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EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' ANXIETY AND READINESS FOR TEACHING PROFESSION

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between pre-service teachers' concerns about the teaching profession and their readiness. For this purpose, the research was designed in relational research model. There are 294 pre-service teachers in the study group of the research. In the first part of the data collection tool, demographic information about the gender and department variables of the pre-service teachers, in the second part "Professional Anxiety Scale for Pre-service Teachers" and in the third part "Readiness to Teach Scale" were used. In the analysis of the data, firstly, descriptive statistics of the variables were calculated. Then, canonical correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships between the variables. According to the findings obtained from the research, the average of the task-centered anxiety levels of the teacher candidates is higher than the average of the other anxiety levels. In addition, it was concluded that the pre-service teachers' readiness in terms of technological competence was higher than the other dimensions. In addition, it was found that there were significant and positive relationships between the sub-dimensions of the Vocational Anxiety Towards Pre-service Teachers Scale and the sub-dimensions of the Scale of Readiness for Teaching. It was calculated that the variable set obtained as a result of the canonical correlation analysis shared a 29% variance. Based on the findings obtained within the scope of this research, it can be suggested that more opportunities should be provided for school experience and teaching practices in faculties of education, practical studies should be carried out for the effective use of teaching strategies, and guidance / mentoring practices should be carried out for personal and professional development in order to eliminate the task-centred anxieties of pre-service teachers and to be ready for the profession.

Keywords: Pre-service teachers, professional anxiety, being ready for the profession.

INTRODUCTION

Today, it is possible for societies to keep up with the developing technology by raising qualified individuals. In order for these individuals to grow up, they must have received a good education. The existence of a good education system can only be ensured through teachers. Teachers who are aware of their responsibilities are aware of raising individuals who have developed themselves not only academically but also personally and socially.

The teaching profession is a field of academic and professional occupation that requires specialized knowledge and skills in social, cultural, economic, scientific and technological fields related to the education sector (Erden, 1998; as cited in Doğan & Çoban, 2009). A teacher is a person who has a significant impact on his/her students with his/her knowledge, behavior and personality. While fulfilling the requirements of the profession during this process, the affective behaviors of the teacher are also very important along with their cognitive qualities. These affective reactions include the anxiety of teachers and pre-service teachers (Semerci & Semerci, 2004; as cited in Güngör, 2019).

A healthy life of a person is related to the peace in the work environment and the satisfaction he/she gets from this job. The fact that teachers, who are the most important building blocks of the education system, have positive personality traits and have low levels of professional anxiety will create a qualified and successful educational environment (Çelik, 2017). It shows that the negative emotions teachers feel at school and their negative perspectives towards the teaching profession cause them to experience anxiety. These anxiety levels directly affect teachers' performance. The level of professional anxiety minimized in the education-training process will contribute to the future perspectives of the new pre-service teachers, and this perspective will directly affect the related field of activity (Kara, 2020). What we know is that beginning teachers are concerned about class control, about their own content adequacy, about the situations in which they teach and about evaluations by their supervisors, by their pupils and of their pupils by themselves (Fuller, 1969). Reflective practices have an important place in preventing pre-service teachers' anxiety towards the profession. In these practices, pre-service teachers are given feedback to integrate theoretical knowledge with the teaching process. Reflection is a highly effective practice that improves student teachers' learning. Reflective practices facilitate the development of new knowledge, skills and dispositions in pre-service teachers, thus ensuring that their anxiety towards the profession is low (Slade, Burnham, Catalana & Waters, 2019).

Teachers play an important role in the development of students in personal, social and affective dimensions and in the formation of their professional preferences that will affect their lives in the future. For this reason, teachers should feel ready for the teaching profession regarding the competencies of the teaching profession (Karakaya, Uzel, Gül, & Yılmaz, 2019). Determining the extent to which pre-service teachers feel themselves ready for the teaching profession has an important place in terms of both strengthening teacher education programs on the needed issues and revealing the issues that new teachers need support. In this way, teachers can contribute more professionally (Yıldırım & Kalman, 2017).

It is important for pre-service teachers to be ready for the profession and to feel competent to fulfill the teaching profession. For this reason, it is necessary to investigate the relationship between professional readiness and experiencing professional anxiety. When the related literature is examined, there are many studies examining teachers' professional anxiety and professional readiness. In the related literature, there are studies on determining pre-service teachers' occupational anxiety levels (Dilmaç, 2010; Türkdöğün, 2014; Abalı Öztürk, Şahin, Demir, & Arcagök, 2019; Külekçi Akyavuz, 2021; Ermenek, 2021; Arslan, Tunca-Güçlü, & Alkın-Şahin, 2023) and studies to determine their readiness for the profession (Mehmetlioğlu & Haser, 2013; Yıldırım & Kalman, 2017; Karakaya, Uzel, Gül, & Yılmaz, 2018; Yenen & Durmaz, 2019; Aksoy, Sancaklı & Adagideli, 2022). However, there is no research examining the relationship between these two variables. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between pre-service teachers' anxiety towards teaching profession and their readiness. In line with this purpose, this study is important in terms of contributing to the related literature.

METHOD

Research Model

This study, which examines the relationship between pre-service teachers' anxiety towards teaching profession and their readiness, is a relational research. Relational research method is a research method to determine the relationships obtained by comparison between two or more variables (Karasar, 2016). The aim of relational research is to define the relationships between variables (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

Participants

The study group of this research included 294 pre-service teachers studying at the faculty of education of a state university in Turkey in the 2022-2023 academic year. Demographic information of the participants of the study is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Information of Pre-service Teachers

Variable	Category	N	%
Gender	Girl	185	46,8
	Male	109	27,6
Section	Science Teaching	12	3,0
	Social Studies Teacher Education	256	64,8
	Elementary Mathematics Teacher Education	6	1,5
	Guidance and Psychological Counseling	5	1,3
	English Language Teaching	11	2,8
	Preschool Education	4	1,0

When Table 1 is analyzed, 46.8% of the pre-service teachers who participated in the study were female and 27.6% were male. In addition, according to their departments, 3% of the pre-service teachers were science teachers, 64.8% were social studies teachers, 1.5% were elementary mathematics teachers, 1.3% were guidance and counseling teachers, 2.8% were English teachers and 1.0% were preschool teachers.

This research was conducted within the scope of the ethics committee permission numbered 95 obtained at the meeting of Akdeniz University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee dated 06.03.2023 and numbered 2023/06.

Data Collection Tool

In the first part of the data collection tool used in the study, demographic information about the gender and department variables of the prospective teachers were asked. In the second part, "Professional Anxiety Scale for Prospective Teachers" and in the third part, "Readiness to Teach Scale" were used.

Professional Anxiety Scale for Pre-service Teachers: "Professional Anxiety Scale for Pre-service Teachers" was used to measure the professional anxiety of pre-service teachers. The scale developed by Cabı and Yalçınalp (2013) consists of eight factors and 45 items. These items were scaled as "1: I am very anxious" and "5: I am not anxious". As a result of the exploratory factor analysis conducted by Cabı and Yalçınalp (2013) on the items, KMO= .92 ($p<0.001$) was found. In addition, the factor loadings of the items were between .89 and .59 and the first factor was named as "Task-Centered Anxiety", the second factor as "Economic/Social-Centered Anxiety", the third factor as "Student/Communication-Centered Anxiety", the fourth factor as "Colleague and Parent-Centered Anxiety", the fifth factor as "Personal Development-Centered Anxiety", the sixth factor as "Assignment-Centered Anxiety", the seventh factor as "Adaptation-Centered Anxiety", and the eighth factor as "School Management-Centered Anxiety". The total reliability coefficient estimated from the whole scale was determined as .95.

Within the scope of this study, validity and reliability studies were conducted again by the researchers. The sub-dimensions of "Economic/Social Centered Anxiety", "Assignment Centered Anxiety" and "School Management Centered Anxiety" in the Professional Anxiety Scale for Pre-service Teachers were excluded from the study and the items belonging to these dimensions were not included in the analysis. As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, KMO= .94 ($p<0.001$) was found. In addition, the factor loadings of the items ranged between .77 and .44. The total reliability coefficient estimated from the whole scale was calculated as .96.

Readiness to Teach Scale: The "Readiness to Teach Scale" was used to measure the readiness of pre-service teachers for teaching. The scale adapted into Turkish by Yıldırım and Kalman (2017) consists of four factors and 20 items. These items were scaled as "1: Very insufficient" and "5: Very sufficient". As a result of the exploratory factor analysis conducted by Yıldırım and Kalman (2017), KMO= .91 ($p<0.001$) was found. In addition, the factor loadings of the items were .52 and above and the first factor was named "Creating an Effective Learning Environment", the second factor was named "Designing the Teaching Process", the third factor was named "Technopedagogical Competence" and the fourth factor was named "Understanding the Learner". The total reliability coefficient estimated from the whole scale was determined as .92.

Within the scope of this study, validity and reliability studies were conducted again by the researchers. As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, KMO= .96 ($p < 0.001$) was found. In addition, the factor loadings of the items ranged between .51 and .82. . The total Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient estimated from the whole scale was calculated as .96.

Data Analysis and Processing

Within the scope of this research, ethics committee permission and permissions for data collection tools were obtained. The data collection tool was applied through Google Forms to pre-service teachers who were studying at the Faculty of Education and volunteered to participate in the study.

The sub-dimensions of the "Professional Anxiety Scale for Pre-service Teachers" and the "Readiness to Teach Scale" used in the study constitute the variables of the research. Before starting the canonical correlation analysis, the assumptions required for the analysis were tested. According to Kalaycı (2014), these assumptions are linearity, multiple normal distribution and multiple linear connection. According to Büyüköztürk (2009), the correlation value calculated between the variables should be at least .80 for the multicollinearity problem, and it was concluded that there was no multicollinearity problem between the independent variables in the study in question. In addition, skewness and kurtosis coefficients were calculated to determine the normal distribution of the data set, and since the obtained value was in the range of -1 and +1 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), it was seen that the data set was normally distributed.

In the analysis of the data, descriptive statistics of the variables were first calculated. Then, the relationship between pre-service teachers' professional anxiety and readiness was analyzed by canonical correlation analysis. Canonical correlation analysis aims to examine the relationships between two sets of variables (Kalaycı, 2014; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

The "Professional Anxiety Scale for Pre-service Teachers" used in the study consists of 5 sub-dimensions and the "Readiness to Teach Scale" consists of 4 sub-dimensions. The model showing the relationship between these dimensions is given in Figure 1.

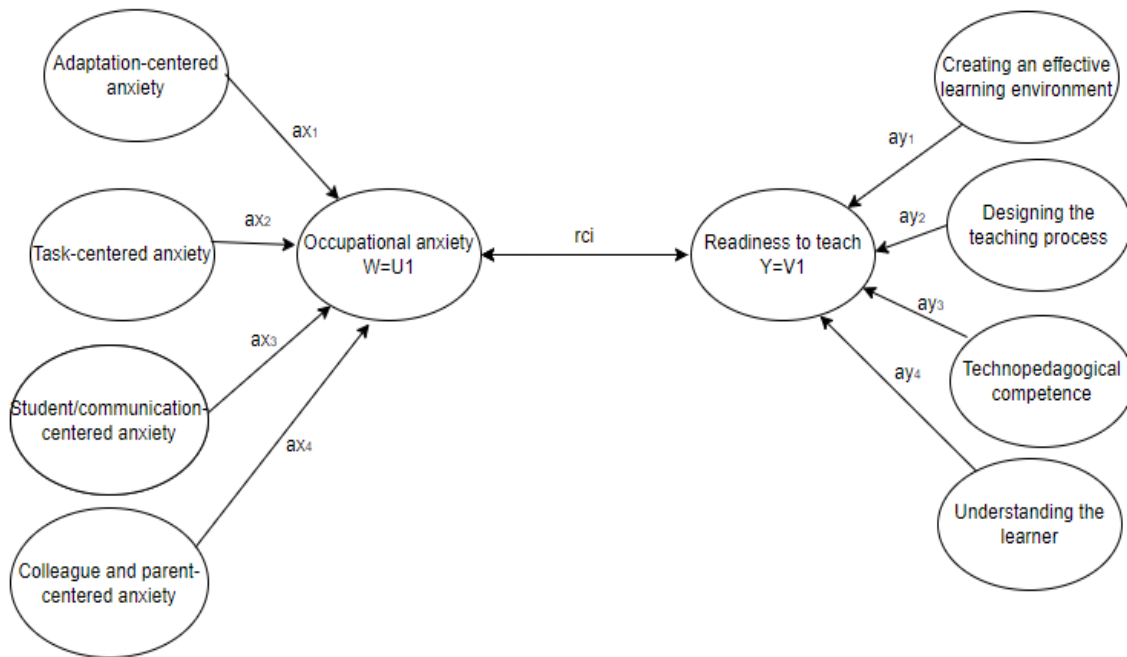


Figure 1. Model of the Variables

Figure 1 shows the canonical loadings (ay_i , ax_i) of the dependent and independent variables and the coefficient of association (rc_i) between the canonical variables.

FINDINGS

In this section, firstly, descriptive analyses were made on the sub-dimensions of the Professional Anxiety Scale for Pre-service Teachers and the sub-dimensions of the Readiness to Teach Scale, and standard deviation and arithmetic mean values were calculated. These values are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Sub-dimension of the Professional Anxiety Scale for Pre-service Teachers	N	\bar{x}	Std.dev.
Task-Centered Anxiety	294	3,52	,92
Student / Communication Centered Anxiety	294	3,39	1,06
Colleague and Parent Centered Anxiety	294	3,44	,99
Adaptation-Centered Anxiety	294	3,08	1,23
Sub-dimension of the Readiness to Teach Scale			
Creating an Effective Learning Environment	294	3,78	,70
Designing the Teaching Process	294	3,91	,77
Technopedagogical Competence	294	3,93	,75
Understanding the Learner	294	3,74	,82

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the average of task-centered anxiety levels of pre-service teachers is higher than the average of other anxiety levels ($\bar{x}=3.44$, $sd= .99$). In addition, it was concluded that pre-service teachers' readiness as technological competence was higher than other dimensions ($\bar{x}=3.93$, $sd=.75$).

In order to examine the relationship between pre-service teachers' occupational anxiety and their readiness for the profession, correlation analysis was performed and presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Correlation Analysis Results for The Relationship Between Pre-service Teachers' Professional Anxiety and Readiness

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Task-Centered Anxiety		,66**	,73**	,46**	,45**	,46**	,45**	,51**
Student / Communication Centered Anxiety			,81**	,46**	,34**	,29**	,34**	,33**
Colleague and Parent Centered Anxiety				,47**	,39**	,39**	,41**	,41**
Adaptation-Centered Anxiety					,33**	,32**	,31**	,27**
Creating an Effective Learning Environment						,83**	,77**	,77**
Designing the Teaching Process							,86**	,78**
Technopedagogical Competence								,73**
Understanding the Learner								

** : $p < .01$

When Table 3 is examined, the highest relationship between the sub-dimensions of the Professional Anxiety Scale for Pre-service Teachers and the sub-dimensions of the Readiness to Teach Scale was found between task-centered anxiety and understanding the learner sub-dimensions ($r=.51$, $p < .01$). However, the lowest relationship between the sub-dimensions of these scales was found between student/communication-centered anxiety and technopedagogical competence dimensions ($r=.29$, $p < .01$). As a result, it was concluded that there were significant and positive relationships between the sub-dimensions of the Professional Anxiety Scale for Pre-service Teachers and the sub-dimensions of the Readiness to Teach Scale.

The results of the canonical correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between the sub-dimensions of pre-service teachers' professional anxiety and readiness are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of Canonical Correlation Analysis

Roots	r_c	r_c^2	Eigenvalue	Wilks' Lambda	F	df	p
1	,54	0,29	,41	,66	7,82	16,00	,00
2	,20	0,04	,04	,93	2,23	9,00	,02
3	,16	0,02	,03	,97	2,04	4,00	,09
4	,06	0,00	,00	,99	,89	1,00	,35

Table 4 shows the canonical correlation coefficients, eigenvalue, r , Wilks' Lambda statistic, F value, degrees of freedom and significance value obtained as a result of canonical correlation analysis. Accordingly, when the significance values are analyzed, it is concluded that the first and second canonical variable pair is significant

(Wilk's $\lambda = 0.66$, $F(16) = 7.82$; Wilk's $\lambda = .93$, $F(9) = 2.23$; $p < .05$). On the other hand, the third and fourth canonical variable pair was not significant (Wilk's $\lambda = 0.97$, $F(4) = 2.04$; Wilk's $\lambda = .99$, $F(1) = .89$; $p > .05$).

When the correlation values for the first and second set of variables were examined, it was concluded that they were .54 and .20. When the squares of these correlation values were analyzed, it was calculated that the first variable set shared a variance of 29% according to the common variance explained.

The standardized correlation coefficients and loadings for the sub-dimensions in each set are given in Table 5.

Table 5. Standardized Correlation Coefficients and Loadings

Variables	r_{c1}	
	Correlation Coefficient	Canonical Loading
<i>First set</i>		
Task-centered anxiety	-,83	-,98
Student/communication-centered anxiety	,21	-,65
Colleague and parent-centered anxiety	-,29	-,80
Adaptation-centered anxiety	-,15	-,58
Variance explained	,59	
<i>Second set</i>		
Creating an effective learning environment	-,11	-,87
Designing the teaching process	-,19	-,90
Technopedagogical competence	-,17	-,87
Understanding the learner	-,60	-,96
Variance explained	,81	

According to Table 5, the equation calculated for the U1 variable is given in Equation 1.

$$U1 = \text{Task-centered anxiety} * -,83 + \text{Student / communication-centered anxiety} * ,21 + \text{Colleague and parent-centered anxiety} * -,29 + \text{Adaptation-centered anxiety} * -,15$$

Equation 1

According to the equation in Equation 1, when the canonical variable U1 was examined, it was seen that the dimension that made the highest contribution to the formation of this variable was task-centered anxiety (-.83). On the other hand, the dimension with the lowest contribution was calculated to be adaptation-centered anxiety (-.15).

When Table 5 is analyzed, the equation calculated for the variable V1 is given in Equation 2.

$$V1 = \text{Creating an effective learning environment} * -,11 + \text{Designing the teaching process} * -,19 + \text{Technopedagogical competence} * -,17 + \text{Understanding the learner} * -,60$$

Equation 2

When Equation 2 was analyzed, it was concluded that the dimension that made the highest contribution to the formation of the V1 variable was understanding the learner (-.60) and the dimension that made the lowest contribution was creating an effective learning environment (-.11).

When the canonical loadings for each set in Table 5 are analyzed, when values greater than .30 are considered as part of the variable sets (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), all dimensions belonging to these sets can be considered as parts of the first and second sets.

CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

In this study, it was aimed to examine the relationship between pre-service teachers' anxiety towards teaching profession and their readiness. Pre-service teachers studying at the faculty of education of a state university in the 2022-2023 academic year participated in the study. According to the findings, it can be said that pre-service teachers' readiness for teaching profession is higher than their professional anxiety. When the related literature is examined, it is seen that pre-service teachers experience anxiety about issues such as organizing a learning environment, academic competence, and understanding the learner (Coşkun, Gelen, & Öztürk, 2009; Külekçi-Akyavuz, 2021; Sezen, 2013).

Within the scope of the study, it was found that task-centered anxiety, one of the sub-dimensions of the Professional Anxiety Scale for Pre-service Teachers, was higher than the other dimensions. When the related literature was examined, similar results were obtained (Adıgüzelli, 2015; Taşğın, 2006). Similarly, Saban, Korkmaz and Akbaşlı (2004) found in a study that pre-service teachers experienced occupational anxiety about the teaching task. In the study of Akhan and Kaymak (2021), it was determined that the teaching practice course increased pre-service teachers' teaching motivation and teaching self-efficacy beliefs, and pre-service teachers stated that their anxiety disappeared at the end of the teaching practice course and their professional competences and motivation increased.

Another finding obtained within the scope of the research is that when the sub-dimensions of the Readiness to Teach Scale are examined, the dimension of understanding the learner is higher than the other dimensions and the dimension of effective learning environment is lower. Similarly, in a study conducted by Karakaya et al. (2018) on the readiness of pre-service teachers for the profession, the dimension of understanding the learner was found to be high. In the study conducted by Karasu Avcı and İbret (2016), pre-service teachers expressed their expectations from the Teaching Practicum course as the opportunity to practice more, the guidance of the mentor teachers to the pre-service teachers and preparation for the teaching profession. Talvitie, Peltokallio, and Mannisto (2000) determined that effective communication and peer support established by counsellors and mentors with pre-service teachers during the teaching practice process contributed to the professional development of pre-service teachers.

SUGGESTIONS

According to the findings obtained within the scope of this research, the following suggestions were made:

- In order to reduce the task-centered anxieties of pre-service teachers, the school experience / teaching practice course can be taught in every semester of education starting from the first grade in faculties of education. It can be suggested to carry out applied studies on the effective use of teaching strategies, especially by using microteaching method.
- Different teaching strategies can be used in faculties of education to prepare pre-service teachers for the teaching profession. According to Fuller (1969), teacher training programmes should be organised in a way to respond to teacher needs, pre-service teachers' concerns about the profession should be identified and their satisfaction should be increased. In this context, individually planned guidance/mentoring practices can be carried out for the personal and professional development of pre-service teachers.
- In this study, canonical correlation analysis was used. In future studies, different analysis methods can be used with the same variables.
- Qualitative research can be conducted to determine the causes of pre-service teachers' anxiety towards the profession and to examine them in depth.

ETHICAL TEXT

This research was conducted within the scope of the ethics committee permission numbered 95 obtained at the meeting of Akdeniz University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee dated 06.03.2023 and numbered 2023/06. In this article, the journal's spelling rules, publication principles, research and publication ethics rules, and journal ethics rules have been followed. The responsibility for any violations that may arise regarding the article belongs to the authors.

Authors Contribution Rate: In this study, the contribution rate of the first author is 50% and the contribution rate of the second author is 50%.

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