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## AN INVESTIGATION OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS TEACHING PROFESSION IN REGARD TO SOME VARIABLES: THE CASE OF MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

*Research Article*

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# AN INVESTIGATION OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS TEACHING PROFESSION IN REGARD TO SOME VARIABLES: THE CASE OF MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession and explore the effects of the certain variables (gender, GPA, age, department, motives for selecting teaching profession, and the level of mother and father education) on their attitudes. The participants of the study consisted of 344 undergraduate students, (282 females and 62 males) from five different departments at the faculty of education at Middle East Technical University during the fall semester of the 2015-2016 educational year. As a means of data collection, the "Attitude Measurement Scale for Teaching Profession" developed by Üstüner (2006) was applied. The scale was a one-dimensional 5-Likert type ranging from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)" with 34 items. For the analysis of the data, Independent-Samples t-test and One-Way-ANOVA were used. According to the findings obtained from the study, while the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards the teaching profession showed a significant difference regarding gender, GPA, department, and motives for selecting the teaching profession, it did not show any significant difference for age and the level of mother and father education.

*Keywords:* attitude, pre-service teachers, the teaching profession

## 1. Introduction

The profession is one of the most important factors in shaping the life of an individual (Bozdoğan, Aydın & Yıldırım, 2007). People ascribe some intellectual, emotional, and psychological means into their profession; and they develop attitudes towards their profession by reflecting these ascriptions on their behaviors over time (Korkmaz, 2009, Bektaş & Nalçacı, 2012). Individuals should develop a positive attitude towards their profession in order to show the required behaviors in their profession. Thus, professional training has an essential place in the attitude towards the profession because it is the environment in which the person develops the earliest attitude towards the profession (Caglar, 2013). Especially in teacher education, the development of positive attitudes of pre-service teachers towards their profession has an important effect in gaining professional consciousness (Başçiftçi, Yanpar & Ergül, 2012).

Along with globalization, the rapid changes and developments take place in all areas as well as in the field of education. Considering that teachers are an essential component of the education system, their roles are mostly influenced and differentiated in order to meet the needs of the new educational paradigm (Açıslı & Kolomuç, 2012). In addition to having cognitive

domain qualifications such as knowledge and skills, it is necessary to have the affective domain qualifications such as attitudes and behaviors towards the teaching profession (Bektaş & Nalçacı, 2012). In other words, being knowledgeable for a teacher is not enough anymore, it is also expected that the teacher should develop positive attitudes towards his/her teaching profession in order to be more successful and more conscious about his/her profession. Besides being successful and conscious, a positive attitude determines teachers' motivation towards profession (Demirtaş, Cömert & Özer, 2011). Teachers who develop positive attitudes towards their profession will be more responsible for their duties in the most satisfactory way, will be more conscious about time management, motivate the students and develop a conducive learner-friendly and creative environment in the classroom (Doğan & Çoban, 2009). It can be said that a positive attitude is an important factor related to the success of teachers (Demir, 2004; Terzi & Tezci, 2007). Besides, teachers' attitudes towards the profession will reflect the understanding of the teaching profession, which is one of the strongest determinants of behavior in their profession. Therefore, it is important to examine the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards teaching profession regarding the way of their success and satisfaction, and also contributing to their professional development (Çetin, 2006; Üstüner, Demirtaş & Cömert, 2009).

### **1.1. The Purpose of the Study**

In light of this information, the purpose of this study was to investigate the pre-service teachers' attitudes toward the teaching profession and explore whether their attitudes differ regarding gender, age, GPA, department, mother education, father education, and their motives for selecting teaching profession. For this purpose, the present study addressed the following research questions:

- What are the attitudes of preservice teachers towards teaching profession?
- What is the effect of certain variables (gender, age, GPA, department, mother education, father education, motives for selecting the teaching profession) on pre-service teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession?

## **2. Review of Literature**

### **2.1. Attitude**

Attitude has been subjected to the social science since the beginning of the 20th century, and several definitions have been proposed by many researchers and psychologists (Allport, 1966; Oskamp, 1977; Ajzen, & Fishbein, 1980; Eagly & Chaiken, 1995; Myers, 2002; Gilovich, Keltner & Nisbett, 2011). Attitude basically can be defined as a negative or positive view of a person towards an object, person, event, or place (Gilovich et al., 2011). On the other hand, Eagly and Chaiken (1995) defined attitude as a psychological tendency that people show towards a particular thing by evaluating with some degree of favor or disfavor. Another attitude definition was made by Myers as “a favorable or unfavorable evaluative reaction toward something or someone, exhibited in one’s beliefs, feelings, or intended behavior” (Myers, 2002, p.36). While the definitions were examined, three important points of attitude come forward, which are effective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects constitute of ABC of attitude. The first component, affective, refers to feelings and emotions while behavioral components correspond “one’s action tendencies toward the object” (Oskamp, 1977, p.10). Lastly, the cognitive aspect refers to opinions and ideas.

### **2.2. The Importance of In/Pre-service Teacher Attitudes on Teaching Profession**

The attitude of a person towards his or her profession is very crucial for his or her performance (Butler, 2004; Hussain et al., 2011). It is because this will have an impact on

productivity and also his/her relationship with people in social life or the work environment. This is also true for a teacher who is supposed to meet specific requirements (Gelisli, 2007; Terzi & Tezci, 2007). Dedication, patience are those requirements for a teacher who wants to be successful in his/her profession. In order to be successful in the profession, especially for a preservice teacher, devotion is another important factor (Aşkar & Erden, 1987).

Considered all three components of the attitude mentioned in the previous section, affective, behavioral, and cognitive, which refer to feelings, emotions, actions, and opinions and ideas, respectively. It can be said that a teachers' attitude towards his/her profession is very essential for success. It is well known that teachers' attitudes firstly affect students' lives. The studies showed that the students who were taught by the teachers with positive attitudes tend to make clear decisions for selecting their professions (Wang & Fwu, 2001; Kukari, 2004).

### **2.3. Research on In/Pre-service Teachers Attitudes**

Since teachers' attitudes towards their profession are crucial for their success, many studies carried out to find which factors affect their attitudes or how teachers' attitudes affect teaching-related issues. In the study of Suja (2007), it was found that interest in teaching, teaching experience, and attitudes towards teaching had a significant effect on job commitment of teachers. Another study conducted by Lasek and Wiesenbergovala (2007) aimed to find attitudes of teachers towards their profession in terms of various variables such as age, domicile, having a teacher model, and parents-teachers. The sample of the study consisted of 105 female and 34 male students, who were third-grade level students from the faculty of education. The findings showed that all students had positive attitudes towards their teaching professions, and female pre-service teachers and those whose parents are teachers had higher attitudes towards their teaching profession than the others. Similarly, the study of Dilg (2003) concluded that in or pre-service teachers with positive attitudes towards their profession were more productive and who were more concentrated upon their academic life than the others. Moreover, the study reported that those with positive attitudes were more satisfied with their personal lives as well.

To bring a deeper understanding, there are also some studies in the literature which examine the effects of some factors on teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession (Faddelemula, 2015; Bulut, 2009; Şimşek, 2005; Guven, 2004; Murphy, 2004; Wang & Fwu 2001; 2002). Gender, age, faculty, social and economic conditions are included in these factors. Pattnaik (2003) carried out a comprehensive study, which aimed to find the effect of gender on teachers' attitudes. The results revealed that female teachers' attitudes were higher than the male ones. The study reported that there was a common sense in the society that the teaching profession was much more female-oriented rather than male-oriented. The study of Guven (2004) aimed to explore the professional development of pre-service social studies teachers' thoughts on teaching and effectiveness. A qualitative study was performed with 48 students from the department of social studies in the faculty of education. Participants answered several questions such as why they chose their field, what sort of a teacher they want to be, etc. One of the remarkable results was that most of the prospective teachers chose their profession due to its supposed guarantee to find a job. However, their beliefs and attitudes towards the teaching profession changed depending on the outcomes of the students. More specifically, they believed that if they could help academically disadvantaged students and make a difference in their academic lives, they develop a more positive belief and attitude towards the teaching profession.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Research Design

The study applied causal-comparative research design. According to Fraenkel, Wallen, and Huyn (2012), these kinds of studies aim to investigate already occurred causes or consequences of the differences or similarities by comparing two or more groups of individuals. More specifically, the present study explored whether certain demographic characteristics (gender, GPA, age, department, motives for selecting teaching profession, level of mother education, and level of father education) had a significant effect on the students' attitudes towards teaching profession or not.

#### 3.2. Participants of the Study

By using purposive sampling, 344 undergraduate students from Faculty of Education in the fall semester of the 2015-2016 educational year participated in the study. Especially junior and senior students were included in the study because of being responsible for the courses related to teaching professions after the second-study year. The mean age of students was  $22.05 \pm 1.39$  years. The participants included 62 males and 282 females. The distribution of the participants according to the departments was as follows: Out of 344 students, 85 of them were from the department of Elementary Science Education (ESE), 65 of them were from the department of Elementary Mathematics Education (EME), 66 of them were from the Department of Early Childhood Education (ECE), 47 of them were from the Department of Computer Education and Instructional Technology (CEIT), and 81 of them were from the Department of Foreign Language Education (FLE). For the statistical analyses, some variables were categorized into two groups. According to METU grading system, GPA was divided into two groups as follows: (1) "satisfactory" corresponding between 2.00 and 2.99, (2) "honor and high honor" corresponding between 3.00 and 4.00. Two students' GPA was under 2.00, corresponding "unsatisfactory", which were not included in the study. The age variable was also divided into two groups as follows: (1) the students aged between 20 and 22 years old were considered as "expected graduation age", and (2) the students aged between 23 years and above were considered as "expected to be graduated". The level of mother and father education was also split into two groups as "being illiterate to finishing high school" and "having any type of higher education". Lastly, the motives for selecting teaching profession were divided into two groups as "dream job" and "others" including the reasons such as opportunities/work condition, the presence of teachers in the family and relatives, the scores of the university entrance exam, family pressure, because of being METU, no reason, etc. The descriptions of the variables were presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptions of the Variables

Variables	Descriptions	%	f
Gender	1 = Female	82.0	282
	2 = Male	18.0	62
GPA	1 = 2.00 – 2.99 “Satisfactory”	55.0	188
	2 = 3.00 – 4.00 “Honor or High Honor”	44.4	153
	< 2.00 “Unsatisfactory”	.6	2
Age	1 = 20 – 22 “Expected Graduation Age”	66.0	234
	2 = 23 and above “Expected to Be Graduated”	34.0	110
Department	1 = ESE	84	24.4
	2 = EME	65	18.9
	3 = ECE	67	19.5
	4 = CEIT	47	13.7
	5 = FLE	81	23.5
Mother Education	1 = Ranging from being illiterate to finishing high school	298	86.6
	2 = Having any type of higher education	46	13.4
Father Education	1 = Ranging from being illiterate to finishing high school	227	66.0
	2 = Having any type of higher education	117	34.0
Motives for Selecting Teaching Profession	1 = Dream Job	112	67.4
	2 = Others (work opportunities, family pressure, etc.)	232	32.6

### 3.3. Data Collection Tool

The present study employed a causal-comparative design. As a means of data collection tool to examine pre-service teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession, the Attitude Measurement Scale for Teaching Profession developed by Üstüner (2006) was used. The scale comprises 34 items; out of them, 24 items represent positive attitudes while 10 of them (Item2, Item5, Item6, Item7, Item8, Item15, Item20, Item21, Item30, Item32) represent negative attitudes, which were coded as reverse item (1 = 5, 2 = 4, 3 = 3, 4 = 2, 5 = 1). The scale is a unidimensional 5-Likert type ranging from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)". The Cronbach alpha coefficient was reported .93, which is an acceptable reliability coefficient because of being above .70 (Kline, 2012; Field, 2009). A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed to undergraduates, and 344 of them were valid.

### 3.4. Data Analysis

In the present study, junior and senior undergraduate students from the Faculty of Education in Middle East Technical University were randomly selected. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted through the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 22.0). For the effect of the motives for selecting teaching profession variables on attitudes, one-way ANOVA was run because of having more than two groups. For the other variables including only two groups, independent t-test analyses were performed. In the following parts, the variables significantly affecting pre-service teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession were explained in detail.



## 4. Results

According to the results of the study, the pre-service teachers had positive attitudes towards the teaching profession ( $M = 3.69$ ,  $SD = .79$ ). While gender, GPA, department, and motives for selecting the teaching profession showed a significant difference in pre-service teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession, age, mother education and father education did not show any significant difference. More specifically, the attitudes of the students whose ages between 20 and 22 years old did not significantly differ the students whose ages above 23 years old. Furthermore, the parents of the students' educational level, whether it was being illiterate to finishing high school or having any type of higher education, did not affect their attitudes towards teaching profession. In the following parts, the variables significantly affected pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession were reported in detail.

### 4.1. The Effect of Gender on Attitudes towards Teaching Profession

An independent sample t-test was conducted to explore the effect of gender on pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession. According to the results, there was significant difference in scores for males ( $M = 3.39$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ ) and females ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = .70$ );  $t(73.52) = 2.60$ ,  $p < .05$ . The magnitude of the differences in the means ( $MD = .36$ ) was small ( $\eta^2 = .02$ ). In other words, female students had higher positive attitudes than male students as seen in Table 2.

Table 2. *The results of t-test for gender*

Gender	N	M	SD	t	df	p	$\eta^2$
Female	282	3.75	.70	2.60	73.52	.011	.02
Male	62	3.39	1.04				

### 4.2. The Effect of GPA on Attitudes towards Teaching Profession

In order to investigate the effect of GPA on pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession, the independent sample t-test was performed. As seen in Table 3, the findings showed that the pre-service teachers with higher GPA had higher mean scores than the others. There was significant difference in scores for "satisfactory" group ( $M = 3.61$ ,  $SD = .79$ ) and "honor or high honor" group ( $M = 3.79$ ,  $SD = .77$ );  $t(328.6) = 2.16$ ,  $p < .05$ . The magnitude of the differences in the means ( $MD = -.18$ ) was small ( $\eta^2 = .01$ ).

Table 3. *The results of t-test for GPA*

Gender	N	M	SD	t	df	p	$\eta^2$
1.00 – 2.99	188	3.61	.79	-2.15	339	.032	.02
3.00 – 4.00	153	3.79	.77				

### 4.3. The Effect of Department on Attitudes towards Teaching Profession

One-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there was a significant difference pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession in terms of their departments. Five different departments from the faculty of education were included in the study, which were EME, ESE, ECE, CEIT and FLE. As seen in Table 3, the results indicated that there was a significant effect,  $F(4,339) = 5.95$ ,  $p = .00$ , indicating pre-service teachers from different

departments have different attitudes towards the teaching profession. The magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate ( $\eta^2 = .07$ ).

Table 4. *The results of ANOVA for the departments*

	SS	df	MS	F	P
Between Groups	13.64	4	3.41	5.95	.00
Within Groups	194.21	339	.57		
Total	207.85	343			

Post-Hoc comparisons using Tukey test indicated that CEIT had lower mean scores ( $M=3.22$ ,  $SD= .94$ ) than the other departments. Except for CEIT, there was no significant difference among the other four departments. The results of pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession by departments were presented in Table 5.

Table 5. *The results of multiple comparisons for the departments*

(I) Department	(J) Department	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ELE	EME	-.09	.13	.95	-.44	.25
	ECE	.14	.12	.79	-.20	.48
	CEIT	<b>.56*</b>	.14	.00	.19	.94
	FLE	.06	.12	.99	-.27	.38
EME	ELE	.09	.13	.95	-.25	.44
	ECE	.23	.13	.39	-.13	.60
	CEIT	<b>.66*</b>	.14	.00	.26	1.05
	FLE	.15	.13	.76	-.20	.49
ECE	ELE	-.14	.12	.79	-.48	.20
	EME	-.23	.13	.39	-.60	.13
	CEIT	<b>.42*</b>	.14	.03	.03	.82
	FLE	-.09	.12	.96	-.43	.26
CEIT	ELE	<b>-.56*</b>	.14	.00	-.94	-.19
	EME	<b>-.66*</b>	.14	.00	-1.05	-.26
	ECE	<b>-.42*</b>	.14	.03	-.82	-.03
	FLE	<b>-.51*</b>	.14	.00	-.89	-.13
FLE	ELE	-.06	.12	.99	-.38	.27
	EME	-.15	.13	.76	-.49	.20
	ECE	.09	.12	.96	-.26	.43
	CEIT	<b>.51*</b>	.14	.00	.13	.89

\* $p < .05$



#### 4.4. The Effect of Motives for Selecting Profession on Attitudes towards Teaching Profession

Lastly, the independent sample t-test was conducted to determine whether pre-service attitudes towards teaching profession differ in terms of their motives for selecting the teaching profession. As mentioned in the previous part, there were two main categories as “*my dream job*” and “others” (e.g., opportunities/work condition, the presence of teachers in the family and relatives, the scores of the university entrance exam, family pressure, because of being METU, and no reason). According to the results, pre-services teachers who identified their motives for the teaching profession as “*my dream job*” had higher mean scores than the others as seen in Table 6. There was significant difference in scores for dream job ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = .47$ ) and others ( $M = 3.43$ ,  $SD = .77$ );  $t(342) = 9.98$ ,  $p < .05$ . The magnitude of the differences in the means ( $MD = .78$ ) was large ( $\eta^2 = .30$ ).

Table 6. *The results of t-test for motives for selecting teaching profession*

	N	M	SD	t	df	p	$\eta^2$
Dream Job	112	4.22	.47	324.50	11.74	.00	.29
Other	232	3.43	.77				

#### 5. Discussion

The results of the study show that pre-service teachers had positive attitudes towards their teaching profession, which showed consistency in the prior research, (Capa & Cil, 2000; Buluç, 2002; Saracaloğlu et al., 2004; Üstün, Erkan & Akman, 2004; Kaya & Büyükkasap, 2005; Aslan, Köksal & Akyol, 2006; Terzi & Tezci, 2007; Bedel, 2008). Moreover, according to the results of the study, pre-service teachers’ attitudes showed a significant difference in regard to gender, GPA, department, and the motives for selecting a profession. On the other hand, their attitudes did not differ in regard to age and the level of mother and father education.

Firstly, as a result of the study, pre-service teachers’ attitudes towards teaching profession differed in terms of gender. In particular, female pre-service teachers had more positive attitudes towards teaching profession than the male ones, which was consistent with the previous research conducted in Turkey (Çapa & Çil, 2000; Çeliköz & Çetin, 2004; Üstün, Erkan & Akman, 2004; Saracaloğlu et al., 2004; Cakır, 2005; Kaya & Büyükkasap, 2005; Gürbüz & Kışoğlu, 2007; Terzi & Tezci, 2007; Çapri & Çelikkaleli, 2008; Çiçek-Sağlam, 2008; Çetinkaya, 2009).

According to Levin (2010), the teaching profession was preferred mostly by females in many countries. Anker (1998) conducted a study with 41 countries, and it was found that teaching was one of the female occupations. There are many explanations for this situation, which differs across society (Ullah, 2016). According to Groskop (2006), school teaching is a soft option compared to other jobs in the public domain. Moreover, school teaching was associated with child-care rather than teaching for along years (Skelton, 2009). On the other hand, there were also a few studies, in which male students had higher positive attitudes than female students (Özben, 2010; Başçiftçi, Yanpar, & Ergül, 2012). Besides, gender did not show any significant difference in some studies (Bulut & Doğar, 2006; Tanel, Şengören, & Tanel, 2007; Kılıç & Bektaş, 2008; Can, 2010; Hacıömeroğlu & Taşkın, 2010; Demirtaş, Cömert, & Özer, 2011). One of the reasons for the gender difference in the study might be explained

unequal sample size of female and male students. More specifically, the number of female students ( $n = 62$ ) was considerably larger than the number of male students ( $n = 282$ ).

In the study, another variable affecting pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession was GPA. The students whose GPA was higher had more positive attitudes than whom with lower GPA. The literature showed different results in terms of the effect of GPA on attitudes. For instance, Fadlelmula (2015) found that GPA did not affect attitudes towards teaching profession. On the other hand, according to Zembat, Yavuz, Tunçeli, and Yilmaz (2018), the students with higher GPA had more positive attitudes towards their profession than those with lower GPA. This was an expected result. Since pre-teachers with positive attitudes are more interested in their field, they tend to be more successful.

Furthermore, the department variable significantly affected the pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession. Accordingly, pre-service teachers from the department of Elementary Mathematics Education (EME) had highest attitude scores towards teaching profession whereas the preservice teachers from the department of Computer Education and Instructional Technologies had the lowest attitude scores towards teaching profession. The present study was consistent with prior research, in which teachers' attitudes significantly differed in regard to the department (Bulut, 2009; Üstüner et al., 2009; Aksoy, 2010). This might be explained the working conditions after graduation were not proper or satisfactory (Üstüner, Demirtaş & Cömert, 2009). However, some studies showed that students' attitudes towards teaching profession did not change according to the department (Demirtaş et al., 2011; Ocak & Demirdelen, 2008; Çapri & Çelikkaleli, 2008; Şimşek, 2005; Erdem et al., 2005; Eraslan & Çakıcı, 2011). As stated by Yaşar-Ekici (2015), students might change their career plans during their education, or it might be related to the quality of education.

Moreover, the findings of the study revealed that pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession differed according to motives for selecting the teaching profession. The attitudes of pre-service teachers preferring the reason of "dream job" are more positive than the "other" reasons (job opportunities and working conditions, the presence of teachers in the family and relatives, the scores of universities entrance exam and the family desire/pressure, etc.). These findings showed consistency with the results of some studies in the literature (Yaşar-Erikçi, 2015; Aslan & Köksal-Akyol, 2006; Yumuşak et al., 2006; Gürbüz & Kışoğlu, 2007). This might be explained that pre-service teachers who selected their profession primarily based on their interests, desires, and expectations, develop more positive attitudes towards teaching profession than the others.

The attitudes of the pre-service teachers towards teaching profession did not show any significant difference in regard to age, which was consistent with the study of Yaşar-Erikçi (2015). However, the result of the present study might be explained with the range age of the sample, which only included the students from the third and fourth study year. The level of father and mother education did not significantly affect the pre-service teachers' attitudes, which was not examined in the literature. Thus, it can be said that this was the novelty of the present study. This might be explained the number of groups, which was only two as "being illiterate to finishing high school" and "having any type of higher education". Actually, the information about the level of mother and father education was collected as seven groups (illiterate, literate, elementary, middle school, high school, undergraduate, and graduate). Since the number of groups are not equal or some of them were under 30 students, this variable was categorized under two groups for the analysis. If the analysis was performed with seven groups, a significant difference might occur among the other groups.

## 6. Conclusion, Implications, and Recommendations

A very important issue investigated in the study was the pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession. It was also explored whether their attitudes differed regarding certain variables such as gender, age, GPA, department, mother education, father education, and their motives for selecting teaching profession. The results showed that pre-service teachers had a moderate positive attitude towards the teaching profession. Furthermore, while gender, GPA, department, and the motives for selecting the profession significantly affected the pre-service teachers' attitudes, age and the level of mother/father education did not affect their attitudes. As Chakraborty and Mondal (2014) stated, positive attitude towards teaching profession is a pre-request for a healthy school system; and an important sign to be successful in the profession (Coşkun, 2011; Açışlı & Kolomuç, 2012; Bektaş & Nalçacı, 2012; Özkan, 2012).

The current study has some important implications which should be considered by researchers, educators, and educational policymakers. For researchers, the present study provided a significant contribution to the literature of teacher education with respect to identifying the variables affecting the attitudes towards the teaching profession. More specifically, the variables such as the educational level of parents and motives for selecting the teaching profession were rarely investigated while the variables like gender and age were examined in many studies. Moreover, this study highlighted the importance of department variable on pre-service teachers' attitudes towards their profession. The pre-service teachers in the departments which are more advantageous in terms of working conditions had more positive attitudes than the others. The findings of this study may be useful for education policymakers when deciding on quotas for education faculties throughout the country. The study also showed that the motives for selecting profession significantly affected the pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession. The pre-service teachers whose motives were "dream job" had more positive attitudes than the others. The present study gave insight to better understand the importance of motivation. Thus, educators should consider the pre-service teachers' interests, expectations, and motivations while reorganizing educational environments.

For further studies, qualitative data collection methods like deep interviews may be carried out to investigate the reasons for the factors affecting pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession. Moreover, the level of mother and father education had only two groups in the study, and no difference was explored between these two groups ("being illiterate to finishing high school" and "having any type of higher education"). Thus, further study might be conducted by adding other levels of education groups. The inclusion of only one university was one of the limitations of this study. Thus, in order to enhance generalizability and external validity (Merriam, 2009), the study might further be conducted with different universities from different regions of Turkey.

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