Pedagogical Analysis of the Role Models Chosen by High School Students

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Abstract

It is considered that role models have a significant influence on individuals' personality development, academic and occupational careers, social lives and lifestyles. In this sense, the purpose of this study is to determine the role models taken by high school students and to analyze them pedagogically. One of the qualitative research models, case study, was employed in the study. A semi-structured interview form was developed as a data collection tool and was applied to 374 high school students. Content analysis was utilized in order to analyze the data. According to the results, it was identified that the high school students adopted mostly famous people from TV or social media as role models. However, it was also determined that teachers took the lowest place among the role models. Additionally, the students mentioned that they considered fame and prestige as the most important factors when determining their role models. Finally, it was seen that the high school students chose different role models when compared in terms of their grade and school type.

Keywords: role models, pedagogical analysis, high school students.

Introduction

The role models taken by students have a significant influence on their personality development. The positive or negative characteristics of the people taken as role models can affect the personality development of students positively or negatively. In this respect, modeling behavior can be asserted as having a considerable effect on the social, psychological and personal development of children and young people. Considering that a rather important part of the personality development occurs in pre-school, primary school, secondary school and high school years, the role models selected within these periods become an important factor in forming the personality structure of young individuals. Particularly in the adolescence period, the behavior of role model taking at high school level gets stronger; thus, negative behaviors taken from role models can negatively affect the future of these young individuals.

Modeling is regarded as a general term attributed to behavioral, cognitive, and emotional changes that occur in an individual as a result of observing one or more models (Schunk, 1987; Zimmerman, 1977). Modeling is considered as one of the most fundamental concepts of social learning theory and it is possible for individuals to obtain attitudes, emotional reactions and new behavior patterns from models (Bandura & Walters, 1977). It is also described as taking a respected and trusted person as an example while someone is developing their own character and values (Gauntlett, 2008). In modeling, a person can model all or some of the behaviors of the person or the group he/she is affected by. In this process, the person can continue the relationship by adopting the things said, done or believed by the person taken as a model (Cuceloglu, 2002). On this occasion, the person tries to take the person as the role model, resemble to him/her by imitating his/her behaviors. What is important here is the reliability of the person to be taken as the role model (Kelman, 1961). According to social learning theory, the observed one (role model) should have a high status, and both be respectable and powerful in the eye of the observer (Korkmaz, 2012). Hence, it can be stated that role models should be individuals who provide an example of success that one may achieve, and often provide a template of the behaviors which are needed to achieve such a success (Lockwood, 2006). Individuals have a disposition to be interested in models in order to learn what can be done to be successful in similar cases that can be encountered in the future. Moreover, observers seeing models rewarded for their behaviors pay greater attention to these models and try to copy their behaviors. Thus, effective models respected by students can be highly influential in the correction of many bad behaviors in students (Schunk, 2014). Furthermore, though modeling can yield many benefits for the person in terms of being accepted and rewarded, identification, being like other people, adopting others' behaviors, understanding the truth and implementing it; it can also trigger certain adverse effects in the future lives of children and adolescents when the adaptation of behaviors is at the imitation level and they are adopted without questioning their content or context (Kagıtcıbası, 2005). In this sense, in addition to the respected models, children and young people can also take characters from films, television series or social media that exhibit negative behaviors as their role models. This might subsequently result in the formation of negative behaviors in children and adolescents.

From birth onwards, children take people around them as their role models. In this respect, the role models they take are mostly family members, people from close environments, or friends and teachers at schools. Parents are also highly respected role

models for children. Thus, the mother and father's personality structure and behaviors plays a primary role in children's personality development. In the role modeling of children, after parents, relatives and people in the immediate vicinity can play a significant part in the role modeling behaviors adopted by children. In addition to these, teachers can also affect children's role model behaviors. Many children select their pre-school or elementary school teachers as role models. However, though teachers can be influential on students' development as role models, they more strongly affect students' classroom participation, dress style and attitudes because of role modeling, and the respectability of the model can play a rather significant role (Schunk, 2014). With this connection, the credibility of teachers in society is decreasing steadily, which may result in students' selecting people other than teachers with higher status and prestige as their role models.

Rapid development of technology has enabled especially children and adolescents to communicate through technological tools such as television, social media, smartphones and computers and thereby get to know very different role models. Based on this, the role models adopted by children and adolescents have changed considerably. Instead of people within their immediate environment, they may take cartoon characters, actors/actresses, athletes or musicians as role models. If the personality characteristics of these role models are positive, then the children and adolescents are affected positively; yet if they have negative personality characteristics, then negative behavioral patterns can be adopted and mimicked such as violence, aggressiveness and antisocial behaviors. For individuals to construct their identities in a healthy manner, they need to have adults around them who they can adopt as role models. According to Senemoglu (2012), it is important for adolescents to meet people who have advanced in their profession and have succeeded as spouses and parents in life so that they are able to deal with their personality issues.

In the related literature, not only are studies revealing the effects of role models adopted by children, especially in cartoons or other films (Ayrancı, Kosgeroglu & Gunay, 2004; Cesur & Paker, 2007; Oruc, Tecim, & Ozyurek, 2011), but researchers are also investigating the impacts of TV role models and celebrities on adolescents (Christiansen, 1979; Erjem & Çaglayandereli, 2006; King & Multon, 1996; Lockwood & Kunda, 1997). Besides, there have been studies which have aimed to determine the influence of parents or teachers as role models on the gender-role attitudes and educational choices of college students (Basow & Howe, 1980), and the effect of same-race or same-gender teacher role models on self-efficacy and student achievement (Paredes, 2014; Parker & Lord, 1993). Moreover, in the study conducted by Zirkel (2002), the effect of role models was examined on the academic identity of students from different ethnic races in New England, USA; whereas, Azmi, Ahmad, Khalique, and Khan (2014) investigated the role models and occupational ambitions of in-school male adolescents in India.

As can be inferred from the related studies encountered in the literature, most focus on quite specific populations of children or adolescents, and are also mostly limited to TV role models. In this regard, this current study addresses a much larger sample from Turkey, observing what has changed in terms of student role models in these recent years. In addition, considering that role models taken by such a young population have significant influence on their personality and their whole future life, including their academic careers, social lives and even their lifestyles, the current study is considered to be of significant importance to the literature. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to determine the role models taken by high school students and to pedagogically analyze them according to

their characteristics. In accordance with this purpose, answers to the following research questions were searched throughout the study:

- Who are the individuals taken as role models by high school students?
- By considering what kinds of characteristics have students chosen their role models?
- Is there any difference between students' role models in terms of the grade they are studying?
- Is there any difference between students' role models in terms of their school types?

Methodology

Research Design

This study was designed in the qualitative research model, and as a case study. Qualitative research method can be defined as a research model in which a qualitative process is followed in order to reveal perceptions and events in a holistic and realistic manner within their natural environments by using qualitative data collection tools such as observation, interview and document analysis (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Case study is described as the examination and description of a limited system (Merriam, 2013) or multiple limited systems (cases) at a specific time period (Creswell, 2015).

Participants

The participants of the study consisted of 374 high school students from the province of Muğla, Turkey. In the determination of the participants, one of the purposeful sampling techniques, criterion sampling, was utilized. The logic of criterion sampling is to review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance (Patton, 1990). The criterion for participation in this study was determined as being either a 9th grade student or a senior (12th grade) high school student in order to reveal the difference between the beginners and seniors in a four-year high school setup. The demographic characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variable	Category	*n*	%
Grade	1. 9th Grade	212	56.7
	2. 12th Grade	162	43.3
School Type	1. Trade Vocational School	45	12.0
	2. Vocational School for Girls	44	11.8
	3. Anatolian High School	55	14.7
	4. Science High School	55	14.7
	5. Social Sciences High School	62	16.6
	6. Fine Arts High School	75	20.1
	7. Religious Vocational High School	38	10.2
	Total	374	100.0

According to Table 1, 212 of the participants of the study (56.7%) are from the 9th grade (first year at high school) and 162 of them (43.3%) are senior students (12th grade, or final year at high school). Moreover, in terms of school type, the number of students range from 38 (Religious Vocational High School; 10.2%) to 75 (Fine Arts High School; 20.1%). It can therefore be stated that the participant students distribute almost homogenously in terms of gender and school type.

Data Collection Instrument

A semi-structured interview form was developed by the researchers as a data collection instrument. Expert opinion was sought from three experts; one from the field of Evaluation and Assessment, and two from the field of Curriculum and Instruction. The data collection instrument was revised and edited according to the opinions of these experts. The final version interview form consisted of four questions.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, one of the qualitative analysis techniques, content analysis, was employed. Content analysis is a systematic and renewable technique through which the message given in a text is objectively recognized and inferred by means of codes, based on certain rules and words, and then summarized through smaller content categories (Buyukozturk, Kılıc-Cakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2012). The main purpose of the content analysis is to find associations that can explain the data. For this purpose, first the collected data were conceptualized and then the concepts logically organized; and on the basis of this organization, themes that can explain the data were constructed (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). In the process of content analysis, the data were categorized into themes developed by the two authors of this study. Both the percentage and frequency of the data were calculated and included in this study. The data were interpreted by the researchers so as to support these interpretations, with some of the students' quotations included for this purpose. The personal information of the students was not divulged, and the student participants coded accordingly as S1, S2, S3… through to S374.

Validity and Reliability of the Study

The validity and reliability methods appropriate for the nature of qualitative research were selected and the concepts of consistency, verifiability, and persuasiveness were utilized within the scope of the study.

- *Verifiability*: The concept of verifiability means that the results obtained by the research can be verified and that the study can present a rational explanation. In this sense, the dataset was coded twice at different times by one of the researchers, and the convergence percentage was calculated as 74%. Hence, it can be remarked that this value assures the verifiability of the study.
- *Persuasiveness*: In order to increase the persuasiveness of the study, certain sample quotations of the students and findings of related previous studies in the literature are included to support the presentation of the study's results. Hence, it can be stated that the study is persuasive as it provides valid evidence of the results.
- *Consistency*: With the intent of assuring the consistency of the study, answers given by the students to the semi-structured interview form were coded independently by two researchers. The convergence percentage of the so-called codes was calculated as 83% through applying the formula of [Agreement / (Disagreement +Agreement)]*100 (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The convergence value attained by the researchers indicates that the study can be regarded as consistent.

Results

In order to determine the role models taken by high school students, the role models students mentioned in their semi-structured interviews were categorized under seven main themes. The frequency and percentage values for each theme are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Categorization of Students' Role Models

Role Model	*n*	%
1. Famous person	142	38.0
2. Family member	84	22.5
3. Friend	47	12.6
4. Businessperson/Politician	44	11.8
5. Scientist/Author	29	7.8
6. Teacher	16	4.3
7. No role model	12	3.2
Total	374	100.0

When Table 2 is investigated, it can be stated that students mostly take famous people such as musicians, artists, actors, fashion models, and sportspersons as role models (38%), followed by their family members (22.5%). On the other hand, high school students perceive scientists or authors (7.8%) and teachers (4.3%) the least as their role models. Moreover, it can be stated that the majority of high school students have role models; with only 3.2% of the participants having not adopted a role model.

Furthermore, in order to present the factors students considered in determining their choice of role models, the expressions mentioned by students are grouped as five factors as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Factors Students Considered in Determining Role Models

Factor	*n*	%
1. Fame/Prestige	104	27.8
2. Personal Characteristics	101	27.0
3. Success/Career	83	22.2
4. Lifestyle	60	16.0
5. No characteristics	26	7.0
Total	374	100.0

According to Table 3, it can be asserted that at the highest proportion, students adopted their role models by considering their fame and prestige (27.8%) and their personal characteristics (27%), respectively. It can also be remarked that whereas most of the high school students chose their role models by considering their characteristics, 7% of them could not state any reasons or specific factors they considered in choosing their role models. In addition, some of the students' opinions regarding who their role models were and what factors they considered in choosing their role models are given throughout this section.

A vast majority of the students who participated in this study expressed that they chose famous people as their role models. Some of these reasons are as follows:

"Ronaldo is my role model. He earns a lot of money and he is so rich." (S49)

"I took Justin Bieber as my role model because he has had a wonderful lifestyle since he was at the same age as me." (S124)

"My role model is Serenay Sarıkaya. She is very beautiful and she wears very nice clothes. I want to be as beautiful as she is and wear as nice clothes as hers." (S230)

"I took Messi as my role model as he is the greatest football player. He is very successful." (S322)

A significant proportion of the students specified that they took their parents or other family members as role models, and expressed their views as follows:

"I took my father as a role model because he has experienced lots of bad events but he is still so strong." (S339)

"My father is the greatest role model one can encounter. He is my hero with his attitude to every condition, energy for life, perspective on life, all his personal characteristics etc. In short, I consider all the characteristics of my father as a role model." (S112)

"My elder sister is my role model in life. She has always been very successful and is studying in a very good department at university. I wish I can be as hardworking and successful as she is." (S46)

Most of the students who took their friends as role models stated that they chose them either because of their being successful and hardworking, or because they were beautiful/handsome. The students' opinions regarding this theme are given as follows:

"I take my classmate as a role model because she is so hardworking that one cannot believe. I am sure she is going to have a good university education and then a wonderful job." (S82)

"I take my friend as a model because he always wears really nice clothes is very popular among our friends." (S247)

Moreover, the students also mentioned that they took businesspersons such as Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, and Mark Zuckerberg, or politicians of the past and today such as Atatürk, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Fatih Sultan Mehmet, and Sultan Süleyman. The views of students related to this theme are as follows:

"I took Steve Jobs a role model. He was very rich and powerful." (S56)

"I took Bill Gates as role model. Because whenever I turn on my computer, I cannot stop myself from calculating how much money he has earned." (S72)

"Atatürk is my role model because he was very successful in building a new country with his principles and revolutions." (S81)

"My role model is Atatürk. He was the greatest leader in the world; he had the most wonderful personal characteristics in the world." (S126)

"I took Recep Tayyip Erdogan as a role model. Because he believes in God and he prays for Allah. That's why he is so successful." (S134)

A small proportion of the students expressed that they took scientists like Einstein, Newton, Edison, and Mehmet Oz, or authors such as J. K. Rowling, Stephen King, Elif Shafak, and Ahmet Umit as their role models. The opinions of students concerning the scientist/author theme are as follows:

"I took Mehmet Öz as a role model. He is very successful and he has proven his success all around the world." (S25)

"My role model is Edison, since he was really hardworking and successful. He dealt with many difficulties but he never gave up." (S97)

"J. K. Rowling is my role model because she writes extraordinary books and she is very successful in her field." (S168)

On the other hand, the least proportion of students mentioned that they took their teachers as their role models, which can be considered a surprising result within the scope of this study. Some of those students views are as follows:

"I took my English teacher as my role model. He has a wonderful rapport and he gets on well with his students." (S58)

"My Math teacher is my role model. She is very kind and she treats everyone in a wonderful way." (S311)

"My role model is the music teacher since she is really beautiful and wears really nice clothes. Whatever she wears looks pretty beautiful on her." (S371)

Lastly, a small number of students stated that they have no role models. They stated the reasons for not having a role model as follows:

"I don't have a role model because I don't need one as I am a wonderful person." (S95)

"I haven't chosen a role model yet because I haven't met anyone who can be a good model for me." (S234)

As can be inferred from students' quotations, they have various role models, namely famous people were the most chosen, then family members, friends, and businesspersons or politicians, respectively. However, a rather smaller proportion consider scientists or authors as their role models. What is a more unfavorable and unexpected result is that only a few students took their teachers as role models. When the factors they considered in choosing role models are investigated, it can be asserted that most of the students determined their role models according to their fame, prestige or personal characteristics. The students mentioned that they considered whether or not they have attributives such as being famous, rich, beautiful/handsome, strong, powerful and kind. Besides, what the students also took into consideration regarding their role models was their achievements, careers and also their lifestyles.

On the other hand, in order to determine whether or not there is a difference between the role models chosen by high school students in terms of their grades, the descriptive values of grades and role models are given as a crosstab in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of Role Models in Terms of Students' Grades

Role Model	9th Grade		12th Grade		Total	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
1. Famous person	84	22.5	58	15.5	142	38.0
2. Family member	51	13.6	33	8.8	84	22.5
3. Friend	28	7.5	17	5.1	47	12.6
4. Businessperson/Politician	17	4.5	27	7.2	44	11.8
5. Scientist/Author	18	4.8	11	2.9	29	7.8
6. Teacher	6	1.6	10	2.7	16	4.3

Role Model	9th Grade		12th Grade		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
7. No role model	8	2.1	4	1.1	12	3.2
Total	212	56.7	162	43.3	374	100.0

When Table 4 is investigated, it can be seen that 9th grade students chose famous people (22.5%), family members (13.6%), friends (7.5%), and scientists or authors (4.8%) more than senior students. On the other hand, they adopted businesspersons or politicians (4.5%) and teachers (1.6%) as role models less than senior students. Moreover, the proportion of 9th grade students who did not determine their role models (2.1%) was higher than for the seniors. Furthermore, when the students' opinions are analyzed in detail, it can be stated that the effect of students' age and thereby their grade can be asserted to have a positive effect on the students' choice of role model.

In order to see whether or not there is a difference between the role models chosen by students in terms of their school type, the frequency and percentage values based on school type and students' role models are given as a crosstab in Table 5.

Table 5. Distribution of Role Models by Students' School Type

Role Model	Trade Vocational		Vocational School Girls		Anatolian		Science	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1. Famous person	11	7.7	33	23.2	20	14.1	17	12.0
2. Family member	16	19.0	7	8.3	15	17.9	6	7.1
3. Friend	6	12.8	2	4.3	5	10.6	6	12.8
4. Businessperson/Politician	6	13.6	0	0	4	9.1	7	15.9
5. Scientist/Author	3	10.3	0	0	2	6.9	18	62.1
6. Teacher	0	0	1	6.2	5	31.2	1	6.2
7. No role model	3	25.0	1	8.3	4	33.3	0	0
Total	45	12.0	44	11.8	55	14.7	55	14.7

Role Model	Social Sciences		Fine Arts		Religious Vocational		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1. Famous person	12	8.5	42	29.6	7	4.9	142	100
2. Family member	14	16.7	14	16.7	12	14.3	84	100
3. Friend	13	27.7	12	25.5	3	6.4	47	100
4. Businessperson/Politician	9	20.5	4	9.1	14	31.8	44	100
5. Scientist/Author	4	13.8	1	3.4	1	3.4	29	100
6. Teacher	8	50.0	0	0	1	6.2	16	100
7. No role model	2	16.7	2	16.7	0	0	12	100
Total	62	16.6	75	20.1	38	10.2	374	100

When the famous person category in Table 5 is investigated, it can be observed that students in Fine Arts High Schools adopted famous people as role models at the highest level (29.6%), whereas students in Religious Vocational High Schools chose famous people as role

models the least (4.9%). According to what students mentioned in the interview form, it can be understood that students of Fine Arts High Schools mostly took musicians and artists as their role models, which can be regarded as an expected result.

Another notable result that can be seen in Table 5 is that the students in Science High Schools perceived scientists and authors as role models at the highest proportion (62.1%). When the opinions of students in Science High Schools are analyzed, it can be stated that they consider scientists like Mehmet Oz, Edison, and Einstein as their role models. Moreover, in the businessperson and politician category, it can be obviously stated that students in Religious Vocational High School take businesspersons and politicians as role models at the highest level (31.8%). According to what the students mentioned in their interview form, they mostly perceive past and present presidents such as Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the current president of the Turkish Republic, and the Ottoman sultans of Fatih Sultan Mehmet and Sultan Suleyman as their role models.

Discussion

People acquire a significant portion of their behavioral dispositions through observation and imitation of other individuals in a social context (Bandura, 1986), and these individuals are often considered as role models (King & Multon, 1996). Within the scope of the current study, it is intended to determine the role models taken by high school students; in other words, adolescents. According to the results, it was identified that high school students adopt famous people from TV or social media such as musicians, artists or actors, fashion models and sportspersons as role models at the highest level. This result complies with previous studies (Christiansen, 1979; King & Multon, 1996) which identified that adolescents have a great tendency to be influenced by television role models. Not only adolescents, but children were also identified as taking TV cartoon characters as their role models in many studies (Ayrancı et al., 2004; Cesur & Paker, 2007; Oruç et al., 2011). This is also supported by the study of Erjem and Çaglayandereli (2006), which found that 72% of adolescents in their study took characters from TV series as their role models. Based on the fact that both children and adolescents spend a lot of time using the Internet and watching TV, it is quite important for the films and cartoons to include characters that can be positive role models.

Another outstanding result of this study is that the high school students having participated in this research adopted teachers as role models at the least proportion. Contrary to this result, in a study conducted by Azmi et al. (2014), it was found that a good proportion of students chose a teacher as their role model. The result obtained from the current study can be asserted to demonstrate that teachers, having a significant role in all aspects of the development of children and adolescents, do not show adequate role model characteristics that affect their students. Teachers are not only required to have pedagogical knowledge to train students, but they also have to show positive role model characteristics for students with their attitudes, behaviors, appearance and other personal characteristics. However, in today's world, with the rapid changes and developments in technology, it is known that TV, Internet, mobile phones and especially social media greatly influence students' choices of role models. In a study conducted by Lockwood and Kunda (1997), it was determined that superstars taken as role models had an influence on self-views and lifestyles of young adults. Besides, it was also identified that television role models had a significant influence on occupational and career goals of young adolescents (King & Multon, 1996). Furthermore, Zirkel (2014) concluded in her study that role models showed a

significant relationship with the achievement concerns and developing identities of young people. Considering all these research results, it can be asserted that adolescents have a tendency to be affected by their role models in terms of many aspects. This condition may lead to both positive and negative results, because the students, in other words adolescents, might encounter people with either positive or negative characters in social media, on the TV or the Internet, and they can sample or imitate their negative behaviors as well as positive ones. This may cause students to develop negative personal characteristics, attitudes or behaviors. Besides, as mentioned in many studies, it can also affect the students' occupational and career aspirations, educational choices, their self-view, identity development and their whole lifestyle.

Furthermore, when the factors that high school students considered in choosing their role models are analyzed, it can be concluded that students take fame and prestige as the most important factors when determining their role models. Similarly, in a study conducted by Azmi et al. (2014), the majority of students adopted their role models considering the glamour attached to them by others. The reason why students have given such importance to fame and prestige may be because of the fact that in TV series, advertisements and especially in social media such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, they have the opportunity to observe famous people's lives, which seems "perfect" to students – a life of fame, prestige and money. This may lead to students experiencing problems in real life since famous people's lives cannot be achieved by most of them. Instead of this, in the educational process, students should be given the opportunity to encounter positive role models, and thereby provide adolescents with more positive personality development.

Moreover, when analyzing whether or not there is a difference in the role models chosen by students in terms of their grades, it was concluded that 9th grade students took famous people, family members and their friends as role models much more than the senior students. This can be considered as an expected result because 9th grade students, who are in their very first year at high school and therefore younger than the seniors, may not think as independently and analytically as senior students and therefore depend more on the Internet and social media. As a result, they are probably more attached to their families or friends and have a greater tendency to be affected by famous people they meet in social media than the seniors. In this context, senior students, who are preparing for university entrance exams in Turkey and therefore taking an important step in their job selection process, might have chosen politicians, businesspersons and teachers as their role models more than the 9th grade students.

Another important result obtained from the current study is that students at Fine Arts High Schools perceive famous people like musicians and artists as their role models at the highest level. It can be regarded as an expected result because students at this type of school will probably choose an art-related job such as being a musician or an artist. Moreover, it can be concluded that students in Science High Schools perceive scientists and authors as role models at the highest proportion. Students at these schools are those who have taken the highest points in the high school entrance exams in Turkey, which might mean that they are frequently the most successful among all the students. In addition, since their education mostly relies upon Science subjects, they might well have taken scientists as their role models. The fact that Science High School students mostly take scientists like Mehmet Öz, Edison, Newton, and Einstein as role models can be regarded as a positive and expected result, because these students will probably choose science-related jobs in the

near future. However, the fact that students educated in the other high school types have not taken scientists or authors as their role models can be regarded as a negative result. It is perhaps an indicator that high school students do not read books at the desired level and are less interested in scientific developments.

When the results of the current study are evaluated from a pedagogical perspective, the most outstanding result can be stated as that teachers have moved away from being role models for students, replaced instead by students choosing famous people or others that they encounter on the TV, or from social media or the Internet. Since the importance of role models not only in the occupational choices and academic success of students but also their self-views, identity development and lifestyles has been emphasized by many scholars (Basow & Howe, 1980; Christiansen, 1979; King & Multon, 1996; Parker & Lord, 1993; Zirkel, 2014), it can be recommended that teachers need to demonstrate especially positive role model characteristics with their appearance, attitudes, behaviors and personality traits. In addition, teachers should have a good rapport and communication with their students, not only in their courses but also outside of the school in order to better understand their feelings and opinions. Moreover, since high school students take famous people from TV, the Internet and social media as their natural role models, society should aim to bring more positive role models to the forefront in today's mass media. Also, students should be encouraged by their parents and teachers to read more books in order that they can be confronted with different characters and choose the positive role models among them. Besides, guidance and counseling services in schools should take effective responsibility in students' personal development so as to help students meet more positive role models.

Notes

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