya konmuştur. Bu etkinliklerin yetersizliği ve eksikliği, Katılım alt boyutunda öğrencilerin düşük ortalamalara sahip olmalarının sebebi olarak değerlendirilebilir. Ders içeriği de bu bağlamda ihtiyaç ve beklentileri karşılar nitelikte bulunmamıştır. İçeriğin ilgi çekici ve öğrencilerin yaşantısına ilintili olmamasının güçlenmeyi engellemesi durumu Thomas ve Velthouse (1990)'un bilişsel güçlenme savı ile örtüşürken, ders içeriğinin belirlenmesinde öğrencilerin etkili olmaması ise McQuillan (2005) tarafından öne sürülen öğrenci güçlenmesinin politik boyutuyla paralellik göstermektedir.

Görüldüğü üzere, bu çalışmanın sonuçları alan yazındaki öğrenci güçlenmesine ilişkin sınırlı sayıdaki çalışma ile karşılaştırmalı olarak değerlendirildiğinde genel olarak daha önceki çalışmaların sonuçlarını destekler nitelikte sonuçlar elde edilmiştir. Önceki çalışmaların sonuçlarıyla farklılık gösteren veya yeni olarak ortaya çıkan bulgular ise öğrenci güçlenmesi alan yazına katkı sağlamıştır.

## **Öneriler**

Çalışmadan elde edilen sonuçlar göz önünde bulundurulduğunda aşağıdaki öneriler yapılabilir.

- Öğrenci güçlenmesi öncelikle bir eğitim felsefi olarak okul otoritesi tarafından benimsenmelidir. Eğitim sisteminde hiyerarşiyi ön plana çıkaran, öğrencilerin varlığını göz ardı ederek otoriteye daha fazla güç atfeden geleneksel paradigmanın aksine öğrencilerin yetkinliğine saygıyı ve güveni temel alan bu felsefenin içselleştirilerek okul politikası benimsenmesi ve okul genelindeki her türlü uygulamada bunun yansıtılması gerekmektedir. Ancak bu sağlandıktan sonra öğrenciyi güçlendirecek uygulamalar etkili olacaktır.
- Okul tarafından güçlenmeyi engelleyen mevcut faktörlerin belirlenmesinin ardından bunların güçlenmeyi destekleyecek uygulamalarla ortadan kaldırılması gerekmektedir. Güçlendirme sürecinde yer alacak uygulamalar,

öğrencilerin karar alma süreçlerine katılımlarını, öğrenme hedeflerinin belirlenmesinde ve program tasarımında onların fikirlerine daha fazla yer verilmesini sağlar nitelikte olmalıdır. Bu sayede, güç paylaşımını ve olumlu ilişkileri destekleyen bir ortam kurmak mümkün olabilir. Öğrencilerin akranlarıyla ve hatta öğretmenleriyle iş birliği içinde çalışacakları çeşitli etkinliklerin uygulamaya konması öğrencileri güçlendirecek bir ortamın yaratılmasına katkı sağlayabilir.

- Okul yönetiminin, öğrencilerin taleplerine ve beklentilerine duyarlı olması gerekmektedir. Bu da öğrencilerin okuldaki karar alma süreçlerine dahil edilmeleriyle mümkün kılınabilir. Örneğin bu amaçla, öğrencilerin oluşturduğu bir temsil heyeti kurularak öğrencilerin talep ve beklentilerinin okul yönetimine doğrudan iletilmesi sağlanabilir. Böylece öğrencilerin etki, seçim ve katılıma ilişkin algıları iyileştirilebilir ve sonuçta daha yüksek bir güçlenme algısına sahip olmaları sağlanabilir.
- Sınıf ortamında ise öğrencileri güçlendirecek öğrenme ortamını sağlamaktan öğretmenler sorumludurlar. Bu sebeple, öğretmenin güçlendirilmesi de ayrı bir mesele olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Güçlü öğretmenler ancak öğrencilerini güçlendirebilirler. Güçlü bir öğretmen, sınıf içinde gücünü öğrenciyle paylaşarak, öğrencilerinin sorumluluk alma kabiliyetine güvenerek, karar alma süreçlerine öğrencilerini dahil ederek, öğrenmeye yönelik iç motivasyonu, genel ve akademik öz yeterliği destekleyen sınıf içi aktiviteleri uygulayarak öğrencilerini güçlendirebilir. Bu bakımdan, öğretmenlerin böylesi şeffaf, iş birlikçi ve güçlendiren bir ortamı yaratabilmeleri için hizmet içi uygulamalarla eğitilmeleri gerekmektedir.
- Bu çalışmada anket geliştirme ve araştırma sorularını cevaplamak için her ne kadar odak grup görüşmeleri ve açık uçlu sorular gibi nitel veri sağlayacak yöntemlerden faydalanılmış olsa da, çalışma esasen anket yokuyla elde edilen nicel verilere dayanan betimsel bir araştırmadır. Bu bakımdan öğrenciyi güçlendiren okul ortamına yönelik etraflı bir bilgi elde etmek için nitel bir araştırma yapılabilir. Gözlem, görüşme ve doküman analizi yapılarak öğrenci güçlenmesine dair daha fazla nokta keşfedilebilir.



- Bu çalışmanın bulguları, okul ortamının öğrencilerin güçlenme algısını etkilediğini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu sebeple, nitel bir çalışma ile bu algıyı etkileyebilecek diğer bağlamsal, kültürel, politik ve sosyal boyutlar keşfedilebilir.
- Öğrenci güçlenmesi ve öğretmen güçlenmesi arasındaki ilişkiyi araştıran korelasyon çalışması yapılabilir. Ayrıca nitel veriler toplanarak okul politikasının öğretmeni ve öğrenciyi nasıl güçlendirebileceğine ilişkin bir araştırma yapılabilir.

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