A Large-Scale Examination of Elementary and Secondary School Students' Metaphors Pertaining School Phenomenon[*]

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Article Information	ABSTRACT
Received: 29.04.2020 *Accepted*: 22.05.2021 *Online First*: 10.12.2021 *Published*: 31.07.2022	The purpose of the current study was to reveal the experiences and conceptions of the students who had been subjected to the schooling system. In addition to the research in the related literature, both qualitative and quantitative analyses were conducted in the study, and a complete picture was tried to be presented. The participants of the study were 1782 elementary and secondary school students. In this study, the participants' experience patterns and abstractions were obtained by operating a relational survey approach by capturing their metaphoric reasoning. Qualitative analysis resulted in 17 (e.g., place of love and confidence, the centre of control and discipline, unsafety and unnecessary place, the field of development and maturation, knowledge transfer centre, the centre of cognitive and practical apprenticeship, the centre of selection) themes reflecting schooling perceptions of the students gathered under four higher-order thematic categories (positive attitudes, negative attitudes, epistemic underpinnings and productivity). Quantitative analyses confirmed that the participants emphasized that the school-led mental images incorporated the affective characteristics and elements (positive attitudes, negative attitudes). However, it was observed that there were very few proportions devoted to school perceptions with regards to epistemic underpinnings and product categories, including pedagogical and cognitive sub-elements. As a significant outcome, it was observed that the positive perceptions of the participants were significantly displaced by the negative ones from the first grade to the end of the secondary education level. Various educational suggestions were made in light of the study outcomes. **Keywords:** School, schooling, metaphorical reasoning, school type, learning, teaching
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1. INTRODUCTION

Especially in the last quarter of the 21st century, significant political, economic, ideological and technological transformations occurred globally (Power, 2000). Within the context of responding to these changes and shifts, each society expects its citizens to cooperate with their environment and be individually compatible with the relevant processes. The schools and their employees (e.g., teachers, education administrators, education politicians) are the most important institutions that contribute to these goals (Fullan, 1993). The school organization, which prepares the future of the society, has roles such as making predictions, determining the basic requirements of the change mentioned above, and realizing and maintaining them (Conley and You, 2014). So, what does school mean as a phenomenon? The school phenomenon is described in the dictionary of the Turkish Language Association as "the place, school or Ecole where all kinds of education and training are carried out collectively" (https://sozluk.gov.tr/). Etymologically, the word school may have been brought into our language with the free association approach by establishing an analogy with the French word école (Ecole) from the Turkish root "to read". The origin of the French word école is the Greek word σχολή (skholḗ), meaning "philosophy and place of study". Similarly, Banguoğlu (1987) states that the word school is derived from *ekole* or *schola*. In this study, the school was discussed as a phenomenon.

The phenomenon is known as what appears to us (Marton 1981; 1986; 1995). People's perceptions or experiences of phenomena are fragmented. Each individual can perceive and experience a phenomenon with a different form or part of it.

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[*] It has been stated by the decision of Istanbul Aydın University Ethics Commission, numbered 2020/6 and dated 02/07/2020, that this research does not violate any ethical element.

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Therefore, phenomenological experience is usually individual, making it impossible for phenomena to be fully perceived by an individual (Marton 1981; 1986; 1995). One of the essential descriptions in this regard is the "blind people and elephant" metaphor. Blind people are asked what the elephant is like or what it looks like. One of the people has a material experience of the elephant's ear and describes the elephant as flat, soft and wide-surfaced. Another one has a pattern of experience with the elephant's tusk and likens the elephant to a pointed and sharp spear. As seen in this metaphorical reasoning, none of the above explanations describes the elephant or the phenomenon of the elephant entirely; the sum of all of them only gives a general picture of the elephant. In this study, the school was experienced by the learners (participants of the study). It was attempted to capture their perceptions or analogies of school in historical time through their relevant patterns of experience. Although each individual's perception of school is different and fragmented, it was considered that when all of them were isolated in a shared pool of perceptions/concepts/experiences/personal theories, they could reflect their school-related experiences holistically.

Within the context of the changes and developments, schools undertake to share with future generations how and under what conditions they will take action to contribute to the country's economic, social and cultural development (Reyes, 1992). However, in this context, the essential point to consider is that there is a significant disharmony between the rate of change/development in social existence areas such as cultural, intellectual, technological, economic and scientific, and the rate of change and growth of schools in terms of pedagogy (everything related to learning and teaching) (Parsons, 1967). To make it clear, the school covers a significant part of students' lives. Moreover, school refers to learners' pedagogical beliefs, norms and understandings about learning, and value judgments (Deal & Peterson, 1991). In brief, learners spend a lot of time at school, and the school organisation's contradictions with the current needs of the age are unacceptable for its beneficiaries. One of the deepest of this conflict is that the parallelism between the practice of the outside and the theory addressed in the school has been initially lost. Dewey (1899) comments on the issue mentioned above by stating that if school life is deliberately kept away from real life, they have become places where experience is scarcely presented. Dewey (2004) says that people do not theoretically deny his belief in the necessity of integrating theory with practice in schools. However, the idea that all the assumptions, in theory, are fully reflected in practice should also be rejected. Because individuals who are born with an instinct of curiosity and have an instinctive need for learning are synthetically directed to sit on church-like benches and to memorize pieces of information that are not internally connected (Apple, 1995; 2006), which is addressed more radically in Jacques Ranciere's (2014) work entitled The Ignorant Schoolmaster: education that does not emancipate stultifies. In other words, when school currently and expectedly similarizes the learning and understanding phenomena and eliminates intellectual liberation from learning processes, the child's instinct for learning is rasped and mechanized (Ranciere, 2014). The simplest explanation for this situation is that the so-called cognitive distance or difference between two minds legitimizes the domination of one reason over the other (Ranciere, 2014). For instance, What could be the hidden and perhaps unknown (cannot be known) purpose of the teacher, who initiates the course with the question "Do any of you know the features of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test?" and maintains the instructional processes with these kinds of intellectual domination, other than making others ignorant? And since no one can answer this aristocratic and high-level question, the teacher's presence in that class has now been legitimized. Since others cannot answer this question, the teacher's presence is implied and cannot be discussed. The pedagogical conclusion that comes out of this is that the only way for a mind to teach something to another is to make it ignorant first. As it is indicated by many researchers today (Apple, 2015), the general atmosphere inside schools is an atmosphere that makes individuals ignorant. To support it, when schools are drawn away from their educational reality, they may inevitably contribute to the processes that highlight book character and pseudo-intellectual formations instead of social construction (Dewey, 1906). Therefore, it is imperative now, as it always has been, to readdress the school organization and to question what a comprehensive school is and is not. In this sense, it is necessary to address the mission that schools should have in different ways. More than 100 years ago, as it was questioned by Dewey (2007), the research questions of "what schools are like and how they should be" were opened for discussion again in this study.

1.1. Research Problem and Rationale

It is a right for an individual to continue his/her life in society, to have mental development, to have a sense of belonging, and to have the processes of constructing and protecting identity in total (Hoy & Miskel, 2010). The need for education creates the right to education. In other words, the need for providing education, which is a prerequisite for a productive and quality life in modern societies, professionally requires that this service should be delivered in an organized and planned manner. This need for organization justifies the existence of the school (Peters, 2005). Schools play a significant role in developing the individual personally, transferring the society's cultural heritage to them, forming the community intellectually, socializing the individual, and maintaining the existing social orderliness and order (Peca, 2000). One of the most widely accepted functions of schools is the transfer of cultural heritage to new generations to maintain the existing social ideology (Ladson-Billings, 1995). The purpose of the school's existence is to help somehow young ages gain the ability to know, understand and adapt to the characteristics of culture (Ladson-Billings, 1995). The standard view states that learning and teaching processes in schools generally depend not on students but on the established and stereotypical values of management systems (Ladson-Billings, 1995), which can be explained with the phenomenon of "banking pedagogy" (Freire, 1970), in which the educated are placed in the object position, in an evidence-based manner. In the depository or banking education approach, it is considered that the main problem lies not in society but the individual. For instance, the main reason poverty/poor individuals make organisations pay the price is that the flawed individual does not/cannot know how to behave in society. All the blame belongs to the poor because they cannot adopt and apply the upper social rules, not because they are impoverished, but because they are poor. The lack of finances of

the community poor manifests itself as an intellectual lack or a lack of knowledge in the classroom, which is supposed to be a pedagogical environment. Since the individual has a lack of knowledge about what is told in the school, he/she does not/cannot know how to behave in the school or what to say and when, just like the poor man, he/she is incapable of taking mental or operational activities in the class community. This mental deficiency obliges a knowledge-rich teacher, and they have the authority to decide what is right and wrong in the classroom, what is said in what way and when, because teachers are knowledge-rich (Apple & Au, 2015).

Against the depository education paradigm, Freire describes education at school as the processes of defining and resolving a collective problem and redefining a problem (Freire, 2013). Such a process includes a series of dialogues in which teachers and students undertake learning and teaching actions and analyze conceptual, epistemological, ontological and axiological problems with a co-constructive approach to education (REF). According to Freire, authentic school equates learning and teaching with dialogue. Freire (2013) describes students as subjects in instructional activities; beyond that, he accepts from the beginning and thinks that the discussion between the subjects is an essential feature of knowledge. Since each individual in the classroom can show a certain degree of cognitive expertise to others and share them in a discursive harmony suppressed by dialogue, learners will have the opportunity to exercise their skills in taking mental or operational action in this second situation described. They will also have the chance to improve their quantity and quality, or they will exist in the classroom at that moment (Fromm, 1969). The conflicting educational perspectives presented above are also evident in the discourses of other commenters. For instance, Oakes (1995) states that the social function of the school is perceived as choosing and directing the individual. Everyone does not/cannot benefit from school equally. According to Oakes (1995) and Shor (1992), there is an elitist school understanding that the elites benefit from at one end. There is an alternative school approach that regards difference and diversity forms as richness at the other end. In these understandings, the definition of the phenomenon of intelligence differs significantly. In the elitist school understanding, intelligence is individual, or there is a more Piagetian definition of intelligence: intelligence that can only belong to the individual has certain stages of development, development precedes learning, in the final analysis, intelligence is an individual's capacity and quality to adapt to environmental changes (Ültanır, 2012). Therefore, the idea that schools should benefit from this idea comes to the forefront. Schools often select students through applications (IQ tests, central exams, etc.) that highlight the above statement. Alternative schools emphasize a more Vygotskian definition of intelligence: intelligence is social or collective, we have our intelligence thanks to others (Bruner, 1974; 1983; 1986); learning precedes development, in the final analysis, intelligence is a result of the social, cultural, historical and materialistic construct (Bruner, 1974; 1983; 1986). Therefore, learning communities comes to the forefront in alternative schools, and while the new rules that are formed over time try to provide an education according to the intellectual needs of each individual in the community, they constantly categorize what will be achieved as a result of education (e.g., learning outcomes; conceptual outcomes, skill outcomes) according to the capacity of each individual. Since the sociological, cultural, historical and contextual patterns into which each individual is born will determine the difference between the existing zone of development and the potential zone of development (Bruner, 1974; 1983; 1986), intelligence is expected to increase or further increase through the people who create the patterns mentioned above, because it is an element determined or designated by the community (Bruner, 1974; 1983; 1986). In this context, many philosophers directly or indirectly refer to John Paul Satre's (1946) existentialist philosophy to philosophize the school phenomenon. Existentialism, which is opposed to the mechanical view of education put forward by traditional teachings about the phenomenon of education, focuses on liberalization or liberation by saving individuals from the constraints of limited ideas that subject them to sharp classifications. In simple terms, one of the effects of existentialism on education is adopting the consciousness and belief that human freedom is superior (Spring, 2017).

McLaren (2011) criticized today's educational practices from an existential point of view and concluded that education should act as such a level that individuals' educational processes should be associated with their existing processes (human is existence and this requires education, or it requires expressing what is inside). That intellectual development should not be something imposed but an ordinary or routine demonstration of social consciousness. In other words, a human should undertake the learning task that he dreams of undertaking as an activity that realizes or creates himself, not to adapt to the existing mechanical life but to correct or restore this reversed world/life by changing it (Gutek, 2006). It does not/cannot seem possible for a person to become a subject in his own life in any other way (Apple, 2004). Freire (2003) blended the above interpretations with pedagogy and re-expressed it as follows: the processes of learning and teaching in school include specific procedures that must be continually processed and strengthened: identifying problems, taking responsibility for solutions to problems and being an authority, being accountable to logic (peers, others) and knowledge patterns produced so far in solution proposals. Tonguç (1952) reviewed the above arguments and referenced the compulsory interaction of school and society. According to Tonguç (1952; 2004), when individuals identify problems in school systematics and solve them with the practices that are reasonable and open to everyone's examination accompanied by data collection, analysis and interpretation processes, they pave the way for social rehabilitation. In brief, Tonguç (2004) thinks that the self-consciousness that a person will acquire by confronting his thought and the social reality he is in can potentially be an instrument in the transformation of this reality. Based on the above philosophical theses, the school phenomenon can be discussed within traditional and contemporary paradigms. The conventional paradigm prefers to characterize the school with an indirect or direct methodological approach with the following concepts: "closed system", "authoritarian and despotic relations", "memorized or compelled mind", "compulsory education", "forgetting the self", "teacher- or knowledge-focused", "requiring discipline and punishment", "making ignorant", etc. (Giroux, 2007). The contemporary paradigm addresses school from a different perspective and
- o   addresses schools as historical and cultural institutions,
- o   accepts that schools contain political and ideological opportunities,

o   does not reduce schools to a mirror that reflects only the image of the dominant culture and society,
o   regards schools as the institutions that create meaning and value to define and realize individuals and groups' needs, identities, and individuality (Tezcan, 2005).

Hinchey (1998) re-characterizes the traditional paradigm with the following items:

o   loaded and intensified curricula,
o   classroom members isolated from each other in crowded classrooms,
o   the latent dominance of the behaviourist teaching,
o   pedagogically impoverished teaching environment,
o   acceptance of the primary knower as the teacher and the continued approval of it,
o   having tasks done with line-type (upper/lower) organizational structure and authoritarian supervision,
o   passive studentship understanding,
o   irregular or unproductive or inorganic school building and equipment,
o   school organization management, bureaucratic school management/organization centred on administration,

When the above comments are considered as a whole, school-related perceptions, experiences, and experience-oriented beliefs of the stakeholders that make up the school, including students, teachers, school administrators, parents and other stakeholders, are of great importance. Revealing and describing the stakeholders' school-related perceptions is a test of which paradigm the current school systematic is closer to, which contradicts each other above. As it is known, the most critical stakeholders of schools are students and teachers. Therefore, in this study, it was attempted to describe the perceptions of the learners based on their first-hand experiences about the school and to examine them in-depth in terms of various variables. Both in national and international literature, many studies are discussing how the school is characterized from the eyes of individuals (e.g., Beavis and Thomas, 1996; Dreeben, 1968; Eisner, 1979; Freire, 1970; Jackson, 1968; Hardcastle et al., 1985; Lahelma, 2002; Marshall, 1988; 1990; Özdemir, 2012; Özdemir & Akkaya, 2013; Toker, Gökçe, & Bülbül, 2014; Sarışık & Düşkün, 2016). Although these studies are precious and informative in their field, they failed to care about an issue: a longitudinal perspective. In most of the studies, the data were collected from one or a few groups of learners through how the school was, and with the interpretations obtained from them, only instant predictions could be answered. In other words, the change and/or transformation of the learners' perceptions of school in the historical flow subjected to school systematics was not/could not be examined and systematically examined. This study aims to systematically investigate how individuals, who have just started school and are just before the starting point of university education, experience the school during their 12-year compulsory education and the changes in these experience patterns. In brief, the experience-based theories, views, ideas, perceptions and evaluations and judgments of primary and secondary school students, as the most critical stakeholders of the school, about the school, and the evaluations and appraisals they put forward in connection with these were examined in-depth and multi-directionally in this study. The sub-questions of the study are as follows:

1. How are the thematic trends in the metaphorical reasoning of primary and secondary school students as an indicator of their perceptions of school?
2. Do the changes in school-related perceptions of primary and secondary school students differ according to the gender variable?
3. Do the changes in school-related perceptions of the students studying in primary and secondary schools differ according to the school level?
4. Do the changes in school-related perceptions of the students studying in primary and secondary schools differ according to the grade levels?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Model

This study was conducted as a relational survey model. The general purpose of the survey studies is to determine the trends in the processes in which various moderators or interventions belong to the dependent variable investigated. The dependent variable or the variable studied in this study was the learners' metaphorical reasoning at school. In this study, there was no intervention to the participants, whether empirical or not; however, the trend patterns in the data set were examined by considering the possible effects of three moderator-categorical variables. Therefore, this study is a relational survey study since the categorical conceptual themes created by the researchers with the qualitative data analysis approach are associated or interacted with the moderator variables inherent in the system such as gender, grade level and school level. To make it clear, the relational survey model is a research model that aims to determine the presence or degree of covariance between two or more variables (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). The relational survey model considered as a pattern in this study also has a longitudinal style. Fraenkel & Wallen (2009) mentioned three different approaches when considering data collection processes in survey studies. They have a longitudinal character: trend studies, cohort study and panel study (p. 394). In trend studies, data can be collected from different groups or samples in a population at different times (p. 394). However, this is not the case in group or panel studies; namely, in the cohort and/or panel studies, a particular group is examined and described in terms of a

specific variable or variables. Therefore, this study reflects a longitudinal character as a trend study concerning data collection style.

2.2. Selection and Characteristics of the Participant

In this study, metaphorical reasonings of 1782 (female = 811; 45.5%; male = 971; 54.5%) students about school were obtained. The participants completely answered the socio-demographic information and main data collection form directed to them. The sample was obtained from the Beykoz district of Istanbul province. Beykoz district was the population of this study. Therefore, the population to which the results will be generalized is the students studying in the Beykoz district. For sample selection, the schools in the Beykoz district were first listed on the Ministry of National Education website. According to official data, there are 13.707 students in the population. A total of 13% (n = 1782) of these students were selected for sampling. In random sampling approaches, it can be said that the power of the sample feature to represent the population increases as the number of unit persons to be included in the sample increases according to the axioms of probability theory. A calculation engine that constructs the relationship between "confidence level", "confidence interval", "population", and "sample" on the web address "https://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm" was used to ensure the technical reliability of the sampling processes. The confidence interval was first calculated, and then the sufficient and necessary sample size was observed, and the confidence interval coefficient of 0.95 was determined as 2.17. When these values were employed for 13707 people, the required sample size was calculated as 1775. It can be said that the 1782 people included in this study were a group that would ensure the representativeness of the population and that the study met the conditions for generalization of the population or had an acceptable level of external validity. Furthermore, the calculations performed by the researchers of this study can be repeated by any external reader using the relevant calculation engine.

Schools were classified in terms of school level among themselves. The weighted ratios of the number of students in different school types were calculated, and by using stratified sampling approach, one of the random sampling methods, student selection was made without spoiling the ratio of each stratum (e.g., primary school, secondary school, vocational high school, etc.) from the population with regard to the school level variable. Within the scope of this study, the sampling unit was person/student. Students from seven types of schools participated in the study: "primary school" (n = 335; 18.8%); "secondary school (n = 748; 42.2%)"; "Anatolian high school" (n = 278; 15.6%); "imam hatip high school" (n = 191; 10.7%); "vocational-technical high school" (n = 50; 2.8%); "sports high school" (n = 153; 8.6%); "science high school" (n = 27; 1.5%). The distribution of the students who participated in the study in terms of grade level was as follows: 1st grade (n = 28 ; 1.6%); 2nd grade (n = 45; 2.5%); 3rd grade (n = 147; 8.2%); 4th grade (n = 79; 4.4%); 5th grade (n = 114 ; 6.4%); 6th grade (n = 229; 12.9%); 7th grade (n = 274; 15.4%); 8th grade (n = 167 ; 9.4%); 9th grade (n = 257 ; 14.4%); 10th grade (n = 169 ; 9.5%); 11th grade (n = 152 ; 8.5%); 12th grade (n = 121; 6.8%). Since the sampling process became too complicated and technically uncontrollable, stratified sampling could only be performed in terms of the school type and grade level variables, while no rating was/could be performed for the gender variable. However, since the number of male and female students in schools was generally close to each other (female= 811; 45.5%; male = 971; 54.5%), the stratification of the participants by gender was performed at similar rates.

2.3. Data Collection Tool

As stated, this study's main aim was to reveal the students' perceptions of the school created by their school-related perceptions. Following this aim, students' metaphorical reasoning about school was used (Buaraphan, 2011; Saban, Koçbeker, & Saban, 2007). In the data collection tool, the participants were expected to respond to the following statement through their experiences: ***"My school is like/looks like …………, because…………"*** (Saban, 2003; 2004; 2006). In this study, there are specific reasons for referring to participants' figurative or analogy-based reasoning to reveal experience-based perceptions, beliefs, or personal theories about school. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999), the person expresses a phenomenon or situation with another phenomenon or condition compared to performing metaphorical reasoning. Metaphorical reasoning or expression can provide very concrete and realistic information about the participants' experiences or practices (MacCormac, 1990; Yob, 2003). When learners explain the process of "being a student in a school" by likening it to another situation, phenomenon, event, object, person or anything, they have to start from their experiences in school in historical time. A student who expresses his school with the metaphor of "refrigerator" may be talking about the "coldness" or "shallowness" of civic and social relations at school and his/her inability/failure to be included in various sociometric cliques. However, these inferences were not made intuitively or subjectively by the researchers. As it can be seen in the structure of the data collection tool, the reason why the students, for example, likened the school to a refrigerator, was also attempted to be analyzed conceptually and in-depth with the instruction "…because".

Furthermore, within the scope of this study, participants' metaphorical reasoning could be used effectively within the context of expressing their experience-oriented perceptions and concepts hidden in the background of everyday speech, as in other studies (e.g., Saban, 2003; 2010). One of the main reasons for using such a data collection tool is that metaphors can have higher expressive power than the spoken language (Inbar, 1996). The power of metaphorical reasoning in capturing the meaning can also be expressed within the context of this study as follows: "If a picture is worth 1000 words, a metaphor is worth 1000 pictures." (Shuell, 1990; s. 102).

2.4. Data Collection Processes

This study included the broad participation of learners (n = 1782). All of the data were collected through a six-month field study by one of the researchers of this study. First, necessary permissions for the study were obtained, data collection tools were printed, plans were made for visits to schools, and the data collection process organizational plan and various B plans were developed to recover the technical problems. First, the researcher either read aloud the Research Information Text, which states the study's aim, significance, and possible outcomes, to the teachers or delivered it to them in writing. The researcher took part in the classroom with the teachers in all data collection processes and paved the way for obtaining a more efficient and significant data set through his civic-social relations at the school. Their parents signed the consent form for each participant. The fact that ethical issues were taken into consideration at the highest level and no data would/could be shared with the people, institutions or organizations outside the study was clearly stated to those concerned in the participant consent form. The researcher entered the classroom with the teacher and briefly introduced himself and the study to the students after informing the learners about the process. Learners were given 15 minutes to write their metaphorical reasoning. Because, in this study, the participants were not asked to make lengthy descriptions about the school but to reflect the first concept, situation, phenomenon and object that came to their minds.

One of the most methodological barriers in the data collection processes was that the learners had not previously used analogical reasoning or been involved in a scientific research process. It was observed that there were participants who hesitated to write their thoughts during the data collection processes. In these cases, the teacher and the researcher went out of the classroom for a short time. They tried to make the participants feel that this process was not a situation that should cause anxiety, such as giving a mark and aimed to provide a comfortable environment for them to create a healthy data set. The second methodological barrier was the problems encountered during the healthy collection of data from students in the first years of schooling. The data collection process was performed with the help of the researcher, especially since the first, second and third-grade students faced problems in conveying their school-related experiences with metaphors. The researcher, who conducted the data collection processes, interviewed each student at the first and second-grade level individually and transferred their metaphors and reasons to written media. Nevertheless, the researcher conducted group-based interviews with 3-5 students at the third-grade level and attempted to inform them about the data collection tool. The above-mentioned methodological barriers were not encountered for the learners at higher cognitive or grade levels.

2.5. Data Analysis Processes

In this study, data analysis was performed in two interdependent stages.

Qualitative analyses: In this stage, the suitability of written transfers was first checked. The reflections of the participants who presented the analogy but did not include the justification or explanation were not be added to the data repository. The number of participants who filled out the data collection tool incompletely was less than 2% of all participants. In this stage of the analysis processes, all metaphors and accompanying explanations were arranged alphabetically using the Excel® program. This indexing provided researchers with an initial holistic picture of where the thematic contents of the metaphors concentrated. Then, in-depth analyses were initiated. The data analysis processes were conducted inductively, as stated in the interpretive paradigm that reflects the perspective of qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To this end, the first two stages of the analysis steps, which are frequently used by the theory ground, were used: open coding and integrative coding (Creswell, 2007). In open coding, metaphorical reflections, justifications, or explanations were analytical or fragmented through an organic catalogue of codes. In the second stage, in the integration stage, fragmented thematic contents of school experiences were integrated to form homogeneous structures within themselves. It was ensured that the external reader could see general conceptual trends in a synthesized way. In this stage, conceptual categories or themes indicating broader categories were abstracted by researchers through the pieces of meaning made analytical.

The researchers maintained the analyses by considering both the existing theoretical frameworks and the content of the data set. In other words, this stage of the analyses was conducted through data-based and theory-laden codes. The codes obtained from previous studies and the original codes that emerged during the analyses ensured that the coding catalogue remained organic (Creswell, 2007). The written reflections obtained from 50 participants were coded together by all researchers through the catalogue, it was assumed that sufficient and necessary conceptual consensus was achieved, and two researchers carried out the remaining coding. When the written reflections of each 500 participants were coded, the coders came together, and the agreement percentages were calculated (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The first, second and third inter-coder agreement rates were 81%, 87% and 95%, respectively. The different situations in the coding were attempted to be resolved by the negotiations between the researchers.

Quantitative analyses: In this study, the primary aim was to perform a qualitative analysis of the participants' metaphorical reasoning and reach conceptual themes. The secondary objective of the study was to associate the abstracted thematic contents with three variables in particular. They were gender, school type and grade level. In other words, the changes in the qualitatively abstracted conceptual categories according to the participants' gender, level of education and grade level were examined relationally. To this end, multiple relationships between categorical variables were examined, and in this context, independent chi-square tests were performed using SPSS 20.0©. It was indicated with the decision of Istanbul Aydın University Ethics

Commission's decision numbered 2020/6 and dated 02/07/2020 that the data collection tools used in this study and the data collection processes employed would not violate any possible ethical issue on behalf of the participants or that they would not cause any physical/psychological harm.

2.6. Validity and Reliability

Within the context of the study, qualitatively oriented data were collected, and this data set was subjected to both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Two methods were used for the validity of the quantitative perspective. First of all, as is mentioned in the sections above, this study is a study of the external validity of which was provided to a certain extent. To support it, the stratified sampling approach, one of the random sampling methods, was performed by fulfilling the necessary technical conditions and calculations. Therefore, the results obtained from the sample in this study can be generalized or transferred to the accessible population to a certain extent (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). The phenomenon of transferability in this context is related to population generalization (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009) and should not be confused with the phenomenon of transferability in qualitative studies. Since this study was descriptive and there was no researcher's intervention in the group studied, internal validity threats to the quantitative perspective were not/could not be taken into account (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Furthermore, opinions were received from experts on whether the statistical tests used in this study were chosen reasonably and technically correct to ensure statistical validity (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009).

In this study, it was attempted to use the strategies that can be realized within the research possibilities, especially among the approach proposed by Creswell (2007, s. 207-211) (e.g., long-term stay in the research field and transformation of the researcher into data collection tool, data- or theory-based triangulation, presence of external auditors, negative case analysis, statement of researcher bias, participant control, in-depth definition of context etc.), at the highest level to check the validity and reliability conditions for the qualitative perspective. First, the intercoder reliability ratios, namely internal consistency coefficients, were calculated at acceptable levels (Miles & Huberman, 1994). One of the most critical limitations of this study in terms of validity was that the data source was uniform indicated that the diversification/triangulation criterion was not met. However, the phenomenon of diversification in qualitative research is not realized only in terms of the data source (Patton, 1990). Methodological or theoretical diversification is also an acceptable method of validity (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Creswell, 2007, p. 2008). In this study, theory diversification could be achieved by creating codes and constructing category systems during the qualitative analysis and interpretation of data. The qualitative dataset was processed by constantly considering both metaphor theory's main discourses and arguments (e.g., Lakoff & Johnson, 1999) and critical pedagogy theory (e.g., Freire, 2003; McLaren, 2011). In all these processes, external researchers specialising in qualitative analysis, metaphor theory, and critical pedagogy theory examined and revised the code derivatives and thematic abstractions formed in the analyses.

Furthermore, after qualitative analysis, interviews were conducted with the students in some schools with whom the researchers had close civil-social relations. The participant views and researcher analysis and interpretations were compared within the context of participant control. Due to the time and human resources, this process was limited to only 19 students. Finally, as mentioned in the analysis section, an organic/flexible code catalogue was used. The compatibility of the data-based and theory-laden codes determined over time with the researchers' preliminary hypotheses/propositions regarding the general picture or possible research outcomes was constantly checked (Creswell, 2007; s. 208). The codes that were not compatible with the determined categories or themes were repeatedly considered until the data analysis was terminated. If they could not be adopted to any embodied/clarified category, it was decided to eliminate them from the data corpus. However, all participants' discourses could be included in the analysis and interpretation processes through the diversity of thematic trends, as seen in the "Results" section.

3. FINDINGS

This study serves two purposes. First, it reveals the diversity of students' qualitatively oriented metaphorical reasoning about the phenomenon of school. The second one is to determine whether there is a relationship between the categories produced by the school metaphor and various variables. In this section, the study results are presented in two stages (qualitative and quantitative).

3.1. Qualitative Results: Thematic Trends in the Metaphorical Reasoning of Primary and Secondary School Students as an Indicator of Their Perceptions of School

The metaphors produced by students for the concept of school and the generalized themes reached through these metaphors are presented in Table 1. 17 general themes and the sample codes are presented in Table 1. Furthermore, the relative dominance of each theme is also shown as percentages.

Table 1.
Thematic Trends in Students' Metaphorical Reasoning as an Indicator of Their Perceptions of School

Generalized Themes	Example Metaphorical Codes	(%)
School as a place of love and trust	Family, Second family, Home, Second home, Dormitory, Neighborhood	30.4
School as a beautiful and pleasant place	Comfort, Bed, Palace, Paradise, A beautiful and fun place, Everything, Life, A special place, Dream, Sports facility, Circus	16.1
School as a control and discipline centre	Factory working to enslave people, Modern slavery, Prison, Quarantine, A boring place, A boring game, Torture place, A golden cage, Thought management, Blinding centre, Military, Grooming system, Discipline place, Place of control, Between four walls, Robotization place, Probation, Freedom restrictor, Eraser pen, Boss, Concentration camp	15.6
School as an unsafe and unnecessary place	Hell, Enemy's nest, A place of unhappiness and sadness, Unsafe, A terrible place, A nest of stress, A place that kills time, A useless place, Trash, A dirty place, Nothing, An unjust area, Barn, Courtyard, Street, Spider web, Cactus, Death, Morgue, Zoo, Confusion	12.1
School as a place of development and maturation	Playground, Flower garden, Belgrad forest, Tree, Organism, Body, Soil, Place of development, Place of growth, Place of cultivation, Children's house, Mind house, Brain, Intelligence cube	7.16
School as a source and transfer centre of knowledge	Knowledge nest, Knowledge world, Teaching place, Informing place, Knowledge transferring site, Conference, Teaching building, A library for children, Book cover, Quiz book, Book, Encyclopedia, Library, Internet, Computer, Market, Greengrocer, Notebook, Mobese camera, Camera, Bottle, Jar, Piggy Bank, Mirror, Simulation, Space, Infinity, Rainbow, bottomless pit, sea	8.18
School is the environment of competition	Racetrack, Hippodrome, Battleground, Slope, Astroturf, A long marathon	2.39
Cognitive and practical apprenticeship centre	Experience area, Discovery, Survivor, Responsibility, Life itself, Rehearsal of life, A creative place, Being born again, Workshop, The place where I will build infrastructure	1.99
School as a centre for civic-social relations	Place for bonding with friends, Community space, Solidarity association, Socializing space, Environment	1.99
School as a means to reach the goal	The way to the light, The path to the goal, Ship, Vehicle, Ladder, Glasses, Step, First Step, Footstep, Shoe	1.42
School as a place where basic needs are met	Water, Basic need, Necessity	0.97
School as an election centre	Metrobus stop, Waiting place, Lobby, Gate of destiny	0.91
School as a place of production	Anthill, Beehive, Workplace	0.62
School as a temporary process	A sip of coffee, Coat, Foundation, Balloon	0.28

As seen in Table 1, the theme of school as a place of love and trust (30.4%) is one of the main themes. With this theme, the participants perceive the school as a place where they establish friendship relations without hesitation or doubt. In other words, it is not possible to reduce the school to just a physical location in the eyes of the participants. The phenomenon of school can be understood as a socialization environment with a meaning specific for the participants.

"Since we are in school a lot, the school environment is warm like a home environment of friendships and relationships" (Ali, 11).

"School is our home, teachers are like our mother, the principal is like our father. We should behave at school the way we behave at home" (Meryem, 10).

"School represents the people at home for me. Female teachers are like mothers, principals are like our fathers" (Sena, 12).

"We are all one. The nuclei are the teachers, the red and juicy part is the students. Its enveloping shell is like a manager and administrators" (Serdar, 11).

For instance, according to one participant, school is a family nucleus based on relationships between friends; for another participant, school means being next to each other materially and spiritually, physically and spiritually, under all circumstances, within all possibilities, in good and bad times. Therefore, he refers to teachers as mothers. According to another participant, it is a fundamental social unity like an extended family based on cooperation created by the principal, administrators and teachers with their students. One of the other prominent themes within the context of the study was the theme of school as a friendly and pleasant place (16.1%). Through this theme, participants perceived that school resources, quality of teaching and most of the curriculum had an important place in education.

*"Learning becomes fun because we enjoy learning about real life and different information" (*Sevda, 10).

"The cake tastes good. The knowledge we learn at school gives the same pleasure" (Meryem, 11).

"School is the place where students are most comfortable. There is no parental pressure, and we are with our peers" (Sevgi, 12).

"There are lots of nice and fun social activities at school. It is the place where I have the most fun and talk" (Ahmet, 14).

"I trust my teachers at school, and school is the second place where I feel safe" (Mert, 10).

"It is the place where I spend most of my time. It was a happy environment where I could have fun and share my troubles with my friends" (Eliz, 14).

For instance, according to one participant, the use of various situations that students encounter in their daily lives in transferring course content makes their learning enjoyable. According to another participant, the fact that the range of the curriculum includes exciting and more entertaining social activities facilitates their understanding. Another participant indicates that they can have fun because the school allows them to establish social relations with their friends. Although most participants perceive the school as a fun and beautiful place, a significant part of the participants (15.6%) perceive the school as a centre of control and discipline. In other words, from the participants' perspective, school is the place where prohibitions, rules, and restrictions are imposed to direct their educational activities.

"The education system is full of teachers who try to teach students the right information with the wrong methods and act like robots, not human. Furthermore, it is tried to provide education with a thought that does not consider the students' psychological state" (Eren, 16).

"We are constrained and isolated and are losing our talents and differences. We become one-of-a-kind people. Our ideas are constrained. They put us in a certain mould and expect us to live the way they want" (Elif, 11).

For instance, according to one participant, the correct information is tried to be taught to the student with the highlighted methods in the school. Learning by rote is the most typical example of it. In other words, according to the participant, this is not learning. According to another participant, the school tries to put them into a particular thought pattern by filing their brains. In other words, in this school, which does not allow the participant to think and interpret independently, he is forced to memorize the subjects presented by the teacher in patterns. In addition to the mentioned themes, one of the prominent themes is the perception of the school as an unsafe and unnecessary place (12.1%) by the students. According to the participants, the school system is the storage of information in students' brains without making the necessary and unnecessary distinction.

"Sometimes it is useless to explain unnecessary things in the lessons, and our teachers should not think that they have taught us everything and should not teach us by force. I would like them to provide us with interesting information and enable us to research and reach them, instead of teaching us something" (Ece, 15).

"In schools, we, as students, try to learn the areas that we are not inclined to forcefully and absurdly instead of being directed to areas where we will succeed" (Mehmet, 16).

For instance, according to one participant, all known information in the world is tried to be stored in our brains. In the participant's eyes, the brain, where so much information is stored, becomes a receiver. Therefore, according to the participant, asking questions and looking for answers other than the answers given is wrong and forbidden in this school. According to the other participant, in the school, services should be offered so that students can develop a positive self-concept by taking into account their interests, desires, abilities and personality traits, try to set it by being aware of their potential, make profits in this direction, see the results of their decisions and take responsibility. One of the prominent themes in the study was the theme of school (7.16%) as a field of development and maturation. With this theme, the participants mentioned the school as a maturation and development centre to fulfil the expected function.

"First, we become saplings, and we start primary school. We grow up and go to secondary school. The tree also grows. New students arrive, the. We'll be in 8th grade. We leave school. We go to high school. Autumn comes, and the leaves fall. We leave" (Salih, 11).

"Our knowledge increases, and we mature in lessons" (Samet, 15).

For instance, according to one participant, the school ensures that the student makes continuous progress with the interaction of physical, mental, emotional and social maturation and learning, starting from before birth. From the perspective of the participant, this progress in his development is systematic, sequential and continuous. According to another participant, as the

development of the individual occurs as a result of the knowledge in the lessons, growth and maturation differ depending on the information they learn. As indicated, five themes emerged as a result of the examination of students' perceptions of the phenomenon of school. Nevertheless, according to the participants, the school is the environment of competition (2.39%) against other students to gain superiority in the theme of school as a centre of the competition.

"Every morning, we get up early and get together with my friends for the same purpose. And at the end of the year, everyone gets the reward they deserve. There is often a sweet competition with friends, and it is fun to be together, but sometimes it feels like a prison" (Zehra, 13).

"All students are different. There is a lot of competition and conflicts. Some of the teachers do not care about their job. The only concern of the administration is what the students wear" (Kerem, 14).

For instance, according to one participant, in the school, the teacher sometimes makes kids race to motivate them, and children have fun and a good time in this situation. However, sometimes, if the competitive environment is agitated and risky and there is a risk of losing, children prefer not to compete not to shake their self-confidence. Thus, as they avoid sharing too many ideas and perspectives, their chances of learning decrease, and the learning environment becomes a prison. In the eyes of another participant, a school is a place of conflict between individuals with the same goal. The competitive classroom atmosphere where students try to learn against each other instead of learning together leads to conflict. In this sense, a person's experiences, inferences and future predictions are directly related to what he has experienced and what he has learned from them. Therefore, if interpersonal conflicts and disagreements are considered cognitive and affective development areas, they will appear as a subject to be carefully considered. On the other hand, under the theme of cognitive and practical apprenticeship centre, according to the participants, school is a place where students can do something that they cannot do on their own (1.99%) with the help or guidance of the teacher.

"We learn most of the things we learn at the beginning of life by experiencing it at school under the supervision of the teacher" (Fatma, 12).

"School is for learning the right and wrong in our lives by taking the teacher as a model. School is not a place where we just learn lessons and take exams" (Ali, 14).

For instance, according to one participant, school is a place where students are taught how to access, use and apply knowledge under the guidance of a guiding teacher. According to another participant, the student starts learning at school by observing his teacher and becomes self-sufficient in his way. Under the school's theme as a centre of civil-social relations, the participants perceived school as preparing the student for a specific social environment by gaining personality and integrating with society.

"Our children's valuable time is spent at school. Learning and socializing start at school" (Büşra, 12).

"Everyone finds a friend who accompanies their ideas, feelings and thoughts and with whom they become partners. School is an environment for socializing. It is the field of education that we live in good or bad coexistence, preparing knowledge for the future" (Aleyna, 14).

For instance, according to one participant, the learning-teaching process at school teaches the existing values and norms of society. In this process, the individual learns how to behave in the community he is a member. According to another participant, school is the process of preparing the individual for social life. It helps the individual become an active member of that society by learning the culture, values and norms of the group or community they are or will be members. In the theme of school as a means to reach the goal, according to the participants, school is a tool that enables students to achieve their dreams, the future they plan and commit to getting, or the result they want (1.42%).

"If we do not do it, we will remain ignorant, our lessons should always be our first target. Sometimes we can be bored, but we can make up for it by spending time with our friends" (Melda, 11).

"The car takes us wherever we want. The driver is our teachers here. It is a means that can bring us to our destination at maximum speed with the necessary conditions" (Deniz, 13).

For instance, according to one participant, school is an indispensable environment for students to engage in specific purposes. In school, it is essential for students to establish positive relationships with other students to determine the goals, think about the ideal future, turn their vision of this future into reality, and motivate themselves in the process. According to another participant, the school helps us choose where we want to go in life. If the student knows exactly what he wants to achieve and focuses his efforts, the school will quickly get him where he wants to go. Under the theme of school as a place where basic needs are met, according to the participants, a school is a place that fulfils students' needs that should be satisfied (0.97%).

"School is a place where our basic needs cannot be met" (Oğuz, 12).

"Just as people cannot live if they do not fulfil their needs such as food, education at school is also one of them" (Emine, 14).

For instance, according to one participant, we also need education such as school, food, shelter, and clothing essential for living. School is the place where this need is met. According to another participant, education is a need like food and water that is necessary for living. Therefore, first, education should also be fulfilled like the basic physiological needs, and the above requirements come to the fore as students are satisfied by this school. Under the school's theme as the centre of choice, the participants perceived the school as to where a collective would choose between more than one option (0.91%).

"What kind of person you want to be, what you want to achieve, you choose according to them. This choice is not like a course and a profession. It's about people and values. Winning something is not the same for everyone. School is a starting point" (Ahmet, 14).

For instance, according to one participant, the school allows the student to make choices about the events that appear before him and make him think. On the other hand, making a choice involves responsibility. Thus, making a choice makes life difficult among the options offered, or on the contrary, it can bring freedom to life. Under the theme of school as a place of production, according to the participants, school is the place where efforts are made to increase the amount or benefits of services to meet human needs (0.62%).

"It is a place where people receive education after the family. The bees also learn to collect the essence from the flower from the queen in the hive" (Merve, 13).

"There is also a community in the school. Old and young people are just like industrious ants. Those children will save other people, earn money, get paid for what they did like ants and continue their lives in the coming years" (Mehmet, 11).

For instance, according to one participant, school is the activities and process of people changing their natural environment to obtain objects necessary for the living and development of society. According to another participant, it is the place where everyone creates a new good or service due to specific activities and transactions. According to the participants in the school theme, as a temporary process, the school cannot provide permanent learning (0.28%) for the student because it is short-term.

*"It looks full from the outside, but when you open it up, it teaches things that may be useless" (*Şerif, 13).

"When it is viewed from the outside, you cannot see a bad thing. However, when you come to school, that is, when you remove the school's makeup, you will understand all the defects" (Mine, 12).

For instance, according to one participant, since the school applies the rote education system, it causes the information to be remembered in the short term, and learning does not take place. Therefore, the time spent at school is empty, and this will not do any work. According to another participant, since the education in the school enables the students to keep the information in their minds so that it can be repeated when desired, all defects of the students reveal when information is forgotten after a particular time.

3.2. Quantitative Results: Associating the Abstracted Metaphorical Categories with Various Variables as an Indicator of Primary and Secondary School Students' Perceptions of School

In this section, the relationships between the participant population's three categorical variables and the conceptual categories obtained from the learners' metaphorical reasoning and their statistical significance were examined through crosstabulation. The goodness of fit values was interpreted. Before the analyses, a critical assumption for the square (good fit) test was checked. This assumption can be expressed as the expected minimum cell frequency (Gravetter and Wallnau, 2004). In the chi-square test, which creates cellular matrices, the value expressed as a percentage in each cell is expected to be "5%" and above. However, according to statistical assumption, more than 20% of the values in all cells in total are below "5%", which means that a less accurate analysis or interpretation is performed (Gravetter and Wallnau, 2004).

Table 2.
Reduced Qualitative Metaphoric-Conceptual Categories

High category	Set of subcategories	Sample codes
Positive	School as a place of love and trust School as a beautiful and pleasant place	Family, second family, home, second home, dormitory, neighbourhood, comfort, bed, palace, paradise, a beautiful and fun place, everything, life, a special place, dream, sports facility
Negative	School as a control and discipline centre School as an unsafe and unnecessary place School as a temporary process	Factory working to enslave people, modern slavery, prison, quarantine, a boring place, a boring game, a place of torture, a golden cage, thought management, blinding centre, military, grooming system, location of discipline, zone of control, between four walls robotization place, probation, freedom restrictor, eraser pen, boss, concentration camp
Epistemic	School as a transfer centre of knowledge School as a source of information Cognitive and practical apprenticeship centre School as an unlimited source of information School as information registry centre Election centre School as a means to the goal School as a centre for civic-social relations School as a competitive centre	Information home, information world, teaching place, informing place, information transfer place, conference, teaching building, a library for children, book cover, test book, book, encyclopedia, library, internet, computer, market, greengrocer, notebook
Productive	School as an area of development and maturation School as a place of production School as a place where basic needs are met Cognitive and practical apprenticeship centre	Anthill, beehive, workplace, experience area, exploration, survivor, responsibility, life itself, rehearsal, creative place, rebirth, workshop, place where I will build infrastructure

In this study, the conceptual-metaphorical categories (17 categories) obtained from qualitative analyses interacted with the variables of gender (2 categories), school level (7 categories) and grade level (12 categories). Therefore, "17x2=34" cells for "gender*categories" crossing, "17x7=119" cell for "school level*categories" crossing and "17x12=204" cell for "class level*categories" crossing were created. However, the number of cells below 5% in each intersection was more than 20% of the total cell numbers. To this end, the qualitative categories were regrouped among themselves and reduced to 4 higher categories in total. Detailed information about this reduction process is presented in Table 3. After performing this process, it was observed that the basic assumption for chi-square was met.

Table 3.
Relationships between Gender Variable and Metaphorical Reasoning Categories

Categories (R)	RXC	Gender (C)		Total
		Girl	Male	
Positive	% R	44.1	55.9	100
	% C	48.5	51.3	50
Negative	% R	45	55	100
	% C	32.7	33.4	33.1
Epistemic	% R	52.3	47.7	100
	% C	9.6	7.3	8.4
Productive	% R	49	51	100
	% C	9.2	8.0	8.6
Total	% R	45.5	54.5	100
	% C	100	100	100

In Table 3, crossing (association) values of gender (C: column) and abstracted metaphorical reasoning categories (R: row) are presented as percentages. As it is seen, the majority of female students (48.5%) produced positive metaphors about the school, while a significant portion (32.7%) of them created negative metaphors about school. It is observed that the analogies produced by female students in the epistemic (9.6%) and Productive (9.2%) categories are below 10%. It can be seen that these percentages have similar rates for the participating male students. Male students also perceived the school quite positively (51.3%); however, male students who explained the school with negative perceptions or concepts (33.4%) were also significant. Under both the Epistemic (7.3%) and Productive (8%) categories, male students also preferred to make analogies at low levels. In conclusion, the metaphorical reasonings of both girls and boys about school primarily reflected the mental images containing

affective features and elements (positive and negative); however, school conceptualizations were made at shallow levels on behalf of the epistemic and productive categories, which include the pedagogical and cognitive sub-items.

Table 4.

Chi-Square Test Results in the Context of Gender Variable

	Value	SD	p
Pearson chi-square	4.34	3	0.227

The chi-square (good fit) test for associating the metaphorical categories created for the school phenomenon in the context of gender variable is presented in Table 4. As it can be seen, the relationship between these two variables was not statistically significant [$\chi2$ (3, n = 1782) = 4.188; p = 0.227; p≥0.05]. This result can be verified by checking the values in Table 3. For instance, it was observed comparatively that female (44.1%) and male (55.9%) students produced metaphors at close rates under the positive category, which is also valid for other metaphor categories (Female $_{negative}$ = 45%, Male $_{negative}$ = 55%; Female $_{epistemic}$ = 52,3%, Male $_{epistemic}$ = 47,7%; Female $_{productive}$ = 49%, Male $_{productive}$ = 51%).

Table 5.

Relationships between school-level variable (C) and metaphorical reasoning categories (R)

Categories	RXC	Primary school	Middle School	Vocational Technique	Imam Hatip	Anatolian High School	Science High School	Sports High School	Total
Positive	% R	28.3	43.2	2.2	5.4	8.8	0.8	11.3	100
	% C	75.2	51.5	40.0	25.1	28.1	25.9	66	50
Negative	% R	3.1	38.4	4.2	19.0	26	2.9	6.5	100
	% C	5.4	30.2	50	58.6	55	63	24.8	33.1
Epistemic	% R	33.6	43.0	2.7	7.4	10.7	0.7	2	100
	% C	14.9	8.6	8	5.8	5.8	3.7	2	8.4
Productive	% R	9.8	47.7	0.7	13.1	20.3	1.3	7.2	100
	% C	4.5	9.8	2	10.5	11.2	7.4	7.2	8.6
Total	% R	18.8	42	2.8	10.7	15.6	1.5	8.6	100
	% C	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The metaphorical conceptualizations of the participant students about the school phenomenon were also examined in terms of the level of education. Half of all students (n = 1782) studying in primary and secondary education (n = 891; 50%) expressed the school phenomenon with positive metaphors (e.g. comfort, bed, palace, paradise, a beautiful and fun place, life, a special place, etc.). A significant proportion of all participants (n = 589) or one out of every three participants (33.1%) reflected their negative experience about school in metaphorical expression (e.g. hell, home of enemies, place of unhappiness and sadness, insecure, horrible place, time-waster, unnecessary place, dustbin, dirty place, unjust place, barn, etc.). On the other hand, while students expressed the positive and/or negative perceptions created by the school in them metaphorically, they were less interested in the learning/epistemic (n = 150; 8.4%) or informational-social-individual production (n = 153; 8.6%) dimension of the school.

As shown in Table 5, significant results emerged when crossed with the school level produced under the positive category. First, especially those studying in primary schools (75.2%), secondary schools (51.5%), vocational high schools (40%) and sports high schools (66%) interpreted, perceived or experienced the phenomenon of school quite positively compared to the learners studying in imam hatip high schools (25.1%), Anatolian high schools (28.1%) and science high schools (25.9%). When the results were evaluated in terms of negative perceptions or experiences, it was determined that the school level of the students who expressed at least a negative metaphorical reasoning about school was a primary school (5.4%). However, one out of every three students (30.2%) studying in secondary schools, one out of every four students (24.8%) studying at sports high schools, and more than half of the students studying at vocational (50%), imam hatip (58.6%), Anatolian (55%) and science high schools (63%) had a negative perception and experience about school and therefore a metaphorical conceptualization. As shown in Table 5, learners at all school levels, except for learners in primary schools (14.9%), less frequently perceived the school as the centre or source of knowledge, learning or acquisition in their metaphorical reasoning about school. On the other hand, learners, especially in secondary schools (9.8%), imam hatip (10.5%) and Anatolian high schools (11.2%), more frequently preferred to explain the school phenomenon with the conceptual themes of production place, a place where basic needs are met, or area of development/maturation compared to learners at other school levels.

Table 6.

Chi-Square Test Results in the Context of School Level

	Value	SD	p
Pearson chi-square	319.468	18	0.000

The chi-square (good fit) test of multiple associations (crossing) created between the school level variable and metaphoric categories is presented in Table 6. As it can be seen, as the school level of the learners varied, their conceptualizations about school may statistically significantly change [$\chi2$ (18, n = 1782) = 319.468; p = 0.000; p≤0.001]. In other words, the relationships between school level and metaphoric categories are statistically significant. Statistical analysis theoretically confirmed the significance of the relationships between school level and metaphoric categories even at the p=0.001 level. However, Cramer's V value was taken into consideration and calculated as 0.244 (p≤0.001; p = 0.000), as suggested by Gravetter and Wallnau (2004, p. 605), to determine the practical significance or effect size of these values. Gravetter and Wallnau (2004, p. 605) suggested the following criteria for estimating the effect size for a statistical system that includes more than three categories in the interpretation of Cramer's V value:

Cramer's V value for a low effect size: 0.06
Cramer's V value for a moderate effect size: 0.17
Cramer's V value for a high effect size: 0.29

Considering the above-stated criteria regarding the Cramer's V, it can be said that the value of 0.244 obtained was very close to the high degree of practical significance or effect size of the study results. In other words, the theoretical-statistical results obtained in the context of school level and metaphorical conceptual categories can highly reflect the actual learning experiences of the participant learners.

In addition to examining the relationships between school level and abstracted metaphorical-conceptual categories, as an essential variable in the context of this study, how grade level was reflected on learners' conceptualizations, perceptions or experience patterns about the school phenomenon was also analyzed. The point taken into consideration with the grade level was to test whether the perception patterns of the learners about the school changed over time after they were engaged in the school system. In other words, this type of analysis involves a longitudinal approach and reflects learner-based school experiences that may evolve. Table 6 shows the multiple relationships between grade level (time spent at school) and categories of metaphorical reasoning about school. As in the other interaction type presented above, a significant portion (50%) of symbolic expressions about school reflected a favourable judgment about school in this type of interaction. Furthermore, one out of every three participants (33.1%) had a negative conceptualization of the school. As it is seen in Table 6, less than 10% of the participants considered school as a source of information (8.4%) or associated school with the phenomenon of productivity (8.2%).

It is observed that the perceptions of the participant learners about the school turned into a less favourable situation over time. To make it clear, when the percentages of the 1st-5th-grade levels under the positive category were examined (85.7%, 82.2%, 72.8%, 72.2%, 78.9%), it was determined that positive perceptions or conceptualizations about school regularly decreased from the first grade to the fourth grade and increased to a certain extent again in the fifth grade. When these results are evaluated in general, learners in the first years of school (1-5th grade levels) generally have significant positive perceptions and experiences about the phenomenon of school. It can be said that the existing positive perception at secondary school or 6th - 8th-grade levels (54.6%, 42.7%, 47.9%) was eroded or decreased to a certain extent. It was observed that positive perceptions about school in secondary education were at even lower levels (37%, 33.1%, 40.8%, 33.9%). In other words, learners entered the school system with highly positive perceptions; however, they completed their compulsory education by losing or rasping these positive perceptions.

The above-mentioned longitudinal change also manifests itself when analyzing how negative perceptions or conceptualizations about school change over time. As shown in Table 7, learners in the first two years of the schooling system do not have any negative experience pattern or metaphorical perception about school. Thus, the argument that the participating learners have minimal (4.8%, 7.6%, 7.9%) negative school perceptions at the 3rd-5th grade levels was confirmed in this study.

Table 7.
Relationships between Grade Level Variable and Metaphorical Reasoning Categories

Categories	RXC	1.s	2.s	3.s	4.s	5.s	6.s	7.s	8.s	9.s	10.s	11.s	12.s	T
Positive	% R	2.7	4.2	12	6.4	10.1	14	13.1	9	10.7	6.3	7	4.6	100
	% C	85.7	82.2	72.8	72.2	78.9	54.6	42.7	47.9	37	33.1	40.8	33.9	50
Negative	% R	0	0	1.2	1	1.5	10.7	16.8	10.2	20.5	16	11.2	10.9	100
	% C	0	0	4.8	7.6	7.9	27.5	36.1	35.9	47.1	55.6	43.4	52.9	33.1
Epistemic	% R	0.7	4	18.1	9.4	7.4	13.4	18.1	5.4	8.1	6	6.7	2.7	100
	% C	3.6	13.3	18.4	17.7	9.6	8.7	9.9	4.8	4.7	5.3	6.6	3.3	8.4
Productive	% R	2	1.3	3.9	1.3	2.6	13.7	20.7	12.4	19	6.5	9.2	7.8	100
	% C	10.7	4.4	4.1	2.5	3.5	9.2	11.3	11.4	11.3	5.9	9.2	9.9	8.6
Total	% R	1.6	2.5	8.2	4.4	6.4	12.9	15.4	9.4	14.4	9.5	8.5	6.8	100
	% C	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

It was determined that the negative school perception, which was at minimal levels, manifested itself with a sharp increase (27.5%, 36.1%, 35.9%), especially at the secondary school level (6th-8th grade levels). Similarly, learners may have even more negative perceptions about the school transitioning from primary to secondary education (grades 9-12) (47.1%, 55.6%, 43.4%, 52.9%). The general conclusion reached within the context of this study can be expressed as follows: ***learners are subject to school systematics with very positive perceptions, and the direction of these perceptions is significantly turned towards negative in terms of school life***. It can be said that similar regular longitudinal patterns were also observed for the epistemic category. However, as an important note, when it is considered on behalf of all participating learners, the school could be perceived as the source and centre of knowledge for at most one in five students. As shown in Table 8, learners who acquired literacy skills in the first grade (3.6%) perceived school as the source and centre of knowledge acquisition, especially towards the end of the fourth grade (13.3%; 18.4%, 17.7%). Then, this perception decreased significantly at the 5th - 8th-grade levels (9.6%, 8.7%, 9.9%, 4.8%), and out-of-school informal environments were perceived by learners as the source or centre of knowledge at the 9th - 12th-grade levels (4.7%, 5.3%, 6.6%, 3.3%). In other words, ***when it is viewed from the lens of learners, the source and centre of knowledge shifted out of school over time through school experiences, or at least secondary school learners did not perceive school as the place where knowledge is acquired***. Similar metaphorical-conceptual patterns could not be found under the productive category.

Table 8.
Chi-square Test Results in the Context of Grade Level

	Value	SD	p
Pearson chi-square	308.163	33	0.000

The chi-square test results for the associations created between the time or class level variable and the metaphorical categories are presented in Table 8. As shown in Table 8, the conceptualizations of the learners about the school phenomenon varied significantly over time, and this change was statistically significant [χ^2 (33, n = 1782) = 308.163; p = 0.000; p≤0.001]. Furthermore, the Cramer's V value was also calculated as 0.416 (high effect size). According to the above-mentioned statistical criteria, the school's routine experiences in the school could be determined in a longitudinal manner in this study. Therefore, the theoretical-statistical interpretations highly reflected the learners' in-school experiences or were the result of them.

4. CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study attempted to determine the trends of the students' metaphorical reasoning about the phenomenon of school from primary education to secondary education level. It was observed that the students' metaphorical reasoning for the phenomenon of the school had a thematic diversity: "school as a place of love and trust", "school as a beautiful and pleasant place", "school as a control and discipline centre", "School as an unsafe and unnecessary place", "school as a place of development and maturation", "school as a place of control and discipline" school as a centre", "school as a source of information", "school as a centre of competition", "cognitive and practical apprenticeship centre", "school as a centre for civil-social relations", "school as a means to reach the goal", "basic needs are met". school as an election centre", "school as a place of production", "school as an information registration centre", "school as an unlimited source of information", "school as a temporary process". In this section, the diversity of positive, negative, epistemic and productive analogies of the participants about the school phenomenon was discussed, then, how metaphorical abstractions differed according to school level (primary education, secondary education) and grade level (from 1st to 12th grade) was discussed in a data-based way.

4.1. Positive Perceptions of the Phenomenon of School

Participants had positive metaphorical reasonings about school (e.g. family, second family, home, second home, dormitory, neighbourhood, comfort, bed, palace, paradise, a beautiful and fun place, everything, life, a special place, imagination, sports facility), which is parallel with the previous studies (e.g., Jordan, 1996). As observed in some studies (Beck, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1993), analogical expressions such as factory or farm, which are frequently used to explain school phenomenon, were also observed as their alternatives study. The school can also be alternatively perceived as a sustained society in which values and ideals are shared (for example, in the form of the family metaphor in this study) because school can be associated with concepts such as neighbourhood or family (Sergiovanni, 1993). In other words, school is a society in which its participants emphasise civil-social relations (Schechty, 1999), and this perception was also evident in this study. Schechty (1999) reported that the school can be isolated as the centre of the tribe. This perception reinforces the idea that the school is at the centre of the community or subcommunities (e.g., family, second family metaphors were observed in this study). The main reason why school is perceived as a society in which civil-social relations are concentrated is that individuals can continue their lives as alienated and stuck in loneliness in modern life; therefore, the school may be a place where this alienation or loneliness is resolved, or it may be perceived as such by its participants (e.g., the sports facility metaphor was observed in this study) (Strike, 2000). In the national context, there are studies in which school is associated with positive metaphors. For instance, Balcı (1999) examined the metaphorical perceptions of primary school students, teachers and parents as the primary participants and elements of the school. The featured metaphors were as follows: school is family; is home; it is a home for cognitive development; is a bird's nest; is parents; is a warm home. Furthermore, in addition to the above analogical reasonings in Balcı's (1999) study, it was observed that the school was also generally expressed as the care centre where knowledge is transferred, the place where the seeds of young saplings are planted, and the centre of cognitive enlightenment. When today's studies are examined, student

participants associated the school with positive perceptions such as a supportive and safe environment, giving confidence and happiness, a place of knowledge and enlightenment, and a home. (Yılmaz, 2007; Godstein, Young, & Boyd, 2008; Özdemir et al., 2010; Wijers, 2010). The metaphorical expressions that emerged in all these studies and this study are consistent, at least in the scope and context of the positive category. However, it is also essential to indicate that significant critical attitudes or perception patterns towards school are also described within the context of this study.

4.2. Critical Participant Comments on the Phenomenon of School

Within the context of this study, it was determined that the participants intensely criticized the school and therefore produced negative metaphorical expressions. Lahelma (2002) reported extreme examples of negative learner metaphors about the school, as observed in this study. In the study of Lahelma (2002), learners consistently and consistently associated the school phenomenon with the terms torture room or detention room. According to Lahelma (2002), school systems have been and will continue to be subjected to severe criticism from learners. Because schools narrow and rasp the intellectual acquisition processes of learners as autonomous organisms. According to Lahelma (2002), as long as schools continue to use information transferring pedagogical methods that restrict learners' autonomy, they will be subject to such criticism.

In conclusion, the negative metaphors abstracted in this study confirm to a certain extent that the reality revealed by Lahelma (2002) has not changed in today's national context. The results of Inbar (1996) reinforce the negative metaphorical picture about school. In his large-scale study, Inbar (1996) emphasized that the school was experienced by its participants as a place where severe barriers and difficulties are encountered. In the study of Inbar (1996), a significant part of the participants defined themselves as prisoners. This type of perceptual orientation was manifested in this study with participants' metaphors such as "modern slavery, prison, quarantine, torture place". According to the participants in Inbar's (1996) study, teachers are the guardians or jailers of the school prison. Schools are free (!) educational prisons: schools are nothing more than military camps, courts, or diploma factories, and in the context of this study, Inbar's (1996) conclusions are confirmed: a school is still a place that can create unpopular or highly disgruntled emotions or imaginations in its participants. Inbar's (1996) study, the learners perceived school as something with a high degree of discipline and where they were judged harshly, and this situation was also materially confirmed within the context of this study. Moreover, learners also interpreted the school as the centre of suppression and the centre of insanity.

Furthermore, in the study of Inbar (1996), some participants conceptualised the school through punctuation marks. School is a parenthesis because it has a restrictive and limiting or dictating structure, a set of norms and notions. Students are a question mark because it is unclear what will happen or what they will do after they have a school systematic. The teacher at school is the exclamation point because he is the one who employs the school's restraint or precautionary shouts. The principal is the point, he is the last point related to discipline and puts an end to the events with what he said, or he has the final word in vital decisions about learners (Inbar, 1996). The analogies processed with punctuation marks were used in this study with the metaphors such as "factory working to enslave people", "modern slavery", "prison", "quarantine", "boring place", "boring game", "torture place", "a golden cage", "thought management", "blinding centre". The negative metaphorical expressions abstracted in this study also show themselves in today's studies. In various studies, when learners were asked about their school-related experience patterns, the following perceptions were expressed about how they felt at school: well-behaved, memorized, not making a sound, passive, refraining from expressing their opinion, not thinking, not speaking, not investigating, not questioning (Twenge et al., 2012; Özdemir, 2012; Özdemir & Akkaya, 2013; Toker, Gökçe, & Bülbül, 2014; Sarışık & Düşkün, 2016).

The above-mentioned negations about school are not just a feature of the national context or atmosphere of Turkey. It has also been observed that the term school is expressed in different derivatives in geographies with different sociocultural structures (e.g., Engin-Demir, 2007). For instance, in the American schooling system, the phenomenon of school is more often associated with the term therapy (Cook-Sather, 2003). Within this study, participant metaphors corresponding to the therapy centre became clear as "quarantine" or "thought management". According to this understanding, the school is a hospital.

Furthermore, curricula are drug prospectuses. A knowledgeable teacher is a diagnostician who can diagnose ignorance or a knowledgeable therapist who can cure it. Therefore, students are also ignorant patients; their minds are sick (or deficient) and should be improved with various treatment methods, namely in-class instructional approaches (Cook-Sather, 2003). In another study, Jackson (1968) indicated that the school participants expressed it with metaphors such as prison, mental hospital, home, and church, and quite similar conceptual expressions were also identified in this study in a material way. According to Jackson (1968) or the outcomes of this study, individuals or students sitting in church order listen to a lecture or sermon from the pulpit or the teacher's desk, that is, from the pastor or the teacher.

4.3. Metaphorical Expressions of the Epistemic and Productive Aspect of the School

Within the scope of this study, the phenomenon of school was abstracted by the participants through the themes of "epistemic" (knowledge house, world of knowledge, place of teaching, place of informing, place where knowledge is transferred, conference, building that teaches lessons, a library belonging to children, book cover, test book, book, encyclopedia) and "productive" (experience area, discovery, responsibility, life itself, rehearsal of life, a creative place, rebirth, workshop, the place where I will build infrastructure). Saban (2008) reached ten different conceptual categories related to school in his study with broad

participation. Some themes may go beyond affective forms (e.g., positive, negative), such as "school as a place of knowledge and enlightenment", and caused epistemic inferences. In his study, Yamamoto (1969) observed that the place where the seeds of the formation of the upper minds of the learners are planted is defined as the school. Within the scope of this study, it was observed that epistemic expressions related to school mostly touched on personal theories that are subject-centred or teacher-centred and emphasize the mechanisms of transfer of knowledge (e.g., place where information is transferred, conference, teaching building), and since it is consistent with other studies, schools still do not abstain from taking on their traditional roles. As it was confirmed by both this study and other studies, very few students at all school types and grade levels had a student-centred pedagogical perception of school (Saban, 2004; 2008; 2009; Saban, Koçbeker and Saban, 2006), which indicates that their teachers highly shaped the pedagogical-epistemological belief systems of the study participants. From an epistemic point of view, the learners perceived the school not as a place where knowledge is produced or shared but as a place where knowledge is transferred. In other words, under the epistemic category, participants constantly experienced that knowledge is transferred from people who know more to those who know less. According to Dewey (2004), the reason for it is that neither an internal maturation on behalf of the learners nor the processes of developing the abilities existing in the mind itself is operated in the school organization; therefore, it can be said that the study participants have a more subject-centred epistemic perception.

When the relevant literature was reviewed within the context of the productive theme, Eisner (1979) and Marshall (1990) emphasized in their systematic compilation studies that the school mainly was likened to a factory-derived workspace by its participants in historical time. As Marshall indicated (1988), the school can be perceived by most of its participants as a place of work or an institution with working hours. The school area is like a construction site in the context of a workspace because students have to work hard, get to school on time, attend classes, complete homework and gain grades (Marshall, 1988). There are various reasons for the association of the phenomenon of school with the phenomenon of the factory. Teachers have primary responsibilities for meeting the criteria of accountability to existing curricula, policymakers and principals. In the study of Beavis and Thomas (1996), the statements indicating that schools work like car lines were found. The student-auto parts that enter the mechanical system are processed, trained, and come out as a completed-trained automobile-graduate in the school factory. However, when the metaphors determined in this study were analyzed thematically, schools were associated with more positive perceptions of productivity. They are as follows: a place of experience, exploration, responsibility, life itself, rehearsal of life, a creative business, a place to be reborn, a workshop, a place to build infrastructure. The participants of this study may consider school as a springboard for the future. The school seemed to be a place that provides disciplined work, creation or infrastructure to the participants in this study, which is observed in the sub-themes of "school as a place of development and maturation", "school as a place of production" and "cognitive and practical apprenticeship centre" that characterize the productive school category. The content of these themes indicates that the achievements in the school change over time, is crystallized, and, in the final analysis, takes on an active process. For instance, for participants who consider the school as a place of development and maturation, knowledge in school is something that has continuity and usability. Therefore, knowledge in school is a kind of acquisition necessity. To make it clear, in a pragmatic context, a different construction of the school from what is known today and its actualization may enable what is acquired through it to gain meaning for social life (Freire, 2000; Giroux, 1998; Hudson, 1988).

4.4. School Analogies Differing According to School Level (Grade) and Grade Level (1-12th Grade)

In the study conducted by Yılmaz (2007) on the quality of school life, it was determined that three-quarters of the 6th, 7th and 8th-grade students liked the school very much and had positive perceptions about the school. In this study, especially in the first years of primary school students, a significant part of the students considered the school a place that gives love, tolerance, and trust and nourishes the individual both cognitively and emotionally. Moreover, in the study of Yılmaz (2007), it was observed that the perceptions of school differed in the comparisons on the type of education and grade level. The comparisons clearly show that learners take a dislike to school in the transition from primary level to secondary level. While primary school students associated the school with positive perceptions such as "a place of protection and development", secondary school students preferred to describe the school as a "pressure centre". In other words, both in this study and Yılmaz's (2007) study, it was determined that student motivation towards school tended to decrease as the grade level increased. Other researchers also supported these results (Eccles, Midgley and Adler, 1984; Andersson and Strander, 2004; Pehlivan, 2006). So what could be the explanation for this situation? One of the primary purposes of the idealized school is to create relational opportunities in the learning-teaching process and to base the learner-teacher relationship on mutual trust and dialogue (Bartholomew and Kretlow, 2010). However, events that support teaching, learning and civic-social constructive relations do not always occur at school. In the simplest term, most of the time allocated to teaching-learning within the school, especially at the secondary level, can be spent developing and applying heuristic methods that will restrain student behaviour (McLaren, 2011). It is known that especially a significant portion of high school (secondary) students frequently skip school (Kimberly, 2006; Reid, 2005), are absent from school (Reid, 1983), damage school items (Mayer et al., 1983), exert peer bullying (Smith & Brain, 2000) and sometimes exhibit behaviours contrary to school rules (Kuş & Karatekin, 2009). The most important reason why students exhibit such maladaptive behaviours in schools may be negative perceptions of school. To support it, perceptions as personal-theoretical systems determine the actions or life practices of individuals.

Within the context of this study, secondary school students perceived the school as a place of intense pressure compared to primary school students. In general, the main reason why a large number of vocational-technical and imam hatip high school, Anatolian high school or science high school students except for sports high school students considered school as a place of

pressure may be the control practices and mechanisms that are increasingly conducted in and out of the school. One of them is that students are monitored in the school garden and corridors through computer-aided camera systems. Even in a study conducted 20 years ago by Orthmann (1998), it was reported that monitoring and control systems in schools were becoming increasingly common. Nowadays, it is observed that bureaucratic oriented techniques are also widely used in controlling the students. In the bureaucratic control approach summarized by Walton (2005), he interprets the situation as mentioned above as follows: in the school context, teachers and administrators at the top of the organizational hierarchy have the power to control the behaviour and behaviour of students at the lower level (Walton, 2005). Studies on the organizational structure of the Turkish education and school system also report that the current system is designed in a highly hierarchical structure (Özdemir, 2008). When the school is considered in its bureaucratic context, it generally includes authoritarian, mind-forming, subject-teacher-centred features as fundamental elements for students. Therefore, it can be said that the centralized-hierarchical organizational structure in schools has turned into and will continue to turn into a kind of pressure tool on students. In this context, it is possible to conclude that schools' technological and bureaucratic control practices cause students to feel under pressure. Dewey (2004) interprets this situation as follows: the standard order is naturally based on force.

Furthermore, Dewey (2004) states that adults (teachers and administrators) try to impose their standards, the unchanging content of the curriculum, and their instructional methods on young people who are slowly progressing to adulthood. Then, the traditional attitude in school organizations accompanies coercion and pressure. Within the context of this study, the situation mentioned above was also clearly observed in the sub-themes of "school as a control and discipline centre" and "school as an unsafe and unnecessary place". The thematic contents abstracted in these themes indicate that attendance to school refers to losing identity with all human relationships that affect conscious life, education in school is nothing but the exchange of knowledge, and it reduces learning to verbal symbols, that is, to a mere literacy. The traditional understanding of education, which is based on rote and does not/cannot prioritize the interests and abilities of the individual, also determines the position of the teacher. Classrooms in schools are essentially the epistemic domain of the teacher. The teacher is at the centre of all the actions that take place in this epistemic domain. In this sense, the traditional classroom constitutes a clear example of authority, where teachers confront students directly with their power, and students are always aware of this power (Spring, 2017).

4.5. Conclusion and Educational Recommendations

This study has two generalizing conclusions. First, practical or experience-based perceptions of school are accelerated from a positive perspective to a seriously negative attitude from the beginning of school to the last steps of compulsory education. Secondly, when the outcomes of the nearly 50-year literature were compared with the current results of this study, it was observed that the patterns of perception of school did not/could not radically change towards positive even in the presence of significant reform-based interventions. On the contrary, when learners become more conscious individuals, they criticize the school and attempt to negate it significantly. In other words, in the pedagogical, historical time or path, school turns into a phenomenon that learners dislike/cannot like, which may unexpectedly cause learners to be less successful and to make concessions in attending school, and the unifying dynamics of the main aims of schooling to be disturbed. This study was conducted with a minimal sample, and the results are not likely to be generalized to large populations. However, suppose the thematic expressions that come to the fore as a result of studies to be conducted in different regions continue to show themselves in a negative perspective. In that case, serious actions will have to be taken for the Turkish Education System. In addition to the methodology of this descriptive study, the source of the causes of negative perceptions should be examined by employing and using the attribution theory (Weiner, 1985, 2010) effectively within the context of the school. This study looked only at what kind of perceptions a certain number of students had towards school and whether they varied according to school and grade level. The aim is therefore descriptive, not causal. By considering other theories of social psychology such as attribution theory and combining them with a pedagogical perspective, it can be found out in-depth why learners have such a variety of school perceptions and their reasons.

Statement of Interest

No conflict of interest was observed between the authors and the relevant institution and/or persons.

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