



The Relationship Among Self-Efficacy, Self-Esteem and Subjective Well-Being Levels of Prospective Teachers

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Abstract

This research was conducted in order to examine the relationship among self-efficacy, self-esteem and subjective well-being levels of prospective teachers. The research is of descriptive quality. The study group is composed of the first-year, second-year, third-year and fourth-year students of the Department of Elementary Classroom Teaching at the Faculty of Education in Erzinçan University. The “Teachers’ Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale” (TSSES), which was developed by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (1998) and adapted to Turkish by Çapa, Sarıkaya and Çakıroğlu (2005), as well as the “Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale” (RSES), which was developed by Rosenberg (1965) and adapted to Turkish by Çuhadaroğlu (1985), were administered to the prospective teachers. The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), which was developed by Watson et al., (1988) and adapted to Turkish by Gençöz, was also administered to these prospective teachers. In view of the findings obtained in the research, it was concluded that self-efficacy did not exhibit a significant difference in terms of gender and class level; that no significant difference was observed between subjective well-being and class level; and that there was no significant difference between subjective well-being and gender.

Keywords: Self-Efficacy, Self-Esteem, Subjective Well-Being, Prospective Classroom Teachers

Introduction

Nowadays, teachers are the most important factors in performing the functions of education. This is because teachers have a position to implement and affect the educational policies that can be influenced by the research studies and that are developed as a result of research (Varış, 1973).

Bandura (1986) stated that human behaviors are based on what people believe to be true rather than what is actually true. For this reason, it is very important to understand the ideational processes underlying these actions in order to interpret human behaviors correctly. In parallel, studies on learning domain progress on a line that spans from behaviorism to cognitivism (Ün-Açıkgöz, 2005). In recent years, the focal point of the researches, which examine learning and the factors that affect learning, has gravitated towards the ideational processes underlying these actions rather than observable activities of the individuals, that is to say, their behaviors.

It was found that teacher behavior affects students’ thinking and decision-making processes, and the behavior exhibited by students at the end of this cognitive process similarly affects teachers’ thinking processes and accordingly their behavior (Doyle, 1986).

Individuals’ judgments on how successfully they can use their competences in line with their objectives were conceptualized as “Self-Efficacy Beliefs” by Bandura (1977). Self-efficacy belief is one of the concepts that have a central importance in Bandura’s social learning theory, and it is defined as “the belief in individuals’ capabilities to organize and successfully perform the necessary activities and actions for demonstrating a certain performance” (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1995, 1997).

Self-efficacy beliefs mostly emerge in relation to special areas. Teacher self-efficacy is one of the most important examples of these areas. Teacher efficacy is an important construct in teacher education, and it is important to determine how teacher efficacy develops, of which components it consists, what factors contribute to strong and positive teaching efficacy, which

education programs must be developed for improving high-level teacher efficacy and how they must be developed (Pajares, 1997; Zimmerman, 2002). Furthermore, teachers' self-efficacy beliefs stand out as an important variable in creating a productive school or restructuring the schools (Hoy and Woolfolk, 1993; Pajares and Miller, 1994; Ross, 1994). Self-efficacy beliefs act as an intermediary for individuals to determine the aims that they want to reach and to regulate the environment that they experience (Bıkmaz, 2004; Çapari, 2008).

People exhibit positive or negative attitudes towards themselves and other beings in the world that they live in. People's attitudes towards their own selves are called self-esteem. Self-esteem is defined as 'the positive or negative evaluation of the self'. Self-esteem is not a stationary structure, but a dynamic one (Rosenberg, 1965; Baldwin and Hoffmann, 2002; Saygın, Y., Arslan, C. (2009).

Self-respect (self-esteem) is the emotional dimension of the self. Individuals not only have certain ideas about who they are but also certain emotions about who they are. Thus, self-respect becomes the degree to which the individuals appreciate themselves and find themselves valuable (Adams, 1995; Kulaksızoğlu, 2001). People may find insufficiencies in themselves, criticize themselves, but they may also see themselves completely positive and appreciate themselves. People do not have to have superior qualities in order to appreciate themselves or respect themselves. That is because self-respect is a condition of self-contentment without regarding oneself inferior or superior than one actually is. It is to find oneself valuable, positive and worthy of appreciation and affection. It is a state of mind that enables people to accept themselves as they are and as how they see themselves, and to trust their essence (Yörükoğlu, 2000; Aydoğan, 2008).

A field of positive psychology analyzes subjective well-being. Subjective well-being enables people to evaluate their lives cognitively and effectively. This subjective definition about the nature of life is democratic in respect that each individual has the right to state whether or not the life that he/she leads is valuable (Diener, 2000). The focal point of the researches on subjective well-being is about how and with what positive ways life is evaluated (Diener, 1984). Researchers of subjective well-being define it as having two components. One of them is the cognitive judgment that contains life satisfaction whereas the other is the affect dimension that is composed of positive and negative pleasure components. Although life satisfaction measurements are related with positive and negative affect, researches have shown that emotional and cognitive components are different from each other and they have been classified under different relationships with other values in the course of time (Diener, 2000). Emotions, which are labeled as emotions-situations and affect, represent the evaluations of the events that occur in one's life at a given time (Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith, 1999).

There are several reasons for why emotions are the center of the state of subjective well-being. The first reason is that people feel an emotion at a certain level almost every time. That is because emotions have a great importance in evaluating the subjective well-being. The second reason is that emotions are about one's evaluation of life. The frequency and continuity of positive and negative emotions gain importance when a person evaluates his/her emotions and life satisfaction (Diener and Lucas, 2000).

It is an expected condition within the profession that the prospective teachers have high levels of self-efficacy as well as self-esteem. High levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem create

an expectation that one's level of well-being will also be positive. This research focused on this problem sentence.

Research Questions

1. Do the self-efficacy beliefs of the prospective teachers exhibit a significant difference in terms of class levels?
2. Do the self-efficacy beliefs of the prospective teachers exhibit a significant difference in terms of gender?
3. Do the self-esteem levels of the prospective teachers exhibit a significant difference in terms of gender?
4. Do the self-esteem levels of the prospective teachers exhibit a significant difference in terms of class levels?
5. Do the subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers exhibit a significant difference in terms of gender?
6. Do the subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers exhibit a significant difference in terms of class levels?
7. Is there a significant relationship among self-efficacy beliefs, self-esteem levels and subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers?

Method

Sub-headings of research group, data collection tools and data analysis are featured in this research which is of descriptive quality.

Research Group

The study group is composed of a total of 300 prospective teachers who are the first-year, second-year, third-year and fourth-year students of the Department of Elementary Classroom Teaching at the Faculty of Education in Erzincan University. A total of 130 of the prospective teachers are male whereas 170 of them are female.

Data Collection Tools

The “Teachers’ Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale” (TSSES), which was developed by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (1998) and adapted to Turkish by Çapa, Sarıkaya and Çakıroğlu (2005), the “Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale” (RSES), which was developed by Rosenberg (1965) and adapted to Turkish by Çuhadaroğlu (1985), and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), which was developed by Watson et al., (1988) and adapted to Turkish by Gençöz, were used in order to examine the relationship among the self-efficacy, self-esteem and subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers in this research.

Teachers’ Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale (TSSES): The “Teachers’ Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale” (TSSES), which was adapted to Turkish by Çapa, Sarıkaya and Çakıroğlu (2005), is composed of 24 items. Scale items are graded ranging from (9) “completely appropriate” to (1) “not appropriate at all”. The researchers, who adapted the scale to Turkish, reached the reliability coefficients of .82, .86 and .84 for three aspects.

Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale (RSES): The “Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale” (RSES), which was developed by Rosenberg in 1965 and adapted to Turkish by Çuhadaroğlu in 1985, is a

4-point Likert scale that has 10 items. The internal consistency coefficients of the scale were found as .76 and .85 in the reliability studies of the scale.

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS): The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) was developed by Watson et al., (1988) and adapted to Turkish by Gençöz (2000). The scale contains 10 positive affect items and 10 negative affect items. It is evaluated according to 5-point Likert type. Cronbach’s Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found as .83 for Negative Affect and .86 for Positive Affect (Gençöz, 2000). The positive and negative affect scores within the scale are calculated separately.

Data Analysis

SPSS 18 package program was used for the statistical analyses of the data. The Mann-Whitney U Test and the independent sample t-test were used in order to determine whether or not the prospective teachers’ scores on the “Teachers’ Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale”, the “Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale” and the “Positive and Negative Affect Schedule” differed in terms of gender. One-Way ANOVA and Kruskal-Wallis tests were used in order to determine whether or not the prospective teachers’ scores on the “Teachers’ Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale”, the “Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale” and the “Positive and Negative Affect Schedule” differed in terms of class level. Correlation tests were conducted in order to determine the relationship among the self-efficacy, self-esteem and subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers. Margin of error was taken as 0.05 in the research.

Results

This research was conducted in order to examine the relationship among self-efficacy, self-esteem and subjective well-being levels of prospective teachers. Research findings are given in the tables below.

The Findings Regarding Whether or Not the Self-Efficacy Beliefs of the Prospective Teachers Differed in Terms of Class Level

Table 1. *Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the self-efficacy beliefs of the prospective teachers in terms of class levels*

Class Level	N	X	Sd
First-Year	171	5.13	1.40
Second-Year	5	4.80	.84
Third-Year	30	5.30	.95
Fourth-Year	94	5.24	1.19
Total	300	5.18	1.29

Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the self-efficacy beliefs of the prospective teachers in terms of class levels are given in Table 1. When Table 1 was examined, it was observed that the average of the self-efficacy beliefs of all participating prospective teachers was 5.18. This average was found as 5.13 for the first-year prospective teachers; 4.80 for the second-year prospective teachers; 5.30 for the third-year prospective teachers; and 5.24 for the fourth-year prospective teachers. According to these results, it was observed that the self-efficacy beliefs of the first-year prospective teachers were close to the general average.

Table 2. *One-way Anova test results of the self-efficacy beliefs of the prospective teachers in terms of class levels*

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Square	F	p
Intergroup	1.901	3	.634	.379	.768
Intragroup	494.379	296	1.670		
Total	496.280	299			

*p>.05

One-Way ANOVA test results of the self-efficacy beliefs of the prospective teachers in terms of class levels are given in Table 2. According to test results, the self-efficacy beliefs of the prospective teachers did not exhibit a significant difference in terms of class levels (F 3-296: .379, p>.05).

Table 3. *The findings regarding whether or not the self-efficacy beliefs of the prospective teachers differed in terms of gender*

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
F	Sig.
5.142	.024

According to Levene's Test for Equality of Variances, p significance level was found as .024. Therefore, since p<.05, the independent sample t-test cannot be applied. Kruskal-Wallis Test, which is the alternative of the independent sample t-test, was conducted.

The Findings Regarding Whether or Not the Self-Esteem Levels of the Prospective Teachers Differed in Terms of Gender:

Mann-Whitney U Test results of the self-esteem levels of the prospective teachers in terms of gender are given in Table 4. It was observed that the ranking average of male prospective teachers (151.96) was higher than the ranking average of female prospective teachers (149.39). No significant relationship was found among the ranking averages of the self-esteem levels of the prospective teachers in terms of gender (Z: -.266, p > .05).

The Findings Regarding Whether or Not the Self-Esteem Levels of the Prospective Teachers Differed in Terms of Gender

Table 5. *Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the self-esteem levels of the prospective teachers in terms of class levels*

Class Level	N	Mean	Sd
First-Year	171	4.19	1.21
Second-Year	5	4.60	.89
Third-Year	30	4.13	1.25
Fourth-Year	94	3.93	1.17
Total	300	4.11	1.20

Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the self-esteem levels of the prospective teachers in terms of class levels are given in Table 5. It was observed that the average of the self-

esteem levels of all participating prospective teachers was 4.11. This average was found as 4.19 for the first-year prospective teachers; 4.60 for the second-year prospective teachers; 4.13 for the third-year prospective teachers; and 3.93 for the fourth-year prospective teachers. According to these results, it was observed that the self-esteem levels of the third-year prospective teachers were close to the general average.

Table 6. *One-way Anova test results of the self-esteem levels of the prospective teachers in terms of class levels*

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Square	F	p
Intergroup	5.593	3	1.864	1.302	.274
Intragroup	423.777	296	1.432		
Total	429.370	299			

*p>.05

One-Way ANOVA test results of the self-esteem levels of the prospective teachers in terms of class levels are given in Table 6. According to test results, the self-esteem levels of the prospective teachers did not exhibit a significant difference in terms of class levels (F_{3-296} : 1.302, $p>.05$).

The Findings Regarding Whether or Not the Subjective Well-Being Levels of the Prospective Teachers Differed in Terms of Gender

Table 7. *Mann-whitney u test results of the subjective well-being levels in terms of gender*

Groups	N	Average Ranking	Total Ranking	U	Z	p
Male	130	139.46	18130.00	9615.000		
Female	170	158.94	27020.00		-2.005	.045*
Total	300					

*p< .05

Kruskal-Wallis H Test results of the subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers in terms of gender are given in Table 7. According to test results, a significant relationship is observed between the subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers and their gender ($\chi^2_{(3)}$:-2.005, $p < .05$).

The Findings Regarding Whether or Not the Subjective Well-Being Levels of the Prospective Teachers Differed in Terms of Class Level

Table 8. *Kruskal-wallis h test results of the subjective well-being levels of the students in terms of class levels*

Class Level	N	Average ranking	X ²	Df	p
First-Year	171	153.14	2.272	3	.518
Second-Year	5	196.60			
Third-Year	30	147.42			
Fourth-Year	94	144.23			
Total	300				

*p > .05

Kruskal-Wallis H Test results of the subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers in terms of class levels are given in Table 8. According to test results, the difference between the subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers and their class levels is not significant ($\chi^2_{(3)}: 2.272, p > .05$).

The Findings Regarding the Relationship Among the Self-Efficacy, Self-Esteem and Subjective Well-Being Levels of the Prospective Teachers

Table 9. *Correlations regarding the continuous variables in the study group*

	Self-Efficacy	Self-Esteem	Subjective Well-Being
Self-Efficacy	1		
Self-Esteem	-.128*	1	
Subjective Well-Being	.197**	.167**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations regarding the continuous variables in the study group are given in Table 9. According to test results, a negative significant relationship was found between the self-efficacy beliefs and the self-esteem levels of the prospective teachers ($r :-.13, p < .05$). There is a positive and considerably significant relationship between the self-efficacy beliefs and the subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers ($r: .20, p < .01$). There is a positive and considerably significant relationship between the self-esteem levels and the subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers ($r: .17, p < .01$).

Discussion

In view of analysis that was conducted in order to determine whether or not the self-efficacy beliefs of the prospective teachers in the faculty of education differed in terms of gender, it was observed that there was no significant difference between female prospective

teachers and male prospective teachers in terms of gender. These findings show parallelism with the findings of Çakır, Kan and Sünbül (2006) whereas they differ from the findings of Çelenk (1988), Çakır, Erkuş and Kılıç (2000), Oral (2004) and Çakır (2005). It is known that the positive attitudes of the female prospective teachers towards teaching are higher than those of the male prospective teachers due to the fact that society regards teaching as a more appropriate profession for women and society inculcates women with this idea, considering the social structure of Turkish society. However, when different research findings obtained above are taken into account, it is considered that it will be useful to continue the studies on this variable in different samples.

In this study, a significant difference was found among the subjective well-being levels of the students in terms of gender. This obtained finding shows difference with the results of the conducted studies in the literature (Katja et al., 2002; Melin and Fugl-Meyer, 2002; Mahon and Yacheski, 2005). Based upon the cultural characteristics of the society that the individuals live in, women and men are expected to possess different emotional skills and attitudes in line with social role expectations in gender differences. The fact that the culture that we live in places men in a more valuable position than women causes men to become more active and favored in many fields of life. It is possible that this condition makes people believe that the subjective well-being levels of men are higher than those of women. However, there are serious expectations and responsibilities that the culture that we live in lays on men. It is considered that the responsibilities such as unemployment following the graduation, economic problems, forming a family and undertaking the leadership role might have removed the differences that are expected to exist between men and women in issues such as depression, anxiety, subjective well-being, etc.

A significant relationship was found between the prospective teachers' sense of self-efficacy and their self-esteem levels. Prospective teachers' sense of self-efficacy is one of the qualities of teacher that have the power to affect many of teachers' decisions about classroom activities (teaching method-technique, classroom management approach, etc.) and their classroom behaviors directly or indirectly. The concept of teachers' sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem concept are qualities that affect and shape each other in a cyclic process. This research was conducted in order to examine the relationships between these two important variables in question.

The fact that there was a significant difference between the prospective teachers' sense of self-efficacy and their self-esteem levels set forth a significant difference between the subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers. This shows that the sense of self-efficacy has a positive effect on the subjective well-being levels and the self-esteem levels of the prospective teachers.

Conclusion

Consequently, paying attention to the prospective teachers' attitudes towards their self-efficacy beliefs and their forms of learning while organizing educational activities in teacher training seems to be important for training qualified teachers. For this reason, it is considered that setting forth different variables and the effectiveness on these variables in the light of further studies will provide great contributions to the literature.

Suggestions

- Self-efficacy beliefs of the prospective teachers were highlighted in this study. Researches must be conducted, which examine the development of teachers' sense of self-efficacy in a longer span (for instance, in a time span beginning from the studentship period in the Faculty of Education to prospective teaching and the first few years of the profession).
- It is considered that it will be useful to evaluate similar further studies in larger sample groups that cover faculties of education and faculties of technical education in different universities.
- Teacher training programs must be taken into account. Learning styles of the prospective teachers must be determined. Educational environments appropriate to their learning styles must be provided.
- Self-efficacy, self-esteem and subjective well-being levels of the prospective teachers were examined in terms of class levels and gender in the study. These can be examined in terms of different variables such as secondary education program of graduation, program type, etc. in a different study.

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