

Investigation of the Relationship between the Attitudes of Prospective Teachers towards the Teaching Profession and Their Perception of Information Literacy Self-efficacy Level

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ABSTRACT The present study aims at investigating both the attitudes of prospective teachers towards teaching profession, and their perception of information literacy self-efficacy. The sample consisted of 250 prospective teachers attending different teacher education programs in the Faculty of Education at Eastern Mediterranean University. "Attitude Scale Towards Teaching Profession", "Information Literacy Self-Efficacy Scale" and "Personal Information Form" were used to collect data. The results revealed that 'gender', 'selecting the program willingly', 'loving the profession' and 'professional satisfaction level' were significantly related with prospective teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession. No significant relations were found between above mentioned variables and participants' information literacy self-efficacy perceptions.

INTRODUCTION

Education in its general sense means the learning activities comprising all kinds of learning, which must continue throughout the entire life of an individual. In order to achieve the intended purposes of education and to obtain the efficiency thereof, all parts of the system should be properly operated. Education systems are formed from many components which includes all sections of the society. Among these components, teachers constitute the focal point of the system in achieving the intended purposes of education.

One of the most significant problems with respect to the system of education in most countries during the last decade, has been the issue of training teachers and the qualification of the teachers. Knowing the attitudes of the teachers about their profession, will definitely be a guid-

ing spirit in respect to what kind of trainings they should be provided with before they start to work as teachers (Ustuner 2006; Probert 2009; Stockham and Collins 2012; Siddiq et al. 2016).

Teaching as a 'professional occupation', has socio-cultural, economic, scientific and technological dimensions, and requires academic study and professional formation based on specialized knowledge and skills (Erden 2008). However, while the teaching profession requires knowledge and skills, it also requires affective specialized competencies such as attitude and behavior (Cetin 2006). Developing positive perceptions towards the profession will enable teachers to be more efficient when they are performing their duties as teachers (Erdem et al. 2005; Cited in: Terzi and Tezci 2007; Álvarez and Francisco 2015).

In order to be successful in the teaching profession which requires patience, self-devotion and continuous working, it is very important for teachers to love their profession and to willingly engage in it. The literature includes many researches which investigate the attitudes of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession (Girgin et al. 2010; Ustun et al. 2004; Pehlivan 2008; Eraslan and Cakici 2011). In this study,

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the attitudes of teachers towards the teaching profession are assessed, and the general positive attitudes of prospective teachers towards teaching profession are emphasized.

Professional development of teachers must continue throughout their teaching career. After graduating from the faculty of education, a teacher should continue learning and should maintain his/her role of learning in addition to the role of teaching. Conventional "teaching approach" was replaced with the approach of 'learning to learn' in the 21st century (Aldemir 2004; Probert 2009; Siddiq et al. 2016). Therefore, teachers should be lifelong learners. Information literacy is the most important part of the lifelong learning.

Information literacy is also highlighted in learning how to learn. An information literate person is the one who has learned how to learn, how the information is arranged, how it will be found and how it will be used (Polat 2006). With today's approach which centralizes learning, the role of the teacher has changed, and the role of knowing and lecturing everything has been replaced with the role of leading (Kurbanoglu and Akkoyunlu 2002). Chen (2010) explained that information literacy specifically refers to a person who is able to recognize information when it is needed and how to retrieve, evaluate and make effective use of it, someone who has the comprehensive ability of information processing, organization, refinement, and innovation to obtain new knowledge.

As Álvarez and Francisco (2015) claims, underlined Information Literacy is one of the dimensions of digital competence, and in today's information based society, it should be a skill that everyone craves and develops, and teachers in particular should develop this skill because of their roles in this crucial issue. All such developments revealed that besides the students, the teacher who will guide these students must be equipped with necessary equipment to be an information literate person. The teachers who are themselves not information literate cannot be expected to train information literate students.

International Society for Technology in Education listed the skills that the teachers should be equipped with as information and technology skills. The American Library Association (ALA 1989), also emphasized the need for teachers to be equipped with information literacy skills. Information literacy skills are very impor-

tant for teaching profession because of its nature. If teachers have lifelong learning skills or information literacy skills, they will always keep themselves up date in their profession. Teachers' possession of information literacy skills is important to improve their skills and to keep up with the developments in the field. It will also help them to assist the students to gain such skills, and to arrange environments in which the students will be able to use the skills that they have acquired (Kaya and Durmus 2008; Probert 2009; Álvarez and Francisco 2015; Shujing 2015; Siddiq 2016).

The present study, which is prepared in the light of above information, is primarily intended to assess the attitudes of the prospective teachers attending the teaching programs in the department of Elementary Education (Social Sciences Teacher Education, Elementary School Teacher Education, Preschool Teacher Education) towards the teaching profession, and also it is aimed at investigating the relationship between the attitudes of prospective teachers towards the profession and their perception of information literacy self-efficacy.

The aim of the study is to explore, and to analyze the relations between the prospective teachers' attitudes toward teaching profession and information literacy self-efficacy. Four questions were addressed in the current study:

1. What are the attitudes of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession and their information literacy self-efficacy level according to their gender?
2. What are the attitudes of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession and their information literacy self-efficacy level with respect to their program selection?
3. What are the attitudes of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession and their information literacy self-efficacy level with respect to their Grades?
4. What are the attitudes of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession and their information literacy self-efficacy level with respect to their Professional Satisfaction?

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research method was used in the present study in order to investigate the correlation between the attitudes of prospec-

tive teachers towards the teaching profession and their information literacy self-efficacy.

Study Group

Two hundred fifty participants who are attending Elementary School Teacher Education, Social Sciences Teacher Education, and Pre-school Teacher Education programs in the Faculty of Education at Eastern Mediterranean University during the academic year of 2012-2013 were randomly selected, 202 of the participants are women (80.8%) and 48 of them are men (19.2%).

Reviewing the distributions of the prospective teachers by location, it was observed that 64 percent of them have urban and 21.2 percent of them have metropolitan background. Reviewing the participants from the perspective of the high school they graduated from, it was observed that 59.2 percent of them graduated from regular high school, 14.4 percent of them from Anatolian High School, and 26.4 percent of them, graduated from vocational high school.

Data Collection Tools

In the present study, the data were collected using the data collection tools as described below:

1) Information Literacy Self-Efficacy Scale (ILSES): Information Literacy Self Efficacy Scale is a 7-point likert scale developed by Kurbanoglu et al. (2006) The scoring ranges from "I feel highly confident and competent" (7) to "I do not feel confident at all" (1). The high score obtained from the scale indicates that the relevant individual has a high information literacy self-efficacy level. In the study of Kurbanoglu et al. (2006), the reliability coefficient of the scale was given as .71. In this present study, Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was found to be .84.

2) Attitude Scale for the Profession of Teaching (ASPT): Attitude Scale for the Profession of Teaching is a 5-point likert scale, which is developed by Ustuner (2006), including 34 items. The scoring of the scale is calculated as follows: "Strongly agree" (5), "strongly disagree" (1). The lowest score obtained from the scale means a more positive attitude towards the teaching profession. While the reliability coefficient of the scale in the study of Ustuner

(2006) is .72, in the present study, Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was found to be .94.

3) Personal Information Form: The form consists of multiple-choice and open-ended questions concerning various variables to determine some socio-demographic characteristics of the participants in the study. Personal Information Form includes questions like: age, gender, educational level of parents, monthly income of the family, graduated high school, whether the participant has selected the program willingly, whether s/he love the profession, and professional satisfaction.

Data Analysis

The relations between the scales used in the study were analyzed by means of t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and correlation technique.

FINDINGS

The results of t-test and ANOVA pertaining to various variables relate to the attitudes of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession, and their information literacy self-efficacy level are respectively provided below. In the final section, the findings regarding the correlation between the attitudes towards the teaching profession and their information literacy self-efficacy are given.

I. Findings Based on t-test and ANOVA Results

The assessment of the attitudes of prospective teachers receiving education in various programs at the Department of Elementary Education and their level of information literacy in terms of their gender can be seen in Table 1.

Attitude scores of prospective female teachers with respect to the profession of teaching ($\bar{X}=80.302$) are lower when compared to the scores of prospective male teachers ($\bar{X}=86.458$). The attitudes of prospective female teachers towards the profession of teaching are more positive when compared to those of males and statistically, this result is found to be significant ($t_{(248)}=2.347$, $p<.05$). The analysis of scores of participants by gender in respect to information literacy shows that prospective female teachers ($\bar{X}=223.925$) have a higher efficacy perception in terms of information literacy, but the result was not found significant in statistical terms.

Table 1: t-test results obtained from the scores of Attitude Scale for the Profession Teaching (ASPT) and Information Literacy Self-Efficacy Scale (ILSES) with respect to gender

		<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>sd</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>ASPT</i>	Female	202	80.302	16.447	2.347	.02*
	Male	48	86.458	15.865		
	Total	250	81.484	16.486		
<i>ILSES</i>	Female	202	223.925	54.927	1.192	.24
	Male	48	214.375	48.563		
	Total	250	222.084	53.798		

**P*<.05

As shown in Table 2, attitude scores of prospective teachers who selected the profession of teaching willingly (\bar{X} = 80.125) are lower when compared to the prospective teachers who selected the profession unwillingly (\bar{X} =86.458). The attitudes of prospective female teachers towards the profession of teaching, who selected the profession willingly, is more positive when compared to those who selected it unwillingly and this result was found to be significant in statistical terms ($t_{(248)}=3.936$, $p<.01$). The information literacy scores of participants analyzed in respect of the manner of choosing the profession shows that the prospective teachers who chose their profession willingly have higher scores (\bar{X} =224.040) when compared to those who selected it unwillingly, which therefore, shows that

they have higher level of perception of information literacy self-efficacy, but the result is not found significant in statistical terms.

As shown in Table 3, attitude scores of prospective teachers who say they love the profession of teaching (\bar{X} =79.778) are significantly lower when compared to the scores of those who say that they do not love the profession of teaching (\bar{X} =96.840). The attitudes of prospective teachers who say they love the profession of teaching are more positive when compared to those of them who say they do not love the profession, and this result was found significant in statistical terms ($t_{(248)}=5.155$, $p<.01$). When information literacy scores of prospective teachers were analyzed in respect to whether or not they love the profession, it was found

Table 2: t-test results obtained from Attitude Scale for the Profession of Teaching (ASPT) and Information Literacy Self-Efficacy Scale (ILSES) scores with respect to program selection.

	<i>Program selection</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>ASPT</i>	Willingly	224	80.125	16.153	3.936	.000*
	Not willingly	26	93.192	14.841		
	Total	250	81.484	16.486		
<i>ILSES</i>	Willingly	224	224.040	52.950	1.907	.069
	Not willingly	261	98.318	61.056		
	Total	250	222.084	53.798		

* *P*<.01**Table 3: t-test results obtained by Attitude Scale for the Profession of Teaching (ASPT) and Information Literacy Self-Efficacy Scale (ILSES) scores with respect to loving the profession**

	<i>Does S/He love the profession?</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>ASPT</i>	Yes	225	79.778	13.767	5.155	.000*
	No	25	96.840	27.888		
	Total	250	81.484	16.486		
<i>ILSES</i>	Yes	225	224.223	51.505	1.482	.148
	No	25	204.150	58.587		
	Total	250	222.084	53.798		

* *P*<.01

that the prospective teachers who love their profession has a higher score ($\bar{X}=224.223$) when compared to those who do not love their profession ($\bar{X}=204.150$), therefore, they have a higher level of perception of information literacy self-efficacy, but the result is not found significant in statistical terms.

As shown in Table 4, ANOVA results reveal that scores regarding the attitude of prospective teachers towards the profession of teaching do not have significant difference with respect to grades. When the scores of participants were analyzed, it was found that the prospective teachers of the 3rd grade have the most positive attitude ($\bar{X}=77.522$), which was followed by the prospective teachers studying in the 2nd grade ($\bar{X}=81.682$) and 4th grade ($\bar{X}=82.043$). When information literacy scores were analyzed again, while the prospective teachers in the 3rd grade ($\bar{X}=222.956$) and 2nd grade ($\bar{X}=227.774$) have the highest scores, it was found that the prospective teachers in the 4th grade have the

lowest level of perception of information literacy self-efficacy ($\bar{X}=211.170$).

Table 5 shows the ANOVA results regarding the professional satisfaction and their attitudes towards the profession of teaching and the relation between their information literacy scores. The results show that there is a significant difference between the scores of participants regarding their attitudes towards the profession and their level of professional satisfaction. When the scores of the participants were analyzed, it was found that the prospective teachers who stated that they obtained high satisfaction, have the most positive attitude towards the profession ($\bar{X}=75.221$). According to Scheffe test applied in order to identify the source of the difference between the scores of groups, the differentiation arises from the difference between the scores of those who say they obtained low and high levels of professional satisfaction, and the scores of those who say that they obtained medium and high levels of pro-

Table 4: ANOVA results of the scores from Attitude Scale for the Profession of Teaching (ASPT) and Information Literacy Self-Efficacy Scale (ILSES) with respect to their grades

		<i>N</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>ASPT</i>	1 st grade	53	83.923	21.171	1.253	.291
	2 nd grade	106	81.682	14.835		
	3 rd grade	44	77.522	14.199		
	4 th grade	47	82.043	16.013		
	Total	250	81.484	16.486		
<i>ILSES</i>	1 st grade	53	215.385	76.418	1.492	.217
	2 nd grade	106	227.774	44.621		
	3 rd grade	44	227.956	42.166		
	4 th grade	47	211.170	51.407		
	Total	250	222.084	53.798		

Table 5: ANOVA results of the scores from Attitude Scale for the Profession of Teaching (ASPT) and Information Literacy Self-Efficacy Scale (ILSES) with respect to their professional satisfaction

	<i>Level of satisfaction</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Difference</i>
<i>ASPT</i>	(1) None	10	89.111	18.408	10.123	.000*	2-4
	(2) Low	37	90.189	23.075			
	(3) Medium	108	83.359	14.949			
	(4) High	95	75.221	12.301			
	Total	250	81.484	16.486			
<i>ILSES</i>	(1) None	10	215.111	71.440	.864	.460	
	(2) Low	37	210.784	52.082			
	(3) Medium	108	222.157	51.573			
	(4) High	95	227.068	55.273			
	Total	250	222.084	53.798			

* $p < .01$

professional satisfaction. Analyzing the relation between the information literacy scores and levels of professional satisfaction of prospective teachers, it was observed that those who stated that they obtained high satisfaction have the highest scores ($X=227.068$) and those who stated that they obtained low satisfaction have the lowest score ($X=210.784$). According to information literacy self-efficacy scores, the differentiation between the scores of the prospective teachers owing to different satisfaction levels is statistically found to be insignificant.

II. Findings Regarding the Correlation between the Scales

The findings indicate that there is low and positive correlation between the attitudes of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession and their perception of information literacy self-efficacy ($R=.15$). When the determination coefficient ($R^2=.103$) is taken into consideration, 10 percent of the total variance in the perception of information literacy self-efficacy comes from the attitudes towards the teaching profession ($R=.15$, $R^2=.103$, $F=.627$, $p>0.5$).

DISCUSSION

According to the results obtained, the study revealed some important findings in determining the correlation between the attitude of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession and their perception of information literacy self-efficacy, also, in the variables relating to their attitudes towards the profession of teaching and their perception of information literacy self-efficacy.

The study brought findings which support the results and findings of similar researches and studies in the literature about the gender of prospective teachers, and their attitude towards the profession of teaching ($p<.05$). In the study performed by Tekerek and Polat (2011) with the prospective teachers, the correlation between the attitudes towards the profession of teaching and the gender is found significant in favor of female students. Similarly, in the study in which Capri and Celikkale (2008) analyzed the attitudes towards the profession of teaching, it was argued that gender is correlated with the attitudes towards the profession of teaching, and that females have a more positive attitude

towards the profession. The findings obtained in this study are also similar and are in favor of prospective female teachers. The ascription of the profession of teaching to woman in our society in general, and the backing up of aligned choices is thought to have influence on this tendency.

It was determined in the study, that prospective teachers have an average perception of information literacy self-efficacy, and that the difference is not statistically significant, though females obtained higher scores. Karadeniz Bayrak's study (2014) also showed that according to gender, information literacy scores of teacher candidates did not show any difference. Information literacy is an important skill with respect to the competencies of teaching profession. In this regard, it is obvious that there is no gender difference in respect to professional competency which may be considered as something positive. Yet, today, given the need to have a lifelong learning habit and the variety of the sources of information, it is necessary that teachers have a higher competency in this regard to improve the development of their students and of themselves. And it is of utmost importance that training programs should include more practices and applications which support the information literacy of prospective teachers.

Also, choosing the program willingly and loving the profession are both found to have relation with the attitudes that teachers have or display toward the teaching profession. It is expected that the participants who have chosen the training program should study willingly, and those who stated that they love the profession should have a more positive attitude towards the profession. The literature also includes similar findings (Aksoy 2010; Haciomeroglu and Taskin 2010; Tekerek and Polat 2011).

When the perceptions of the participants regarding information literacy self-efficacy, and whether or not they chose the profession willingly and whether they love it were analyzed, there was no significant difference between the groups in statistical terms. It was expected that the prospective teachers who love the profession and who chose the profession willingly would have a higher level of perception regarding information literacy self-efficacy. Yet, similar to this finding, in the study of Akkoyunlu and Kurbanoglu (2004), it was found that most of the teachers do not keep up with the innovations and developments in the profession of

teaching. The ability of teachers to improve their general and specific competencies before and during their service; and to maintain their professional lives as researchers and critical thinkers will require that they have high level of information literacy skills. Working as a teacher requires being equipped with information literacy skills. In this regard, a need arises that training programs should, in a broader sense, include programs intended for increasing the information literacy skills of prospective teachers.

The scores regarding the attitude of prospective teachers towards the profession of teaching do not have significant difference according to grades. Given the scores of participants, it was found that the prospective teachers in the third grade have the most positive attitude. A significant difference has been found in favor of the fourth grade students in another study (Saglam 2008; Tanel et al. 2007). In the present study, while the findings regarding the grade level are parallel with the results found in the literature, high scores of third grade students regarding their attitude towards the profession may be explained with the fact that in training programs, there are more courses aimed at the teaching profession in the third grade. The possible reasons of why the fourth grade students have lower scores regarding their attitudes towards the profession of teaching may include the difficulties which the teachers encounter during their career in the last grade and the anxiety about whether they will be appointed as teachers after graduation.

In respect to information literacy scores, it is also indicated that the prospective teachers in the third grade have the highest self-efficacy perception. These results show that the prospective teachers in the third grade have a high level of interest and wonder about the profession. The data and findings that are obtained revealed the fact that more detailed and multi-purpose studies and researches should be made about what knowledge and skills the competencies of prospective teachers regarding information literacy require, and at what stages such knowledge and skills should be given in the training programs and with what practices and applications they can be improved.

Prospective teachers should be equipped with information literacy skills during their training. Therefore, teachers information literacy skills should be integrated into their syllabus, in other words, instructors should be models for their

students about how to use information literacy skills in their teaching (Probert 2009). Alvarez and Gisbert's study (2014), demonstrates that school teachers have a high self-perception of their information literacy. Therefore, we can also assume that prospective teachers may improve their information literacy skills while on their job.

Expectedly, it is obvious that there is a positive correlation between the level of professional satisfaction of prospective teachers and their attitudes towards the profession. The study showed that the prospective teachers who stated that they obtained high satisfaction have the most positive attitude towards the profession. In literature, and in a similar study conducted by Sahin (2010), it was found that the prospective teachers who have a positive attitude towards the profession of teaching also have a high level of professional satisfaction. Hacımeroglu and Taskin (2010) claim that while 57 percent of the prospective teachers mentioned that they enjoyed teaching, 73 percent of them said that they felt it was a privilege for them to see the success of their students. These and other similar findings indicate that there is a significant and positive correlation between the attitude towards the profession of teaching, and the level of professional satisfaction. It was also found in the study that there is not a significant correlation between the scores regarding the perception of information literacy self-efficacy and the levels of professional satisfaction.

Lastly, the findings obtained in this study revealed that prospective teachers have an average level of both attitude towards the profession and perception of information literacy self-efficacy. Besides, according to the results of the study, a low level of correlation is found between the attitudes of prospective teachers towards the profession and their perception of information literacy self-efficacy. The correlation between the scores of prospective teachers regarding their attitude towards the profession and their perception of information literacy self-efficacy is an expected result, but it should be over-emphasized. Lack of courses and practices in the teacher training programs, which will develop information literacy skills of prospective teachers, may cause the prospective teachers to feel themselves insufficient in this field.

CONCLUSION

The problems experienced in recent years with respect to the appointments of teachers,

the need for the prospective teachers to become successful in public exams, a wrong perception of prospective teachers that employment in public sector is the single and basic field of employment, continuous changes made to the educational system, and other similar issues are considered to have a negative impact on the perceptions towards the profession. Considering the fact that the education faculties with the present curricula, are not able to train teachers who need to carry out researches, who are inquisitive, creative, have high skills of problem solving and are also able to adopt the principle of lifelong learning habit have enabled us to obtain these results in the present study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the findings of this study, the following suggestions are made:

1. The information literacy levels of prospective teachers should be enhanced in fields where they need training in particular, fields should be identified comprehensively through various researches and studies.
2. Courses and practices should be incorporated into the Faculties of Education, which will enhance the information literacy skills.
3. Cooperation should be ensured with Documentation Information departments and co-programs should be organized in order to develop the information literacy levels of prospective teachers.
4. Rather than increasing the number of applied courses in the last grade, the scattering of applied courses all through the entire training period will ensure that the students felt more self-efficient/reliant professionally. Therefore, the positioning of applied courses in the training program should be revised.

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