Metaphor Analysis of
Competitiveness Concept in University Students

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Abstract
Nowadays, social life is changing very fast. Individuals have to be competitive and increase their power to adapt in the face of this change. Therefore, competitiveness has become a basic characteristic that every individual has to have. Especially, in their university years, young people are moving towards emerging adults in an educational system and experiences that are based on competition. This competitive environment and young adults’ competitiveness characteristics are also supported by their social surroundings and thus, they make a significant contribution to the developments of young adults. However, young adults’ over-competitive behaviors and the distress that this over-competitive environment creates may transform into a harmful function instead of an improving one. Additionally, it may also cause relationship breakdowns in young adults’ lives. Thus, the effects of over-competitiveness on young adults should be investigated. Firstly, there is a need to determine how young adults perceive the competitiveness concept. This study aims to describe the perceptions about competitiveness concept of young adults who are studying at university by metaphoric analysis method. Whether young adults’ metaphorical perceptions about competitiveness concept differ in terms of gender are also indicated. The study has been carried out with 288 university students. When the content analysis has performed to the data which was collected according to students’ answers, 42 different metaphors about competitiveness concept was found and five categorizes based on these metaphors was thematized. These categorizes are determined as “a continuous competition”, “a harmful characteristic”, “a situation that includes a distinct winner and a distinct loser”, “a way to reach success” and “a necessary characteristic if it is sufficient”. These results point out that young adults have mostly negative perceptions about competitiveness concept. In addition, it has been also shown that these categorizes about competitiveness concept do not differentiate in terms of gender.