Prospective Teachers' Self-Efficacy Perceptions of Teaching as A Profession

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SUMMARY

Teachers' competencies in the role of the main actor of the teaching process, which constitutes the most valuable investment in human beings, which is the size of the education service carried out in schools, are critical for the efficiency of this process. The search for new qualities and standards created by other occurrences occurring in the world, especially globalization, is reflected in the education process as in every field. The competition environment and the aim of not to be excluded from the change made it compulsory to evaluate and improve the training and teacher competencies as the driving force of this process. In this study, it is aimed to determine the self-efficacy perceptions of teacher candidates about the teaching profession. As the universe of research, Giresun University Faculty of Education primary education social studies, mathematics and science teaching departments were determined. In the 2017-2018 spring semester, 1024 pre-service teachers are studying in the related departments. The sample size was determined as 280 according to 95 % confidence level and 5 % margin of error and a total of 285 teacher candidates were reached. The results of this research, which aims to determine the self-efficacy perceptions of prospective teachers, show that the self-efficacy perceptions of teacher candidates are at a good level. It is concluded that there is a significant difference in the self-efficacy perceptions of the students who are in the department of social studies teaching.

Keywords: Teacher Candidate, Self-Efficacy Perception, Teaching Profession

INTRODUCTION

In the 1970s, the approach of determining teacher competencies, which started as a new trend, especially in the United States and the United Kingdom, spread throughout the world in the 2000s. The first notable attempt on teacher qualifications related to Turkey after the 1998-1999 National Education, Higher Education and the World Bank within the scope of cooperation is seen that begins with the Development Project. Regeneration needs of the teacher competencies in Turkey has emerged from the reflection of national and international developments in the field of education. While renewing the qualifications, it is aimed to provide the students to be equipped according to the needs of the age, to help to raise the status of the teaching profession and to be able to evaluate the results by following these competencies (http://oygm.meb.gov.tr).

The concept of competence including the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes required for the fulfillment of a task has taken its place in the profession according to the determination of the standards of the relevant professions in all areas and the individuals having the competencies created according to these standards. Ministry of National Education teachers in their attempts to determine their professional competencies; and to determine the general and specific knowledge of the field knowledge competencies in order to increase the quality of the teaching profession. It is critical for vocational qualifications that pre-service and in-service training of these qualifications is provided to prospective teachers (Taspinar, 2014). Teachers' competencies which can be defined as knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors that teachers need to be able to fulfill their professions effectively and efficiently have an important place among 21st century teaching skills. These competencies are important for teachers to gain attitudes and skills in order to fulfill their profession more qualified (MEB, 2008). These competences determined by the Ministry of National Education in accordance with Article 45 of the Basic Law of National Education; personal and professional values, student recognition, learning and teaching process, learning, development monitoring and evaluation, school, family and community relations, program and content information, including six main competence areas and 31 sub-competence and 233 performance indicators (Taspinar, 2014).

The aim of these efforts was to re-determine the competencies of the teachers to make them compatible with the European Union countries. In this context, as a result of the workshops, pilot practices, and stakeholder views that gathered through contribution of national and international experts, academicians, teachers, and various participants, the draft "General Competencies for Teaching Profession" was prepared. The draft was composed of the following six main competency domains, associated 31 sub-domains and 233 performance indicators:

- Personal and professional values - professional development,
- Getting to know the student,
- Learning and teaching process,

- Monitoring and assessing the learning and development of students,
- School, family and community relations,
- Curriculum and subject content knowledge.

Subsequently, the "Draft General Competencies for Teaching Profession" was finalized through workshops that were organized by a large number of participants from various disciplines and organisations such as Ministry representatives, academicians, inspectors, and union representatives. The final version came into effect by the official authorization dated 17.04.2006 and published in the Journal of Notifications no: 2590 in 2006. After the General Competencies for Teaching Profession came into effect, the efforts were initiated to determine the "Subject Specific Competencies for Teaching Profession" that would determine the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that teachers need to have related to his/her own subject (e.g. Maths Teachers Competencies). As a result of these efforts, the following 14 Subject Specific Competencies were developed and put into effect by the official authorizations dated 04.06.2008 and 25.07.2008: Turkish Language, Foreign Language (English), Science and Technology, Information Technologies, Visual Arts, Pre-School, Mathematics, Classroom Teaching, Social Studies, Music, Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge, Physical Training, Technologic Design, and Special Education (visually-, hearing-, mentally-disabled). The competencies for the secondary school teachers were also developed and put into effect by the official authorization dated 26.01.2011 within the scope of the Secondary Education Project. Eight subject specific teacher competencies were prepared: Turkish Language and Literature, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography and Philosophy. Subsequent to the publication of the General Competencies for Teaching Profession in 2006, The European Parliament and the Council of Europe adopted the European Framework of Competencies on 23.04.2008. With this recommendation, countries are required to establish national competence frameworks in relation to the European Competencies Framework. So, the regulation on Procedures and Principles on Implementation of the Competencies Framework of Turkey was published in the Official Gazette no: 29537 dated 19.11.2015, and thus the "Competencies Framework of Turkey (CFT)" has been entered into force. The Referencing Report of Turkey based on this competencies framework was submitted to the Consultative Board of the European Competencies Framework on March 29-30, 2017 and the referencing of CFT to the European Competencies Framework and its compliance with the European Competencies Framework of Higher Education have been approved and become official. Moreover, the "Higher Education Competencies Framework" and the "Basic Domain Competencies of the Higher Education Competencies Framework" were adopted on 13.01.2011 in the context of the Lisbon Strategy, published in 2000, and the Bologna process that Turkey was included in 2001. In addition to these national and international regulations, the need to update the General Competencies for Teaching Profession has emerged due to adapt to the new developments in education and the innovations in Turkish education system. A large number of stakeholders have been consulted during the process of updating the General Competencies for Teaching Profession, YOK, OSYM (Assessment, Selection and Placement Center), the Vocational Qualifications Authority, the Board of Education and Training, and the other units of the Ministry as well as many academicians and teachers were cooperated with. In this process, fundamental policy texts on education and teaching of international organizations such as the European Council, the World bank, ILO, OECD, UNESCO, and UNICEF were studied, and the competency documents of many countries such as the US, Australia, Finland, France, Hong-Kong, the UK, Canada and Singapore were examined. Meetings were held with the stakeholders ensuring (MEB, 2017).

Teacher competencies; It is also seen that it is defined as the recognition and development of the student, creating an effective learning environment, planning and designing appropriate learning experiences, evaluating student learning and developing professional practices (https://www.usd.edu/education). However, it is very difficult to list all the roles of the teacher who plays the role of a consultant and a friend today. The teacher's knowledge, skills, personal qualities and values improve not only the motivations and achievements of the students but also their national identities. In this respect, teachers need to be informed about common cultural values and human rights responsibilities in order to help their students to create motivation, self-confidence and national identities and to reflect these to their lives (Ciuzas, 2013).

Today, when the technology is changing rapidly, countries are trying to keep up with this rapid change. The realization of this goal is only possible with training. Educating new and original products is an integral part of education systems. On the basis of all these purposes are teachers who will do this. Teachers should follow innovations, renew themselves, be open to development and model for their students (Gundogdu and others, 2015). The competition, which took place together with the globalizing world, made it obligatory to educate individuals with superior qualities. In this process, education and training systems play an important role and the teachers who are the implementers of the process have critical responsibilities. In this respect, the qualifications of the teachers should be developed in accordance with the conditions of the age (Aksu and Durmus, 2017). Because nations can only improve the brain power that is needed by people who have passed a good education system and evaluate national resources in a more planned way (Aydin, Sahin and Topal, 2008).

Teachers' competencies including knowledge, skills and attitudes that are intended to prepare students for the 21st century, and the programs of the teachers who are the practitioners of the curriculums developed for effective learning-teaching purposes also include the quality of the implementation behaviors (Korkmaz and Serin, 2018). Teacher qualifications, which are one of the most important factors affecting student qualification and learning outcomes, require that teachers be trained in accordance with professional competences in order to improve the quality of education (Ocak, 2018). As the teacher's personality traits, behaviors, importance given to his / her course and his / her approach to students greatly affect the success of the students, teachers should be aware of this responsibility and take care to act accordingly. Teachers can create a rich environment in order to make students active and learning attractive and can make the impact of the classroom environment, which is a social environment, more instructional (Tas, 2018). The teacher should be able to follow the latest developments in learning-teaching and to reflect this knowledge effectively in the teaching process in designing learning-teaching situations. In addition, the teacher has to act according to the correct and appropriate standards in the process of creating a suitable environment for learning, planning, implementation and evaluation of activities (Teacher competencies, 2009). Briefly, teachers who professionally organize activities in the teaching process will be more likely to achieve the expected learning objectives. In this respect, the teachers who manage the process well and have a good subject area sufficiently feel themselves more confident and competent, and have better relations and communication with students and parents (Westergard, 2013).

Purpose of the Study and Sub-Problems

The aim of this study was to determine the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy perceptions about the teaching profession and the answers to the following sub-problems were sought.

- What are the descriptive statistics for teacher candidates' self-efficacy perceptions about the teaching profession?
- Is there a significant difference in sex self-efficacy perceptions of teacher candidates according to sex?
- Is there a significant difference in the self-efficacy perceptions of the teacher candidates on the teaching profession according to the average score of the general academic grade?
- Is there significant differences in the self-efficacy perceptions of the teacher candidates in terms of their teaching profession?

METHOD

In this study, pre-service teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy related to the teaching profession were used. Quantitative research is the collection and analysis of the data used in social research using statistical methods (Guler, Halicioglu and Tasgin, 2015). Quantitative researches are quantitative studies that quantify the facts about the facts by quantifying them by quantifying the phenomena that are intended to be explained (Ozturk, 2019). The screening model is a research approach that aims to present a situation that exists in the past or the present (Karasar, 2012).

Sampling

As the universe of the research, Giresun University Faculty of Education primary education social studies, mathematics and science teaching departments were determined. A total of 1024 pre-service teachers are studying in the related departments in the 2017-2018 spring semester.

Table 1. Distribution of Universe and Sample Numbers by Sections and Sex

Department	Female (N)	Female (n)	Male (N)	Male (n)	N	n
Social	194	68	157	27	351	95
Math	265	58	107	37	372	95
Science	195	61	106	34	301	95
TOTAL	654	187	370	98	1024	285

The sample size was calculated as 280 according to 95 % confidence level and 5 % margin of error and a total of 285 teacher candidates were reached. Random sampling method was used for sampling and sex.

Data collection and analysis

The data used in this study were obtained through the "Preparedness to Teaching Scale" adapted to Turkish by Yıldırım and Kalman. The original scale consisted of 40 items (one of which is a control substance) and 36 items out of the control item were analyzed by Silvernail (1998) and a five factor structure was obtained. Factors in

scale; supporting learning, learning social development and critical thinking, using technology, understanding learners and improving educational leadership. The validity and reliability studies of the scale were performed with 535 pre-service teachers during the fall semester of 2015-2016 academic year. In the validity study of the scale, in addition to applying expert opinion, the criterion and construct validity were examined. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyzes were conducted to examine the construct validity of the scale. As the item was removed from the scale and a long period of 18 years had elapsed since its development, exploratory factor analysis studies were renewed and the validity of the structure was checked with confirmatory factor analysis. For the reliability of the scale, the internal consistency coefficients, item total correlations and item discrimination were examined for the whole scale and sub-factors. In the validity study, the construct validity of the scale was examined with EFA. In order to be able to perform AFA, the data were first subjected to KMO and Bartlett's Test and the data were found to be suitable for AFA. The factor load values of the substances subjected to EFA were first examined and the substances below 0.45 were eliminated. Afterwards, each item had high factor value in only one factor. In this respect, at least 0.1 difference between the load value of the substance in one factor and another factor was accepted as a criterion. According to EFA results, the scale has four factors. Factors explain 58.71% of the total variance of the scale. After factor rotation; of the six items of the first factor (14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25); (9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 21), the third factor (31, 32, 33, 34, 35), the fourth factor of the three items (1, 2, 3substances). When the relations between the items are examined, the first factor is ama Creating an Effective Learning Environment ", the second factor is Designing the Teaching Process", the third factor is "Technopedagogical Competence" and the fourth factor is "Learning Understanding''. As the number of items eliminated from the scale was high, the structure of the scale consisting of four factors and 20 items was re-examined by three educational sciences experts and a common opinion was obtained that the content validity was acceptable. The fact that the scale explained 58.71% of the total variance can be presented as evidence" (Yıldırım and Kalman, 2017).

The data obtained from the study were analyzed using SPSS 23 program. The significance level of the statistics was accepted as .05. While the descriptive statistics of the pre-service teachers about the self-efficacy of the teacher were given as the first sub-problem of the study, minimum, maximum, arithmetic mean and standard deviation values were examined for each sub-dimension and total data set. As the data collected within the scope of the research did not show normal distribution, non-parametric statistics were used.

FINDINGS

In this section, the problem of the research and the findings obtained within the scope of sub-problems were presented and comments were made about these findings.

Findings and Comments Related to the First Sub-Problem of the Study

The first sub-problem of the research the descriptive statistics about the teacher professions' self-efficacy perceptions related to the teaching profession and the findings and comments obtained are given through table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Self-Efficacy Levels of Teacher Candidates

Dimensions	n	Minimum	Maksimum	$\bar{\mathrm{x}}$	SD
Creating an Effective Learning Environment	285	13	30	23,61	3,410
Designing Teaching Process	285	11	30	24,05	3,297
Technopedagogical Competence	285	8	25	20,60	3,157
Understanding the learner	285	6	15	11,53	1,931
TOTAL	285	38	100	79,79	11,79

The total score arithmetic mean of self-efficacy perceptions of teacher candidates regarding the teaching profession is 79,79 (good grade). The averages for the sub-dimensions are; 23,61 (good grades) for Designing an Effective Learning Environment, 24,05 (very good grades) for Designing the Teaching Process, 20,60 (very good grades) for Technopedagogical Proficiency, 11,53 (good grade) for Learning Learner. The self-efficacy perception total scores for the teaching profession were found to be at least 38 (inadequate) and 100 (very good). In the scale, it was determined that the item related to the understanding of the learner in the form of being able to teach the concepts, knowledge and skills related to the field in the manner that the students could understand was the lowest value with 3,77 (good grade) points. It was observed that the item belonging to the sub-dimension

of technopedagogical competence in the form of developing group cooperation and team work within the scale was the highest value item with a score of 4.17 (good). In the light of these findings, it can be interpreted that the teacher candidates' self-efficacy perceptions about the teaching profession are at the desired level and their self-efficacy beliefs are high, and the educational activities that they take before the service reached their goals. This situation is positive in terms of increasing the self-confidence of prospective teachers related to the profession.

Findings and Comments Related to the Second Sub-Problem of the Research

The second sub-problem of the research is there a significant difference in the self-efficacy perceptions of the teacher candidates regarding the teaching profession according to sex? The findings and comments obtained are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Self-efficacy levels of teacher candidates according to sex

Dimensions	Sex	n	Rank Mean	Rank Sum	U	P
Creating an Effective Learning Environment	Female	187	146,05	27312,00	8592,00	.385
	Male	98	137,17	13443,00		
Designing Teaching Process	Female	187	145,30	27170,50	8733,50	.513
	Male	98	138,62	13584,50		
Technopedagogical Competence	Female	187	142,16	26583,50	9005,50	.811
	Male	98	144,61	14171,50		
Understanding the learner	Female	187	140,24	26225,50	8647,50	.422
	Male	98	148,26	14529,50		
TOTAL	Female	187	145,23	27158,00	8746,00	.528
	Male	98	138,74	13597,00		

As seen in Table 3, there is no significant difference in the self-efficacy perceptions of teacher candidates regarding the teaching profession according to the sex variable and for each sub-dimension (p> .05). In Aksu's (2008) study, it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference between the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and sex. Arseven, Arseven and Tepehan's (2015) research results also show that the level of self-efficacy and self-efficacy perception of mathematics teaching teachers in mathematics teaching does not differ according to sex variable. These studies focus on the fact that sex does not have a significant effect on the self-efficacy perceptions of pre-service teachers. These findings can be considered that both sex groups have the intended competences in terms of the achievements of the training programs applied to teacher candidates.

Findings and Comments Related to the Third Sub-Problem of the Study

The third sub-problem of the research is there a significant difference between the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy perceptions regarding the teaching profession? The findings and comments obtained are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Self-efficacy Levels of Teacher Candidates According to their General Academic Grade Points

General Academic Grade Average	n	Rank Mean	χ^2	Df	p
0,00 – 1,99	61	123,40			
2,00 – 2,99	113	122,40	27,022	2	.00
3,00 – 4,00	111	174,74			
TOTAL	285				

According to Table 4, there is a significant difference (p <.05) between pre-service teachers' self-efficacy perceptions regarding the teaching profession. The results of the Duncan analysis showing the groups in which this difference exists are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Groups where there is a difference according to the multiple comparison of General Academic Grade Average Scores of Teacher Candidates' Perceptions of Self-Efficacy Related to Teaching Profession

Differences in groups	P
2,00 - 2,99 / 0,00 -1,99	.939
2,00 - 2,99 / 3,00 - 4,00	.000
0,00 - 1,99 / 3,00 - 4,00	.000

Considering the item average order of the responses given to all the scale used in the self-efficacy perceptions of the teacher candidates regarding the teaching profession, it was determined that there was a significant difference in favor of the students in the average score between 3.00 and 4.00. According to the average score of the general academic grade, there is no difference between the students in the average score between 0.00 - 1.99 and 2.00 - 2.99. This finding can be interpreted as an expected finding. The prospective teachers who have higher academic achievement may have higher self-efficacy perceptions.

Findings and Interpretations of the Fourth Sub-Problem of the Study

The fourth sub-problem of the research is there a significant difference in the self-efficacy perceptions of the teacher candidates related to the teaching profession? The findings and comments obtained are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Self-efficacy Perceptions of Teacher Candidates According to Departments

Department	n	Rank Mean	χ^2	Df	p
Social	95	172,56			
Math	95	141,59	23,379	2	.00
Science	95	114,84			
TOTAL	285				

According to Table 6, there is a significant difference between the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy perceptions according to the department variable (p <.05). The results of the Duncan analysis performed to determine which parts are in favor of this significant difference are given in Table 7.

Table 7. The Groups That Teachers Candidates Differentiate According to the Multiple Comparisons of the Scores Towards Self-Efficacy Perceptions on Teaching Profession Groups

Differences in groups	P
Science– Math	.025
Science – Social	.000
Math– Social	.010

When the item order averages of the answers given for the whole of the scale used in the self-efficacy perceptions of the teacher candidates were taken into consideration, it was found that the difference between the departments was significant. However, when the item average scores are taken into consideration, it is seen that there is a stronger (172,56) difference in favor of candidates registered in the department of social studies teaching. This finding can be interpreted that the communication skills and emotional intelligence of the pre-service teachers in the department of social studies teaching can be higher than the candidates in the mathematics and science teaching departments and this difference can affect the self-efficacy perceptions of the prospective teachers positively.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The results of this research, which aims to determine the self-efficacy perceptions of the teacher candidates about the teaching profession, show that the self-efficacy perceptions of the prospective teachers are at a good level. In particular, it was concluded that there is a significant difference in the self-efficacy perceptions of prospective teachers studying in the department of social studies teaching. Although the results of the research are in this direction, some researches about the teaching profession emphasize that the pre-service teachers do not see themselves as sufficient in their pre-service training and this situation constitutes a problem in terms of self-efficacy perceptions (Pajares (1992). "School experience" and "teaching practice" courses are not sufficient for pre-service teachers in order to gain professional experience and gain experience, and these problems may lead to various problems related to the application process (Ozmen, 2008).

The quality of the education received by the candidates before the service is one of the most important factors affecting the degree of self-efficacy. Some studies in the field reveal a relationship between the quality of pre-service education and the self-efficacy of the candidates (Caprara and others, 2006; Goodson and Hargreaves, 2005). The quality of teacher education significantly predicts teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their beliefs about how effectively they can organize and manage the teaching process (Capa, 2005). In this respect, it is of critical importance that teachers have undergone a qualified upbringing before the service.

To provide pre-service teachers with the competence to create effective learning environments and to strengthen this competence with techno-pedagogical competence will help the candidates to feel more ready and safe when they step into the profession and thus to have the self-efficacy perceptions of the profession at the desired level. On the other hand, teacher candidates 'ability to analyze students' psychological states and their immediate or past experiences should also be considered as an important factor in their self-efficacy. In general, it can be said that the quality of the education programs applied to the prospective teachers will both affect the in-service performances of the prospective teachers and contribute to the self-efficacy perceptions of the candidates before the service. In the literature, it is seen that there are some researches in which self-efficacy perceptions of teacher candidates are evaluated but these studies are not sufficient to quantify the self-efficacy levels of the teachers. The studies on this area should be given more weight in terms of developing the self-efficacy and qualifications of the teachers who are the chief architects of the training.

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