

Investigation of the Relationship between Teacher Candidates' Attitude and Readiness Levels towards Teaching Profession

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine teacher candidates' attitude and readiness levels towards teaching profession in terms of gender, grade, having teacher relative, willingness to study at this department and belief of being good teacher independent variables. Study group consists of 387 teacher candidates studying at faculty of education from different departments and grades in 2018-2019 academic year. Teacher candidates' attitude scale and readiness towards teaching profession scales were used as data collection tool. For data analyzing independent variables t test, Mann-Whitney U test, Kruskal-Wallis H test and Spearman'srho correlation analysis were used. According to the research results, mean score of teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession is 3.84 and mean score of teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession is 3.91. Furthermore, Spearman'srho correlation analysis showed that there is a moderate and positive relationship between teacher candidates' attitude and readiness levels towards teaching profession.

Keywords: teacher candidates, attitude, readiness, teaching profession

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INTRODUCTION

Today one of the most important issues of development of all nations is education. Nations are in race of economical, political and educational field. Educational development and having contemporary education systems have been studied by many nations recently. In this line, countries are investing on education and especially on teacher education. Teacher candidates generally have education at universities in faculty/college of education. Faculties are the responsible institutes of teacher education. Programs and education systems of faculties prepare teacher candidates to teaching profession. In other words, faculties of education determine the new generation's behaviours and country's development and future of the nation. While designing programs of teacher education, faculties of education consider many issues such as courses, education process, materials, and programs. Among those issues, two of the most important issues are teacher candidates' attitude and readiness towards teaching profession.

Attitude has been studied and defined in many researches and scientists search the role of attitude on people behaviour. According to these definitions attitude is an evaluation of an object of thought (Bohner & Dickel, 2011). Attitude is person's evaluation of someone, issue and objects (Petty & Wegener, 1998). Attitude is a person's positive or negative behavior towards a person, object, event or an institution (Ajzen, 1989). Attitude is a person's potential disposition carries cognitive, emotional and behavioral characteristic (Tavşancıl & Keser, 2001). Attitude is a person's feelings towards objects, thoughts and groups (Gay & Airasian, 2000). From the definitions, it is seen that there are three components of attitude which are cognitive, affective/emotional and behavioral components. A person's idea and belief about an object is defined as cognitive component, emotional responses, likes and dislikes are defined as affective component and actions and behavioral responses to an object are defined as behavioral component (Jain, 2014).

When the definitions and components of attitude are examined, it is clearly seen that attitude is one of the most important factors that determines people's behaviour, thought and feelings towards an object, event, and profession. Teachers start to their profession with an attitude and this attitude is gained by faculty of educations. Teacher candidates' education gets importance at this stage. Faculty of educations design their teacher education programmes by considering attitude of teacher candidates toward their teaching profession. Teacher candidates' positive attitude towards teaching profession will affect the education systems positively as well. From this aspect, one of the tasks of faculty of educations is to determine teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession and positive attitude should be gained in pre-service education period (Semerci & Semerci, 2004).

Readiness is another important factor affecting and determining people's behavior. People need to be ready for a new behavior and being ready for a new behavior may affect the success of the duty or profession. Companies, institutions and education systems prepare the employee for their profession to get better result. According to the studies, readiness is the physiological and psychological complements of a person's behavioral competence (Topses, 2003). Readiness is the feeling of being ready for the job with the consideration of all aspects and elements which contributed to that feeling during pre-service training (Straková, 2015). Readiness is a qualitative criterion of self-regulation at different levels of the processes: physiological, psychological, and social (Uhryn, 2013).

As education systems are one of the most important fields of investment for the future of the nation, teachers play vital role for the development of countries. For this reason, teachers need to be ready for their profession in every aspect. In other words, pre-service education plays an important role for education systems and faculty of educations prepare teacher candidates for teaching profession. There are two important components in pre-service training. The first of these are theoretical courses given in the faculty, the second are application courses organized under the faculty-school collaboration. These two components should form an inseparable integrity to start to the profession prepared for prospective teachers (Kazu & Yenen, 2015). This preparation should be both on scientific and professional issues. According to these explanations, teacher candidates need the skills of preparing others for change and coping with it in addition to having capacity of coping with change

around (Straková, 2015). Since each generation grows in different time, teachers should be ready for this generation differences (Tondeur et al., 2017). The behaviors, attitudes and habits of this generation are all different than that of the previous one. In this case, teachers need to be prepared to teaching profession as ready as possible. For these reasons, faculty of educations should consider the elements such as clinical supervision, service learning, staff development and school-university partnerships while designing their curriculum. Those elements can be considered in the process of designing effective curriculum and assessment schedule to prepare future teachers (Abbate-Vaughn, 2006).

1.1 Purpose of the Research

Teachers' attitude and readiness to teaching profession are important factors for education and the development of the countries. Due to this necessity, education faculties have important roles. Previous studies investigated in-service and pre-service teachers' attitude and readiness towards teaching profession, separately. This study aims to find out the relationship between attitude and readiness of teacher candidates towards teaching profession.

The aim of this study is to determine,

1. Teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession and to find out whether attitude level significantly differs depending on the independent variables such as gender, grade, having teacher relative, willingness to study at this department and belief of being a good teacher,

2. Teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession and whether readiness level significantly differs according to gender, grade, having teacher relative, willingly study this department and belief of being a good teacher independent variables,

3. Relationship of teacher candidates' attitude and readiness levels towards teaching profession.

METHOD

Research Model

In this study, quantitative research designed as correlational survey model was employed to investigate the relationship between attitude and readiness level of teacher candidates towards teaching profession. The relationship among two or more variables is examined in correlation survey models (Fraenkel et al., 2012).

This is a quantitative research designed as correlational survey model to search relationship between attitude and readiness level of teacher candidates' towards teaching profession. Two or more variables relationship is examined in correlation survey models (Fraenkel et al., 2012).

Study Group

The study group of this research is consisted of 387 teacher candidates studying at faculty of education from different departments and grades at a state university in Turkey in 2018-2019 academic year. Study group of this research is determined by simple random sampling method.

Statistical information of research participants' about gender, grade, having teacher relative, willingly study this department and belief of being a good teacher was submitted in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Statistical information of teacher candidates' gender, grade, having teacher relative, willingly study this department and belief of being a good teacher variables

	Categories	n	%
Gender	Female	261	67.4
	Male	112	28.9
Grade	Freshman	124	32
	Sophomore	81	20.9
	Junior	79	20.4
	Senior	84	21.7
Having teacher relative	Yes	288	74.4
	No	85	22
Willingly study this department	Yes	326	84.2
	No	47	12.1
Belief of being a good teacher	Yes	366	94.6
	No	6	1.6

Data Collection Tool

Research data was collected via research data collection tool. 387 scale forms were used in total. Data collection tool was divided into two parts. First part consists of personal information of teacher candidates about their gender, grade, having teacher relative, willingness to study at this department and belief of being a good teacher.

Second part of data collection tool consists of two scales. The first scale of the research is about teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession (Üstüner, 2006). It is 5 point likert type and includes 34 items. In this research, Kaiser Mayer Olkin (KMO) value of the scale is .93 and Bartlett test result is 8320.404 ($p < .0001$). Scale has one factor and explains 64% of total variance. Factor loads of the scale items range from .84 to .49. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) of the scale is .92.

The second scale of the research is about teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession (Yıldırım & Köklükaya 2017). It is 5 point likert type and includes 30 items. In this research, Kaiser Mayer Olkin (KMO) value of the scale is .95 and Bartlett test result is 8110.613 ($p < .0001$). Scale has two factors and explains 65% of total variance. Factor loads of the scale items range from .82 to .52. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) value of the scale is .93.

Data Analyse

Data of the research was analysed via statistical program. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used for normality distribution of data and Levene statistics was used for the homogeneity of variances. The data about teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession showed parametric distribution while the data about teacher candidates' readiness show non-parametric distribution. At this research t test was used for parametric distributed data analyse and Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis H test were used for non-parametric data analyse. For parametric distribution, t test is used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups. For non-parametric distribution, Mann-Whitney U test is used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups and Kruskal-Wallis H test is used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of three or more groups. Spearman's rho correlation analysis was used to analyse the data. Descriptive statistics were used and .05 is determined as significant difference level.

RESULTS

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of teacher candidates' attitude and readiness towards teaching profession and Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z scores

	N	mean	p	K_v	B_s	Ss
Attitude level towards teaching profession	387	3.84	.63	.456	-.446	.687
Readiness level towards teaching profession		3.91	.00	2.750	-1.167	.684
Attitude level towards teaching profession Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z score .87; p=.42						
Readiness level towards teaching profession Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z score 1.835; p=.02						

According to Table 2, the mean score of teacher candidates' attitude level towards teaching profession is 3.84 and the mean score of readiness level towards teaching profession is 3.91. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z score of teacher candidates' attitude level towards teaching profession is .87 and Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z score of Teacher candidates' readiness level towards teaching profession is 1.835.

At Table 3 below teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession was examined depending on gender.

Table 3. T-test results of teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession mean scores according to gender

	Categories	N	\bar{X}	ss	Sd	t	p
Gender	Female	261	3.93	.656	.371	2.951	.003
	Male	112	3.71	.677			

According to Table 3, teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession significantly differs with respect to gender ($p < .05$). The mean score of female teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession is 3.93 and male teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession mean score is 3.71. This means that female teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession is higher than male teacher candidates.

At Table 4 below Kruskal Wallis H test results of teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession mean scores according to grade variable were as shown.

Table 4. Kruskal Wallis H test results of teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession mean scores according to grade variable

	Categories	N	\bar{X}_{rank}	Sd	X^2	p
Grade	Freshman	124	169.02	3	8.615	.035
	Sophomore	81	211.84			
	Junior	79	189.29			
	Senior	84	176.48			

According to Table 4, teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession significantly differs with respect to grade. To determine of which two grades have significant differ Mann-Whitney U test is used. The results were as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Mann-Whitney U analyse results of teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession mean scores according to grade variable.

	Categories	N	\bar{X}	\bar{X}_{rank}	Σ_{rank}	Z	r	U	p
Grade	Freshman	124	3.76	93.53	11597.50	-2.829	.197	3847.500	.005
	Sophomore	81	4.03	117.50	9517.50				
	Sophomore	81	3.90	91.10	7379.50	-2.140	.166	2745.500	.032
	Senior	84	3.80	75.18	6315.50				

According to Table 5, teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession significantly differs with respect to grade variable. The analysis showed that there were significant differences between freshman and sophomore students ($p=.005$); and sophomore and senior students ($p=.032$).

At Table 6 below t-test results of teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession according to willingly study this department variable were presented.

Table 6. T-test analyse results of teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession mean scores according willingly study this department variable.

	Categories	N	\bar{X}	ss	Sd	t	p
Willingly study this department	Yes	326	3.91	.650	371	4.213	.000
	No	47	3.47	.679			

According to Table 6, teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession significantly differs ($p=.000$) with respect to willingly study this department variable.

At Table 7 below teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession was examined with respect to gender.

Table 7. Mann-Whitney U test results of teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession mean scores according to gender variable

	Categories	N	\bar{X}	\bar{X}_{rank}	Σ_{rank}	Z	r	U	p
Gender	Female	261	3.93	197.65	51585.50	-2.911	.150	11837.500	.004
	Male	112	3.71	162.19	18165.50				

According to Table 7 teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession significantly differs ($p=.004$) with respect to gender variable.

At Table 8 below shows Kruskal Wallis H test results of teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession according to grade variable.

Table 8. Kruskal Wallis H test results of teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession mean scores according to grade variable

	Categories	N	\bar{X}_{rank}	Sd	X^2	p
Grade	Freshman	124	166.12	3	8.545	.036
	Sophomore	81	209.79			
	Junior	79	181.76			
	Senior	84	189.82			

According to Table 8, teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession significantly differs with respect to grade variable. To determine of which two grades have significant difference, Mann-Whitney U test is used. Analyse results was submitted in Table 9.

Table 9. Mann-Whitney U analyse results of teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession mean scores according to grade variable

	Categories	N	\bar{X}	\bar{X}_{rank}	Σ_{rank}	Z	r	U	p
Grade	Freshman	124	3.84	93.61	11608.00	-2.804	.195	3858.000	.005
	Sophomore	81	4.07	117.37	9507.00				

According Table 9, teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession significantly differs with respect to grade variable. The significant differences is between freshman and sophomore students ($p=.005$).

At Table 10 below Mann-Whitney U test results of teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession according to having teacher relative variable was submitted.

Table 10. Mann-Whitney U analyse results of teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession mean scores according having teacher relative variable.

	Categories	N	\bar{X}	\bar{X}_{rank}	Σ_{rank}	Z	r	U	p
Having teacher relative	Yes	288	3.87	194.24	55941.50	-2.388	.120	10154.500	.017
	No	85	3.79	162.46	13809.50				

Table 10 submits that teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession significantly differs ($p=.017$) according to having teacher relative variable.

At Table 11 below the relationship of teacher candidates' attitude and readiness level towards teaching profession was submitted.

Table 11. The relationship between teacher candidates' attitude and readiness level towards teaching profession

	N	Readiness towards teaching profession	
Spearman's rho	387	r_s	p
Attitude towards teaching profession		.658	<0.00

$p<.05^*$

According to Table 11, since one of the dependent variables distribution is non-parametric, spearman' srho correlation coefficient analyse was used to determine the relationship between teacher candidates' attitude and readiness levels towards teaching profession. According to analyse results, there is moderate level and positive relationship between teacher candidates' attitude and readiness level towards teaching profession ($r_s = .658$). The relationship of correlation coefficiency between 1.00-0.70 explains high level of correlation; between .70-.30 explains moderate level of correlation and between .30-.00 explains low level of correlation (Büyüköztürk, 2011).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Attitude is defined as feeling towards thoughts, events and objects of a person (Ajzen, 1989) and from this respect, attitude affects people's behaviours. People think and behave according to their attitudes. Teaching profession can also be affected by attitude. For this reason teacher candidates' education process is important issue. In other words, teacher candidates should be prepared to profession with positive attitude. Readiness is another issue for profession. Especially at teacher education process, teacher candidates need to be ready for teaching profession in all aspects. Teaching profession requires not only the skills of being able to cope with the change around; moreover it requires the skills of being able to teach other people to be ready for change and to cope with it (Straková, 2015). Being ready to teaching profession means teachers not only get ready to curriculum and scientific theories but also changes around and dealing with these changes. There could be many factors that affect or determine teacher candidates' attitude and readiness to teaching profession. At this research whether teacher candidates' attitude and readiness towards teaching profession significantly differ according to gender, grade, having teacher relative, willingly study this department and belief of being a good teacher variables are investigated.

According to the first finding, teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession significantly differs with respect to gender. Gender difference has important effect on teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession (Çapri & Çelikkaleli, 2008). Gender difference affects teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession (Üstüner et al., 2009). Gender difference was an important effect on teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession (Maheshwari, 2016). Gender difference has significant effect on professional identification (McGowen & Hart, 1990). Female teacher candidates behave more positive attitude towards teaching profession (Pigge & Marso 1987). The result of the current study was in line with the results of previous studies. There is no significant difference between gender and teacher candidates' science teaching (Metin et al., 2012).

Second finding of this study explains that teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession significantly differs with respect to gender. Gender variable has significant effect on physical education teachers' readiness towards teaching profession (Mohd et al., 2018). Gender significantly differs on mobile learning systems (Tezer & Beyoğlu 2018). Teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession does not significantly differ with respect to gender (Mehmetlioğlu & Haser, 2013). Readiness to profession does not significantly differ according to gender variable (Adedoja & Omotunde (2014). Teacher candidates' readiness is not significantly different according to gender (Amankwah et al., 2017).

Third finding of the research explains that teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession significantly differs with respect to grade variable. Teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession doesn't significantly differ with respect to grade variable (Metin et al., 2012). Attitude of teacher candidates' does not differ according to grade variable (Üstüner et al., 2009).

Fourth finding of the research explains that teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession significantly differs according to willingness to this department variable.

Fifth finding explains that teacher candidates' readiness towards teaching profession significantly differs according to having teacher relative variable.

Last finding of the research explains that teacher candidates' attitude and readiness towards teaching profession is in positive relation at moderate level. While teacher candidates' attitude level to teaching profession raises, readiness level raises as well. In other words, teacher candidates' attitude should be supported to prepare teaching profession. According to previous research findings, teacher candidates' readiness to teaching profession and satisfaction is in relation (Mohd et al., 2018). Attitude of teacher candidates towards teaching profession are in relation with credential courses (Gül, 2017). Teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession is positive relation with their teaching learning competencies (Şahan & Zög, 2017). There is a positive relation between teacher candidates towards teaching profession and success of general biology (Yenice, 2009). Teacher candidates' at pedagogical education program are in positive attitude towards teaching profession (Bademcioğlu et al., 2014). Teacher candidates' attitude and aptitudes are in positive relation (Kanti, 2013). Teacher candidates' towards teaching profession and their communication skills are in positive relation (Yeşil, 2010).

At this study teacher candidates' attitudes and readiness levels towards teaching profession was investigated. For this purpose, teacher candidates' attitudes and readiness relation level towards teaching profession were searched in terms of gender, grade, having teacher relative, willingly study this department and belief of being a good teacher independent variables. Teacher candidates' attitudes level significantly differ in terms of gender, grade and willingly study this department independent variables and teacher candidates' readiness level significantly differ in terms of gender and having teacher relative independent variables. With this study, researchers and educators might consider these variables to increase teacher candidates' attitude and readiness towards teaching profession.

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