

International Journal of Social, Political and Economic Research

IJOSPER

ISSN: 2667-8810 (Online)

[ijosper.uk](http://ijosper.uk)

OPEN  ACCESS

Original Article

Received Date: 19-11-2020

Accepted Date: 20-12-2020

[doi.org/10.46291/IJOSPERvol7iss4pp1051-1076](https://doi.org/10.46291/IJOSPERvol7iss4pp1051-1076)

**The Metaphoric Perceptions of Students in Private High Schools About the School Concept and the Views of the Ideal School**

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**ABSTRACT**

One of the most effective ways to understand the structure of that concept is to reveal individuals' mental perceptions through metaphor. The views put forward regarding the metaphorical way of understanding physical and social reality against the concept of school also increased academic interest in this subject. The aim of this study is to determine students' perceptions of schools through metaphorical perception and to identify their views on the ideal school concept. The study consists of 94 students studying at a private high school in 2019 in Antalya. It was carried out with phenomenological pattern of the qualitative research method. Maximum diversity sampling method was used in the study. As a data collection tool, first forms were distributed to students and they were asked to write the metaphor about the school then students were interviewed to take their views on the ideal school. According to the research, while high number of students perceive the school a prison, mental hospital; it was seen that they expressed them with negative concepts such as a closed box, zoo, darkness and slavery, it was observed that the students expressed the school as a home, nursery or family with positive concepts less often. The physical conditions of the ideal school that students dream of are more suitable and useful; lecture programs are lighter; they express it as an effective school in which practical lessons are increased.

**Key Words:** School, Student, Metaphor, Ideal School, Perception

**Introduction**

In the Turkish Language Association (TLA) dictionary, the word metaphor is an expression that means "using the name of something that is likened to it as a makeshift to describe something" (TLA, 1988). Although metaphor is generally regarded as one of the rhetoric to

embellish discourse, in recent years it has been increasingly addressed as a way of understanding or seeing the world (Morgan, 1998). This view, which is claimed that the thinking process is imaginary, has also led to the suggestions that the imaginary thinking process can be metaphorical. For example, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) added a new depth to the discussions in this direction by arguing that the conceptual system of humans is based on metaphors. Metaphors that help conceptualize perceptions and reveal concrete pictures of these perceptions support transferring information, taking legitimate actions, setting goals and structuring systems in a consistent way (Goglar, Gross, Hartman, & Cunliffe, 2008).

One of the most effective ways to gain information about schools and understand school structure is to reveal individuals' mental perceptions (Cerit, 2006). Therefore, the views put forward regarding the metaphorical way of understanding the physical and social reality of the human increased the academic interest in the subject. Especially in educational research, it is possible to encounter many studies on the perceptions of actors such as school, administrator, teacher and student (Özdemir, 2012). From this point of view, it can be seen that metaphors are powerful tools in understanding schools or revealing the value attributed to them, and they mediate the understanding of the nature and nature of the school; all concepts acquired in this way help to take the picture of the school and to reveal the general scheme (Balçı, 1999).

Through metaphor research, we can learn teachers' beliefs and assumptions about education, students, and their roles (Ben-Peretz, Mendelson & Kron, 2003). In this context, many educational studies (Inbar, 1996; Oxford et al., 1998; Martinez, Sauleda & Huber, 2001; Goldstein, 2005, Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011) have been conducted using metaphors. Inbar (1996) analyzed the perceptions of teachers and students towards themselves, school and school principals with a metaphor study; revealed that the students liken the school to a "factory, prison, garden, family, team, organism, beehive, zoo". In the literature, it is possible to encounter studies that describe the purpose, organizational structure and management style of public schools based on metaphors (Bredeson, 1988). For example, Balçı (1999) found that the participants produced metaphors of "care", "transfer of knowledge", "raising young people" regarding the function of the school. Çuhadar and Sarı (2007) found that the participants produced not only positive metaphors about school but also metaphors with negative content. While among the positive metaphors that the participants produced about the school were "*our future*", "*the home of knowledge*" and "the door to the enlightenment", negative metaphors about the school included "*exam-centered*", "a place where students are not trusted", "*a place made of prohibitions*" and "*a place without justice*" metaphors are found.

If it is assumed that education started with the existence of human beings, we can say that the education service offered to citizens has become organized along with the state phenomenon. Every state needs an education system to survive and educate its citizens, and through these systems the socialization of its citizens; It ensures that the society is a member (social function of education). In addition, states ensure that their citizens they are responsible for are productive citizens (economic function), the type of citizens required by the political regime, and the training of leaders (political function) through education. In addition to all these, it realizes the transfer of social and universal culture to future generations, preserving and developing culture (cultural function) and also providing the educational needs of individuals (individual function) through education. It realizes the education subsystem that it has established to fulfill all these functions through institutions called schools. In other words, states fulfill their education services through schools that they have structured at various levels.

Looking at the overall objectives of the national education stated in the National Education Law No. 1739 in Turkey, summarizes the aim of the Ministry of Education, *"every child within the training system to the basic principles of the republic Republic of Turkey, and its founder as a good citizen who cultivate loyal to Atatürk's principles; To ensure that they are people with a healthy and balanced body and spirit structure, and by directing them to a profession that is suitable for their interests and abilities, by making them a productive and productive person, and to be a beneficial person for himself, his family, society and humanity."*

When the literature is examined, we see that there are various positive or negative perspectives about the school from past to present. We can say that these perspectives are mostly shaped by the functions undertaken by schools. One of the most important reasons for this is the perceptions and expectations regarding the function of the school. These perceptions have created different paradigms in education and new perspectives on the school. Some approaches (Neill, 1997) rather than liberate the school student, he put forward the solutions by claiming that the schools become boring environments, but some (Illich, 1998) have an anti-school understanding that goes as far as perceiving the school as an unnecessary institution. Although there are moderate to radical critical views on the school, determining the students' perception of the ideal school is an important step towards creating ideal schools in the future, in order to realize the perception of the ideal school where criticism is minimized and positive situations are maximized. Therefore, research is considered important in this respect.

According to the views on human nature in management science, people tend to turn towards the things they enjoy and to move away from the things they suffer. According to this, students' behaviors such as coming to school late, not wanting to come to school, absenteeism and

experiencing disciplinary problems are behaviors that show students' tendency to distance themselves from school. Most of the studies conducted support this view; Özdemir (2012), in his study examining secondary school students, determined that students' school perceptions differ in the sub-dimensions of "place of protection-development", "place of pressure" and "home" according to their income and gender. The author revealed that as the grade level increases, the positive school perception decreases. Demir (2007) students in the United States have made comparisons on secondary school students in the United States and Turkey, "zoo, chaotic, crowded, boring, a place surrounded by the rules" as perceiving and he determined that Turkish students see the school as "fun, home". In some studies, it has been observed that students' perceptions about school transform into negative attitudes and behaviors.

In Demir's (2007) study that compares secondary school students in the United States and Turkey, while the students in the United States perceive the school concept as "*zoo, chaotic, crowded, boring, a place surrounded by the rules*"; it was determined that Turkish students perceive the school with expressions such as "*fun, home*." In some studies it has been observed that students' perceptions about school transform into negative attitudes and behaviors. Especially, some of high school students frequently escape from school (Kimberly, 2006; Reid, 2005), are absent (Reid, 1983), damage school items (Mayer et al., 1983), and engage in peer bullying (Smith & Brain, 2000) and It is known that sometimes students behave against the school rules (Kuş & Karatekin, 2009). One of the possible reasons for students to exhibit such behaviors in schools is thought to be the negative school perception they attribute.

In another metaphor study, Mahlios and Maxson (1998) stated that the tendency of primary school students to see school as a family or team decreases in secondary education. School metaphors obtained from students; It has been seen as "*zoo, team, circus, family, prison, factory, crowd*". In addition, it has been observed that metaphors that can be considered negative about school increase with the age of the students.

On the other hand, PISA's made among OECD countries in 2015 'student welfare' based on the results of the research of the country where students was most unhappy that Turkey was 6.12 points; in the same survey also test anxiety size, students are studying the 72 countries with 59 percent of the country's second most concern to again have been identified as Turkey. Some of the reasons for the unhappiness of the children may be the current examination system, intense course schedules and long course hours, as well as the inadequate physical conditions of the schools, the unusable gardens and the low number of practice classes are considered factors that keep children away from school.

This situation of schools has led educators to find and build ideal school features. The aim of this study is to determine students' perceptions of school through their metaphorical perceptions and to determine their views on the ideal school they imagine. Another aim of the study is to develop suggestions on how to make the school cute by reducing the distancing aspects of the students from the school and increasing the aspects and features that attract them to schools. The comparison of students' metaphorical perceptions of the concept of school with their perceptions in terms of gender and grade levels and the fact that there are very few studies in this direction are very important in terms of the contribution of this study to the field.

In order to achieve the aforementioned objectives, the following questions were sought:

1. What are the metaphors produced by students studying in private secondary education institutions (high schools) regarding the concept of school?
2. What are the differences between the metaphors produced by the students of private high schools according to the grade level?
3. What are the metaphorical perceptions of private high school students according to their gender?
4. What are the opinions of the students of private high schools regarding the concept of "ideal school" that they dream of?

### **Research Method**

This research has been carried out with the phenomenological design that is the basis of qualitative research. In phenomenology, whose main purpose is to produce knowledge, it is aimed to reach the nature of the reality related to a phenomenon while investigating (Creswell, 2015; Patton, 2014). To put it more clearly, the purpose is to understand and explain (Patton, 2014). More concerned with experiences, phenomenology focuses on the experience itself and how living something turns into a state of consciousness. Therefore, the main task of the researchers in this design is to try to describe the essence and basic structure of the experience (Merriam, 2009).

### **Sample Collection**

The working group of this research; 94 out of 122 high school students studying at a private Anatolian high school during the 2019-2020 academic year, which was determined in the Kepez district of Antalya province, selected in line with the researcher's preference (18 (9th grade) + 14 (10th grade) + 32 (11th grade) +30 (12th grade)] was formed by reaching. The student working group was formed by including all grades of high school (9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th

grade students). In order to compare the metaphorical perceptions of students in their first years with their perceptions in advanced classes, maximum diversity can be specified within the scope of sampling method. In order to provide diversity for the opinions of students regarding the ideal school, it was aimed to include three from all grade levels to the study group, however, at the end of the interview with 12 students, upon the request of one of the students in the 9th grade, the interview record of that student was excluded from the evaluation. As a result, since this dimension of the study, which is considered within the scope of purposeful sampling, aims to include some differences (Patton, 2014), it is in the type of maximum diversity sampling. The maximum diversity sampling method was used as Purposeful Sampling in the data collection process of this research. Purposeful sampling methods have emerged in the qualitative research tradition and are frequently used. This method allows the situations to be studied in depth (Somekh & Levin; 2005; Dey, 1993; Sherman & Webb, 2005). Two forms (12th grade + 9th grade) were left out of the study group due to problems such as explaining or not stating a reason instead of metaphors about the school. Table 1 includes demographic information about the students.

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Students Participating in the Study**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b><i>f</i></b>
<b>9th Grade</b>	10	7	17
<b>10th Grade</b>	8	6	14
<b>11th Grade</b>	16	16	32
<b>12th Grade</b>	11	18	29
<b>Total</b>	45	47	92

As can be seen in Table 1, the number of students participating in the study at the 9th, 10th and 11th and 12th grades are very close to each other. However, it is observed that the number of male students, especially 12th grade, is dominant. When looking at the remaining grade levels, it can be said that the gender distribution is very close and as a result, the groups are comparatively evenly distributed. A total of 92 students were included in the analysis.

### **Data Collection Tool**

A form was developed to determine the metaphorical perceptions of the students participating in the study about school. In order to develop this form, related studies in the literature were examined and the type of question that many researchers used in metaphor studies was based

on (Aydeş, 2015; Balcı, 1999; Bülbül & Toker-Gökçe, 2015; Gültekin, 2013; Nalçacı & Bektaş, 2012). The questionnaire, which was developed to fill the sentence gaps regarding the relevant metaphor, was adapted by the researcher for the concept of school.

As a data collection tool, students in the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grades of this special high school were given an empty form with this phrase at the top of the page and they were asked to express their thoughts by focusing on only one metaphor. Participants were asked to provide a justification for their own metaphors by including the concept of "because" in this study. The metaphors related to the concept of school and the reasoning sentences of the metaphor word, written by the participants in their own handwriting, were used as the main data source in this study. While "similar" or "like" expressions are mostly used to reveal the similarity between the metaphor itself and its source more clearly, individuals are expected to produce a logical basis with the concept of "because" (Saban, 2008).

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The data obtained from the study forms were collected from a private Anatolian high school in the 2019-2020 academic year. At the first stage, each of them was asked to complete the sentence "School ..... I liken because ....." in order to reveal the metaphors that students have about the concept of school in the forms. The data collection process was distributed to the students who participated in the research voluntarily and to write the metaphor and the justification for the school, and at the next stage, 11 students from these 4 groups, which were determined by the easy-access technique, were reached during the COVID-19 epidemic process. The opinions of these students about the ideal school concept were taken, the interviews were recorded and the study was concluded. Content analysis technique was used to analyze the data obtained from these forms. The basis of this method lies in determining how often the statements about the subject are said and categorizing them (Balcı, 2001; Yıldırım and Şimşek 2005). In this study, content analysis was carried out by keeping the expressions of four groups, namely 9th grade, 10th grade, 11th grade and 12th grade students separately.

### **Validity and Reliability**

Validity and reliability are the two most important criteria used to increase the credibility of research results. "Reporting the collected data in detail and explaining how the researcher reached the results are among the important criteria of validity in a qualitative research" (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005, p. 257).

The researcher personally visited the school determined in this study and the application was made on a voluntary basis. After the forms created for the collection of data were distributed to the volunteer students, the requests from the participants were repeated verbally. The forms collected after they were filled were examined one by one for analysis. In order to determine the students' metaphors about the school, the opinions obtained from the students were documented one by one. The metaphors produced by the participants were examined taking into account the reasons they stated, and coded by the researcher.

In terms of the reliability of the research, the examination and interpretation of the same research by different researchers increases the consistency and understandability of the study (Yıldırım, 2010). Therefore, in the process of describing this study, it was ensured that the responses of another expert from the field of educational management were independently classified and researcher diversification was made. The reliability of the study was calculated using the formula  $[\text{Reliability} = \text{Agreement} / (\text{Agreement} + \text{Disagreement}) \times 100]$  developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The expert, whose opinion was consulted, differed from the researcher in only one category, and the reliability of the analysis was found to be 92%. Findings were detailed within the validity of the study, and direct quotations of the participants were included when necessary. While the expression "FS" in the tables indicates a female student, "MS" represents a male student and grade levels are indicated by "9, 10,11 and 12".

## **Results**

### **Metaphoric Perceptions of Students**

Under this heading, the differences between the metaphors developed by the students regarding the concept of school and the findings regarding the reasons for these metaphors and the views of students according to their grade levels are included.

The metaphors produced by the students in private high schools regarding the concept of school and the meaning expressions they attribute are given in Table 2.



**Table 2. The Metaphors Produced by Students in Private High Schools Regarding the Concept of School and the Meaning Expressions They Load**

Metaphors	Loaded Expressions	Meaning	Participants	f
Prison, Hell, closed box, slavery	Place of imprisonment		9MS1,9MS3,9MS7,9FS5,9FS7,9FS10, 10MS1,10MS4,10FS8,11FS3,11MS4, 11MS13, 11FS8,11FS15,11MS16,12MS7, 12MS8,12FS11,12FS12,12FS2, 12FS3,12MS1,12FS4,12MS11	24
Flood, ferris wheel	Unnecessary and excessive information loading, information repetition		9MS2,10MS3	2
Washing place, sheep farm, organization shaping according to order, mosque	Brainwashing, formatting location		9MS4,10MS6,10MS2,11FS7,12MS6	5
Workplace, Work	Like the workplace, overtime		11MS11,12FS7,12MS3	3
Large family, home, entertainment, socializing environment	Social environment, warm place, friendship		9FS2,11MS6,12FS5,12MS2	4
The foundation of the future, life, the biggest step, the road to light	Future, plans, hope		9FS9,10FS2,11MS2,11MS3	4
Hospital, mental health center, mental hospital	Troubled people community		10FS1,10KFS4,11MS1,11MS9,11MS12,12MS9	6
Bully, class, exam, stress	Bullying and pressure environment		9FS4,9FS6,11FS1,11FS14, 11MS5,11MS7,11MS8,12FS10	8
Darling, set of rules	Place full of strict rules		10FS3,11FS2,12MS4	3
Death, sleeping room, waste of time, a place I dislike, garbage, emptiness	Boredom, unloved environment, wasted life		10FS7,11FS4,11FS13,12FS6,12MS10, 12MS12,12MS13,12MS14,12MS15	9
Black hole, dark, casino, a song I don't know	Uncertainty, worried about the future		9FS5,9FS1,9FS8,11MS14,12MS16	5
Zoo, farm, restaurant, family, soulless community	Group of people coming together at random		9FS3,10MS5,11FS6,11FS10,11MS15	5
Half of my life, second home, home	An essential part of life		11FS5,11FS11,11FS12,11MS10,12FS8,12MS5	6

When the metaphors produced by the students in private high schools regarding the concept of school and the meaning expressions they attribute are examined in Table 2; It was observed that 24 out of 92 participating students produced these metaphors containing negative thoughts by mainly citing the metaphors of prison, hell, open prison, closed box, slavery and attributed the meanings of "enforced detention" to the school. In the table, it was seen that 9 students who produced the metaphors of death, sleeping room, waste of time, a place I don't like, garbage and

emptiness attribute the meanings of "boredom, unloved environment, wasted life" to the concept of school. These metaphors listed above constitute the metaphors with negative perceptions that are generally likened to the highest level by the students in the table. It is seen that the next metaphors that follow these are the analogy of the participants' Bully, lesson, exam, stress about school. It has been determined that the students attribute "Bullying and pressure environment" to this school perception, which we can also call negative. When the content analysis of the students' opinions was made, it was determined that the general environment in the classroom and school consisted of pressure, an environment that reminded the exam and the lesson, and some students stated that they used physical or moral pressure on other students. It can be said that the reason for this negative perception of 8 students about the school is possible peer bullying in the school environment. When we look at the table, it is seen that each of 6 students produced the metaphors of Hospital, Mental Illness Center, asylum, mental hospital and half of my life, second home, home. Although we think that they use the home metaphor to express their positive thoughts, when we examine the meanings that students attribute to this metaphor, it is in fact that the home-second house metaphor contains negative thoughts; even in the student views, "we are always at school from kindergarten until we have a profession, our life passes here" we come across the statement. While 5 students of the school who participated in the research write metaphors of the zoo, a farm, a restaurant, a family, a soulless community to the school to express the negative meanings they attribute such as "a group of people coming together randomly"; the other 5 students attribute the meaning of "uncertainty, anxiety to the future" by likening the school to a black hole, dark, casino, an unknown song. On the other hand, when the school is compared to the workplace and rules set by 3 students and the meaning they impose them, the concepts of the school being "tiring like working hours" and "a place full of strict rules" are encountered. In the table, it is deemed positive that 4 students perceive the school as a large family, home, entertainment, socializing environment and compare it. At the same time, it has been determined that the meanings they attribute to these metaphors are based on the concepts of "social environment, warm place, friendship". Again, in the same table, it is seen that only 4 out of 92 students attribute the meanings of "future plans, hope" to this metaphor by comparing the school to the foundation of the future, life, the biggest step taken in life, the path towards enlightenment in order to express their positive thoughts about the school. The fact that there are no 12th grade students among the 4 students who hold this view supports the idea that the positive thoughts of the students unfortunately turn into negative as their grade level increases.

The metaphors, logical basis expressions and sight frequencies of private high school students (grades 9, 10, 11 and 12) regarding the concept of school according to their grade levels are given in Tables.3a, 3b, 3c and 3d.

**Table3a. 9th Grade Students' Metaphors and Reasons for the Concept of School**

<b>Metaphors</b>	<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>f</b>
Prison	It is forbidden to go out. Very boring	MS1,MS3,MS7, FS7,FS10	5
Flood, Washing Place, Bully	It causes destruction by overloading information. People are brainwashed here. Unnecessarily excessive and forced knowledge is taught. We come to school by force.	MS2, MS4, FS4, FS6	4
Black Hole, Darkness	It sends our ideas and creativity to the void and turns us into puppets. I can't see my future.	MS5, FS1, FS8	3
Large family, Home, The way to light,	I have very good friends, I'm happy. Because it is a home that enlightens our thoughts.	FS2, FS9	2
Family	Students randomly get together, can't pick friends.	FS3	1
Hell	There are courses that I dislike at school and most of the university graduates are unemployed, we read in vain	FS5	1

When the metaphors produced by students regarding the concept of school according to their grade levels and their reasons are examined in Table 3a, it is seen that 5 out of 17 students who attended the school by comparing the school to the prison mostly because of the 9th grade students on the grounds that "going out is forbidden, the school is boring"; 3 students simulated darkness and black holes; It was seen that 4 students compared the school to a place of bully and brainwashing on the grounds that "unnecessarily excessive and forced knowledge is taught". Only 2 students "I'm happy to have friends" and "School is a home that enlightens our thoughts." It was seen that they produced positive metaphors with their statements and likened the school to the road and home to enlightenment and large family.

Again, looking at the table, it was determined that the metaphor of the family was produced by one student, but when the reason for this metaphor was examined, it was found that the metaphor of the family actually contained a negative meaning by showing "the students being together randomly".

Table3b includes findings regarding the Metaphors Produced by 10th Grade Students Regarding the Concept of School and their Justification.

Hospital, mental health center	The youngsters at school all have different opinions and seem to be forced into school. There are always problematic people, including teachers.	FS1, FS4	2
The Foundation of the Future	This is the foundation of the profession I dreamed of .	FS2	1
Darling	It has strict rules like a dating relationship.	FS3	1
Cultural Program, Restaurant	Just like watching a cultural program on TV, we watch. A lot of information comes to us, such as food that we can learn but cannot use.	FS5, MS5	2
Death, Prison, Prison, Half of my life	Our best youth years are wasted in a ten-hour school. We are always at school from kindergarten to having a profession.	FS6,FS7,FS8, MS1,MS4	5
Sheep Farm	The fact that what we are taught at school is not useful in the race of life, making us like sheep.	MS2,MS6	2
Ferris wheel	We keep repeating the same things..	MS3	1

**Table 3b. 10th Grade Students' Metaphors and Reasons for the Concept of School**

<b>Metaphors</b>	<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>f</b>
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When the metaphors produced by students regarding the concept of school according to their class levels are examined in Table 3b, 3 of 14 students compared to prison on the grounds that "we are held by force for nine hours every day"; two students compared a mental health center and a hospital on the grounds that "there are always problematic people, including teachers." In the table 5 student schools "our best years are wasted at school" and "we are at school from kindergarten until we have a profession, school is a bit of nonsense." while likening the concepts of death, half of my life on the grounds; only 1 student produced metaphors containing positive thoughts about the school on the grounds that "this is the foundation of the profession we dream of" and likened it to the foundation of the future. Participant 2 students "What is taught at school is not useful in the race of life; they likened the school to a sheep farm on the grounds that it makes us like sheep.

Again, looking at the table, it was observed that 2 students likened the school to a television cultural program and a restaurant on the grounds that "we watch a lecture at school just like watching the program on TV" and "we have meals that we cannot eat (too many lessons to learn)".

Table3c. contains findings related to the metaphors produced by grade 11th students on the concept of school and their reasons.

**Table3c. 11th Grade Students' Metaphors and Reasons for the Concept of School**

<b>Metaphors</b>	<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>f</b>
Exam, Lesson	They put all our knowledge and what we have learned to the test. We have nine hours of lessons. Exams are our source of stress.	FS1, MS7,MS8	3
The Rules Series, Prison	Everything is in order; there are rules in everything. I feel overwhelmed here. A life passes between four walls.	FS2,FS3,FS15,MS4,MS13,MS16	6
Sleeping Room	I sleep during lessons..	FS4	1
Second Home, Home, Workplace	We spend almost all of our time left here. Like overtime.	FS5,FS11,FS12,MS10,MS1	5
Zoo, Farm	There are all kinds of people at school. They take a lot of people and squeeze them somewhere.	FS6,FS10	2
An institution that shapes according to order, Slavery	Rather than training, they are trying to shape them according to the established order. We are raised not as individuals but as modern slaves.	FS7,FS8	2
Waste of time	I want to deal with art, but there is no time for art from lessons.	FS13,FS16	2
Bully, Stress	Prejudices and gossip among students. The strong insult.	FS14,MS5	2
Mental Hospital	We get crazy report as we graduate. It is very boring and tiring.	MS1,MS9,MS12	3
Biggest Step to Life, Life, Entertainment	School is everything. I have a group of friends.	MS2, MS3,MS6	3

When we examine the school metaphors and justifications of 11th grade students in Table3c, it was determined that 5 out of 32 participating students made comparisons between prison and prison and home, second house, workplace on the grounds that "life passes between four walls". Here again, although the metaphor of the second home, workplace and home seems positive, when the reasons are examined, we come across expressions such as "tiring like working hours" and "we spend almost all the time at school". It is thought that this metaphor is sufficient to determine the finding that students have to spend a long time at school, just like the half-life metaphor of my life. While 3 students following these metaphors likened the school to the

asylum-mental hospital with the expression "we get crazy report while graduating"; they used exam, lesson metaphors for the school, with the phrase "what is taught at school is just an exam and a source of stress. In addition, 2 students compared to the bully who is thought to imply peer bullying with the expression "insulting the strong in the classroom"; 2 students each used the waste of time and zoo, farm metaphors for school.

Again, in the table, it was determined that only 3 students out of 32 students at the school produced metaphors that contain positive thoughts such as entertainment, life and the biggest step to the future.

Table 3d. contains findings regarding the metaphors and justifications produced by 12th grade students regarding the concept of school.

**Table 3d. 12th Grade Students' Metaphors and Reasons for the Concept of School**

<b>Metaphors</b>	<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>f</b>
Socialization Environment	It's just a place to socialize.	MS2,FS5	2
Workplace, Half of My Life	It's tiring like overtime. Half of my life is spent at school	MS3,FS7,FS8	3
Set of Rules	There are so many unnecessary rules.	MS4	1
Home	We are always at school.	MS5	1
Mosque	As if there is an imam in front of us, we follow him.	MS6	1
Asylum	There are no sane people. We are being held at school by force.	MS7,MS9	2
Prison	The teachers are like guards. They take my phone. Breaks like open vision.	MS8,FS1,FS2,FS3,FS4	5
Closed Box, A song I don't know	Once inside, there is no light to take it out. We do not know the process and end of the school either.	MS11,FS12,MS16,FS7	4
A place I don't like It means nothing, Space, Garbage, Waste of Time	The school teaches more information than it should. Education System is very bad and challenging. We memorize instead of producing something.	MS10,MS12,MS13,MS14, MS15,FS6	6
Tv Show	Everyone is pretending. I'm just watching.	FS9	1
Bully, Slavery	The education system is imposed. They are stealing our lives.	FS10, FS11	2

Looking at the school metaphors and justifications produced by 12th grade students in Table.3d, in total, 11 students out of the 29 students attended the prison with the highest frequency values, with the words "the teachers are like guards and the school means nothing to me" on the grounds that "they teach too much, the education system forces us" has been seen. Likewise,

it is seen in the table that 2 students liken the school to an asylum on the grounds of "There is no sane person", 4 students compared the school to a closed box on the grounds of a song I do not know and "There is no light to take it out after you go inside". There is an expression of "school is a place to socialize" with only 2 students in a positive expression. It is seen in the table that only one student compares the school to the home metaphor. The fact that this metaphor was produced with the justification of "we are always at school" shows that it actually gives a negative meaning to the school.

As can be understood from this table; When we examine high school students' metaphors about school in general terms according to their grade levels; It is seen that as the grade levels of students increase, the number of negative metaphors increases compared to the positive ones. When we compare the school metaphors produced by students according to their grade levels based on the above tables; It is frequently encountered among 10th grade students, especially 9th grade students; With the influence of concepts such as communication, warmth, and friendship, metaphors such as family, second home and the foundation of the future come to the fore; When it comes to the views of the students studying in the 11th and 12th grades, it was seen that the metaphors mostly reflected negative thoughts such as asylum, prison, tyrant and slavery. The reason for this is that as the grade levels of the students increase, it triggers the anxiety of the university entrance exam, and as the exam anxiety of the students increases, the sense of pleasure they get from the school is replaced by stress; It can be said that the pressure to focus on the exam by detaching themselves from social relations and activities in the school environment is a major obstacle to the perception of the positive aspects of the school.

Some metaphors and justifications about the school produced by private high school students according to their grade levels are given below:

*"I compare the school to the black hole, to the dark. Because it sends our ideas and creativity to the void and turns us into puppets. I can't see my future. "* (9MS5)

*"I compare the school to the half of my life. Because we are always at school from kindergarten to having a profession. I think the school is a bit nonsense "*(10FS6)

*"I compare the school to slavery. Because we are raised not as individuals but as modern slaves. "* (11FS8)

*"I compare the school to a prison. Because the teachers are like guards. They take my phone. Breaths are like open vision. "* (12MS8)

*"I compare the school to an institution that shapes the order, because it is trying to shape it according to the established order rather than education."* (11FS7)

*I liken the school to the foundation of the future. Because this is the foundation of the profession you dream of. " (10FS2)*

*"School is like a waste of time. We memorize instead of producing something. " (12MS10)*

*"I compare the school to the sleeping room because I sleep in lessons." (11FS4)*

*"I compare school to death because our best youth years are wasted in a nine-hour school." (10FS6)*

*"I compare the school to a song I don't know. We do not know the process and end of the school either. It darkens me like arabesque. " (12MS16)*

*"I compare the school to a sheep farm, because what we are taught at school is not useful in the race for life, making us like sheep." (10FS8)*

*"I compare the school to a madhouse-mental hospital. We get crazy report as we graduate. It bores me a lot. "(11MS12)*

*"School is like a tyrant-slavery because the education system is imposed. They are stealing our lives. "(12FS10)*

*"I compare the school to the brainwashing because it causes destruction by overloading information. People are brainwashed here. Unnecessarily excessive and forced knowledge is being taught. "(9MS4)*

*"I compare the school to hell because there are lessons I don't want and don't like in school and most of the university graduates are unemployed; we read in vain. " (9FS5)*

*"I compare the school to a cultural program because we watch lessons at school just like watching a cultural program on TV." (10FS5)*

*"School is like an exam, because they test all our knowledge and what we have learned. We have nine hours of lessons. Exams are our source of stress." (11FS1)*

*"I compare the school to the biggest step in life, because school is everything." (11MS2)*

*"I compare the school to a mental health center because there are adolescents at this age and everyone lives in a separate mind; They seem to be forcibly held in school, so I compare it to a place like this. " (10FS1)*

*"I compare the school to where something is imposed by force in areas that students do not like, because students do not like some lessons, but now we have to memorize information that we might not have used for 16 years. The interests of the students are ignored, and they are forced to love and know all the lessons. We hardly come to this ridiculous and boring school. We learn something by force. Education in this country teaches by force. " (9FS6)*

The comparison of the metaphors and views of the students studying in private high schools regarding the concept of school in terms of their gender is given in Table 4.



**Table4. Comparison of Students' Metaphors Regarding School Concept According to Gender**

<i>Metaphors</i>	<i>Female Students</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Male Students</i>	<i>f</i>
Prison	9FS7,9FS10,10FS8,11FS3, 11FS15,12FS1,12FS2, 12FS3,12FS4	<b>9</b>	9MS1,9MS3,9MS7,10MS1,10MS4,11MS 4,11MS13,11MS16,12MS8	<b>9</b>
Mental Hospital,Asylum	10FS1, 10FS4	<b>2</b>	11MS1,11MS9,11MS12,12MS7,12MS9	<b>5</b>
Second Home, Home, Workplace, Half of Life	10FS6,11FS5,11FS11, 11FS12,12FS8	<b>5</b>	11MS10,11MS1,12MS5	<b>3</b>
Family	9FS2,9FS9	<b>2</b>		<b>0</b>
Slavery, Set of Rules	11FS2, 11FS8,12FS11	<b>3</b>	12MS4	<b>1</b>
Black hole, Darkness, Closed Box	9FS1, 9FS8,12FS12	<b>3</b>	9MS5,12MS11	<b>2</b>
It means nothing, I don not like, Space	12FS6	<b>1</b>	12MS12,12MS13,12MS14,12MS15	<b>4</b>
Zoo, Farm, Sheep Farm	10FS6, 11FS6,11FS10	<b>3</b>	10MS12, 10MS13,10MS14,10MS15	<b>4</b>
Bully	9FS4, 9FS6,12FS10,11FS14	<b>4</b>	11MS5	<b>1</b>
Biggest Step to Life, Life	10FS2	<b>1</b>	11MS2,11MS3	<b>2</b>
Death, Hell	9FS5,10FS7	<b>2</b>		<b>0</b>
Exam, Lesson	11FS1	<b>1</b>	11MS7,11MS8	<b>2</b>
Waste of Time	11FS13,11FS16	<b>2</b>	12MS10	<b>1</b>

In Table 4, when the metaphors produced by high school students about the school are compared in terms of the gender of the students, it is seen that the prison metaphor of 9 students is in the first place as the highest level detected among male students and female students participating in the study. The students who produce the prison metaphor are observed to have equal numbers of male and female students. At the same time, it was determined that 5 students from the 9th grade compared the school to a prison, being more intense than the 11th and 12th grades. The female students who produce the metaphors of the second home, home and half of my life are 5; it is seen that the number of male students is 3. Again in the same table, it is seen that while the mental hospital asylum metaphors were produced by 5 male students, only 2 female students wrote this metaphor. While the Zoo and Farm metaphors were produced by 3 female students, it was determined that 4 male students also used this metaphor. While the family-home metaphors were written by only 2 female students, none of the male students used this metaphor containing positive meaning. While the number of male students with the perception “I don't like school, it doesn't mean anything to me” is 4; only 1 of the female students used this expression. In the light of these data, it can be said that the metaphors

produced by male students about school have a negative meaning relative to what female students produce about school and that male students' metaphorical perceptions of school are more negative than female students' perceptions of school.

### Students' Views on the Concept of the Ideal School

The opinions of the students studying in private high schools on the concept of "ideal school" that they dream of are given in figure 1.

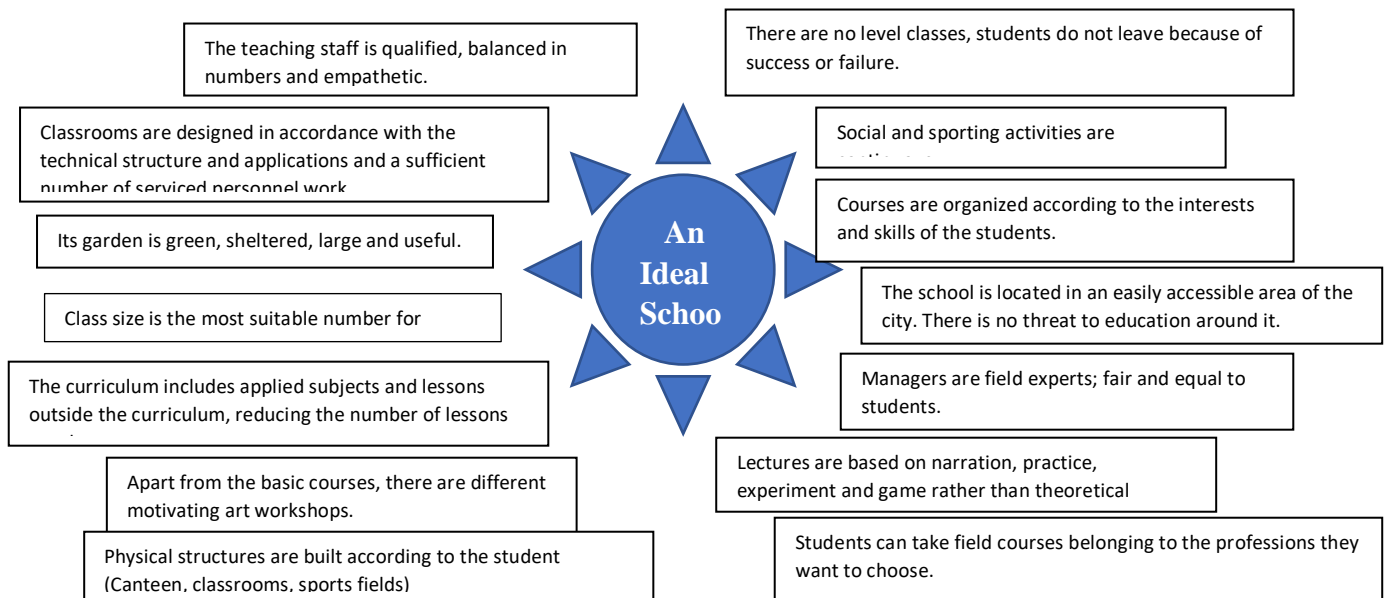


Figure 1. Codes of students' views on the concept of the ideal school

As seen in Figure 1, a total of 14 codes were created based on the students' views on the concept of "an ideal school" they imagined. Among these codes; "the school garden is wide and useful", "the lessening of the lesson programs, the preparation of the lessons in line with their interests-abilities, and the emphasis on the application in the lessons", "the experienced and qualified teaching staff", "the low class size" and "the suitability of the physical areas, sports and It was observed that the codes of "continuity of artistic activities" came to the fore.

Some of the views on the ideal school concept that students dream of are given below:

A student who dreamed that the school garden would be green, sheltered, wide and useful, expressed his views as follows.

*"The ideal school is a school with a large garden, playgrounds in accordance with the physical characteristics and interests of the student, and a large ceremonial area with Atatürk bust. Students can relax during breaks, read books and chat with their friends in green areas with trees. "* (9MS1)

Regarding the concept of the ideal school, a student who advocates that the number of daily lessons should be reduced in the schedule and include applied subjects and lessons, as well as social and sports activities outside the curriculum, explained her views as follows.

*“The lesson hours in the schools are too much, we are overloaded, which makes us very boring during the lessons. If the lesson hours are reduced, we students will be less bored. In addition to the course hours and schedules, physical conditions are also very important, that is, the environments where we can socialize between lessons and do sports activities with our friends should always be suitable and ready for our use.”* (10FS5)

Regarding the concept of the ideal school, the views of a student who emphasized the importance of the number of students in classrooms, the intensity of social activities, and the competence of the teaching staff are as follows.

*“School size is very important for me, because as the number of students increases, social activities, trips and sports activities increase and become more frequent. In the concept of the ideal school, it is very important to me that the competence and the number of the teaching staff are appropriate and that the course programs are organized according to the difficulty and ease of course distribution (numerical-verbal-foreign language lessons).”* (10MS1)

Another student who argued that the ideal school in his dreams is the schools where the student should be aware of his / her interests and abilities and that this awareness can be realized with applications in the field of sports explained his views as follows.

*“The school that perceives the differences in students' interests and abilities is the ideal school. It can highlight the artistic and sportive abilities of students by organizing activities and competitions at school, and bring them to success and happiness. The lecture should be taught with storytelling, game and application method instead of theoretical information.”* (11FS1)

A student who wants to take the field courses of his profession in the future defined the ideal school he dreamed of.

*“I think the ideal school is to have a schedule arranged according to the profession that each student wants to be in, and schools that do not have fixed classes but have classes that vary according to the lessons. There should be classes where there are fewer classes, so that it is possible to experiment and practice. The school garden, which includes sports fields, must be a must.”* (12MS1)

Regarding the ideal school, the product variety and price range of businesses such as canteens where the school's students can easily meet their needs are suitable for each student; the student's views who consider it important that the classroom environment appeals to students physically are included.

*"I think in the ideal school, the canteen sells a wide variety of quality but affordable food products, thus students from every economic structure can benefit from the canteen. The garden should be large but useful. In my opinion, the classes are very classical; Instead of classes, as in the American Education System, lessons should be held in teachers' own offices. Courses are not compulsory, they should be optional. We should come to school not crawling, but loving the school. "* (10FS1)

The student who defends the prolongation of the breaks of the lessons and the structuring of the daily lesson programs according to the types of lessons, the emphasis on participation in the lessons and the priority of the places where students can rest in the schools expressed their ideal school views as follows:

*"In my opinion, the ideal school is a school with a large green garden where students with longer breaks can comfortably chat with each other and have the opportunity to relax. Lessons are arranged in a mixed structure; There should be both quantitative, verbal and art classes on the same day. Classrooms should be large and technically equipped, students 'and their teachers' point of view should be appropriate so that they can practice and experiment comfortably. By using the discussion method, it can enable students to participate in the lesson, and the lessons can become more permanent."* (12FS2)

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

In this study the metaphorical school perceptions of private high school students were examined and the metaphors they produced, the reasons they expressed, and these metaphors were compared in terms of class level and gender, it was analyzed by taking the opinions of the students on the concept of the ideal school they imagined. According to the analyzes the school of the high number of participating students in the study metaphorically, *the prison; madhouse-mental hospital; I don't like school, school means nothing to me*; It has been observed that they express it in negative terms such as *a closed box, darkness, zoo or tyrant, slavery*. On the other hand, it was observed that the metaphors that students express the school as a home, home or family with positive concepts are less frequently repeated. When compared, it was seen that metaphors with negative meanings were higher than positive metaphors both in terms of variety and frequency of repetition. In this case, the research findings OECD's shows that Turkey is in agreement with previous reports that students were unhappy. Especially the findings that the school is a *"prison and zoo"* are supported by the research results of Inbar (1996). The comments regarding the unnecessary, wasted time at school and the place where children are comforted, coincide with Illich's (1998) views on the unnecessary school. Emphasis on

unnecessary and repetitive information at school, and the rote learning process, contradicts Frerrie's (1995) view that the school should be liberating. The ability of schools to achieve their behavioral and academic goals depends primarily on being cute and attractive to students. It is impossible for a student who does not like school and teacher to benefit from the lesson and school sufficiently. Therefore, the physical structure, program, communication and interaction structure of the schools should be attractive to the students. Because, according to the views on human nature, people tend to move away from the things that cause them pain and tend to the things that give them pleasure (Schein, 1990). Forcing a repetitive and unwanted program to students, as Neill (1997) says, negatively affects the love, commitment, and perception to school, and discourages the student from the school. The fact that children in play age spend a significant part of their time in an environment where they see as "*prison, zoo and bully*" may have negative effects on their mental and spiritual structures.

In the analysis based on gender, it was determined that female students perceive school as a place with a higher rate of positive meaning compared to male students. In terms of school metaphors that were attributed to negative meanings, it was understood that male students perceived school as a place of pressure more than female students. Female students perceive school as a place that protects and develops more than male students. This finding is compatible with the literature. For example, in a study conducted on students with a tendency to run away from school, it was found that female students perceived school as a less negative place than male students (Zieman & Benson, 1981). Arastaman (2006) also found that female students' level of school engagement is higher than male students. Female students also perceive the school as a "home". In the study, it was observed that male students perceived school as a place of pressure more than female students. The perception of the school as a place of pressure is consistent with similar study findings. For example, in some studies, it is seen that the concept of teacher is described with the metaphors "*judge, army commander, guard and punisher*" (Çuhadar & Sarı, 2007), and the concept of student "*prisoner, slave, prisoner and guinea pig*" (Saban, 2009).

It was observed that students' level of perception of school metaphorically as family and home was also low. In the analyzes conducted in terms of the grade levels of the students, it was concluded that positive school perception was among the 9th grade students at the highest level, but this positive perception gradually decreased as the grade level increased. As a result of the comparisons at the class level, it is seen that the school perception differs. According to the results of the analysis, lower grades perceive the school as protection enhancement elements such as *life, home, second home or the biggest step to the future, the place to start life*, compared

to the upper grades, while upper grade students perceive the school more as *an open prison, a madhouse, slavery and a place of pressure like hell*. These findings support the study of Eccles, Midgley, and Adler (1984). In the mentioned study, it was determined that student motivation towards school tends to decrease as the grade level increases. Likewise, in the study of Kayıkçı and Sayın (2010), it was determined that as the grade level of high school students increased, their level of satisfaction with school decreased, and the most important reason for this was exam anxiety. Based on these data, it is seen that metaphors about the school such as "family, our future, exam place, prohibitions, set of rules" coincide with the results of the studies of Çuhadar and Sarı (2007) and Mahlios and Maxson (1998). Also, in these studies it was observed that the metaphors that can be considered negative about school increase with the age of the students. The results of our study are consistent with this aspect.

Examining the students' views on the concept of "*ideal school*" that they dream of the teachers who teach at the school are qualified and sufficient in number; easing the lesson schedules and reducing the number of daily lesson hours; the small number of class sizes; separation of the courses to be taught according to the professional fields chosen by the students; the school garden is large, the school has sports halls, conference centers, laboratories and informatics classes and their active use by students. It was seen at a very high level that the lecture was based on practice rather than theoretical. In addition, some of the students stated that they would like to take their opinions and participate in the decisions taken at the school.

We can explain this expression as follows; participation in the decision is very important in organizations, because if the stakeholders of the organization agree to the decision by the management, the sense of belonging of the members of the organization increases. It is thought that their resistance to the decisions taken is reduced. Therefore, it is assumed that if the school administration receives students' ideas and suggestions, students may feel more belonging to the school, as well as a tendency to decrease in their negative perception towards the school. "Effective school", which has been emphasized recently in the field of educational administration, aims not only to increase student success, but also to increase the quality of life and satisfaction of the student (Kayıkçı & Sayın, 2010). When the opinions of the students participating in the research are examined, they will generally be comfortable, they will find more application opportunities in the lessons, they will participate in social and artistic activities, that they will be regarded as individuals rather than students by school administrators, it has been determined that they share the opinion that they want *an effective school* that develops them in almost every field of life such as social, cultural and academic.

## Suggestions

- ✓ 11th and 12th grade students metaphorically compare the school to the concepts of prison, slavery and bully more than the other groups. It is suggested within the scope of this study that the Ministry of National Education should make an institutional self-criticism on this issue. MNE has initiatives to improve schools according to student needs. However, these initiatives can be implemented more accurately and quickly with the opinions of the students.
- ✓ The intensive course schedules and long course hours applied in schools continue to see students as a 'slave', which is a result of this study.
- ✓ It can be suggested that studies on school perception should be expanded to include different education levels and school types.
- ✓ In addition, it can be examined in terms of variables such as truancy, academic achievement, school and peer bullying, family income level, absenteeism, and behaviors requiring disciplinary punishment that may be associated with school perception.
- ✓ This study can be reconstructed using the quantitative method and some variables.

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