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A review of prospective music teachers’ views concerning their self-evaluation of proficiency in the field

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Abstract

This research, aiming at determining the self-evaluation views of pre-service music teachers attending Ondokuz Mayıs University located in the Black Sea region of Turkey concerning their music teaching field efficacy, is of qualitative nature and employs an interview technique. The data collected were analysed through the technique of content analysis, evaluated in the light of the relevant literature, and consequently it was found that pre-service music teachers did not find themselves adequate in applying music teaching methods, conducting teaching in compliance with the music theory, and playing the piano effectively so as to consort; whereas they considered themselves adequate in performing teaching directed to audition training, in transferring international music pieces and introducing the instruments and conducting music groups.

Keywords: Music teaching, music field efficacy, efficacy, self-evaluation, pre-service music teachers.

1. Introduction

In consequence of the reflections of social, technological and economic developments occurring in our rapidly changing and transforming world, such concepts as the quality of teachers, teacher standards, and teachers’ efficacy as well as their outlook in application were questioned and became important. Nations understanding the importance of education have been revising teacher training programmes in order to temporize, and renewing them. Teacher training programmes should increase pre-service teachers’ self belief (Ling & Gorrell, 1998), and thus should facilitate them efficacy feeling and make sure the feeling develops. Knowing about pre-service teachers’ views of their efficacy would make contributions in the pre-teaching process (Aktaş & Walter, 2005).

Music educator, the principal and the most active component of music education (Uçan, 2005), should possess efficacy in several fields (Kurtuldu, 2010) and should improve that efficacy so that pre-service teachers could attain the desired level in terms of the effects of the elements of music education system on functioning accurately (Çelikten & Can, 2003; Çelikten, Şanal & Yeni, 2005). It is important that pre-service teachers make self-criticism and state their self-evaluation in the process of teacher training in order to make music education systems more functional and to improve the process of music teaching and the quality of music teachers. Self-evaluation is defined as students’ making judgements about their own learning (Boud & Falchikov, 1989), and as an approach in which students develop self-criticism skills (Dochy & McDowell, 1997). On can obtain more information about inferences about the self than an observer from outside does through self-evaluation, and self-evaluation helps to describe the

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Keywords: Music teaching, music field efficacy, efficacy, self-evaluation, pre-service music teachers.

A close examination of the field literature shows that the number of studies and publications concerning music teacher efficacy in Turkey has increased rapidly since 1973, especially since 1982 (the Board of Higher Education, 1997; Yöndem & Öztosun, 2003; Kalyoncu, 2004; Ministry of Education, 2005a; 2005b; Uçan, 2006; Kurtuldu, 2010; Deniz & Gündoğdu; 2008). Kalyoncu (2004), setting out from overall teacher efficacy, suggests a model composed of music field knowledge, an active relation with musical forms of behaviour, proficiency in music teaching, knowledge of music teaching profession, and personal/individual properties. The researcher says, in the category of music field knowledge, that music teachers should attain the level of knowledge in the fundamental properties of music, its laws/theories, principles, basic elements, the relations between the elements, and the historical evolution of music; that they should know the shaping and function of music in the society and in the neighboring cultural environment, and should be aware of the fact that music course plays important roles in transferring the culture. This research is significant in that it defines pre-service teachers’ views of self-evaluation so as to determine their occupational field efficacy, that it improves and contributes to upgrading their field efficacy, and that it aims to give feedback to the related institutions and practitioners.

2. Method

This research, which is designed in the form of case study- a method of qualitative research- in order to determine the views of 15 pre-service music teachers attending the music education division of the Faculty of Education, Ondokuz Mayıs University in the 2010-2011 academic year on self-evaluation in terms of music teaching field efficacy, uses a structured interview technique. Having prepared the structured interview form by the researcher, and it was presented to three field experts in order to attain internal validity, and thus the final shape was given to the form. A pre-application was done with 3 students who had not been included in the study group, and thus the validity of the question items was attained. The data collected through 20-minute interviews which were recorded through a voice recorder with the consent of the participants were analysed through content analysis. They were then divided into categories based on themes which were determined according to the conceptual framework in the field literature and according to the interview questions. The themes were continuously compared with the other students’, and thus common themes were formed (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). The common themes determined were tabulated according to the frequency of repetition. The participants were symbolised by 1, 2, 3, ... In order to achieve research reliability, the codes and code categories of three field experts who were experienced in qualitative research were compared so as to confirm whether or not the codes under the themes represented the themes. The inter-encoder reliability was found to be 0.88 (Reliability=agreement/agreement+disagreement) (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

3. Findings

Here the findings obtained are summarised by direct quotations from the participants’ views.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>Participants stating</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical knowledge, skills, and education-teaching</td>
<td>Being able to perform teaching directed to audition training</td>
<td>3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being able to perform teaching directed to music theory</td>
<td>4, 6, 8, 11, 14, 15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being able to use music teaching methods</td>
<td>4, 11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being able to offer education to those in need of special education</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 1, eight students said that they could perform teaching directed to audition training whereas 6 students stated that they could perform teaching directed to music theory. 2 out of 15 pre-service teachers pointed out that they had the ability to use the methods of music teaching. Besides, almost all of the pre-service
teachers considered themselves inadequate in offering education to students in need of special education. A few examples for this are given below:

“I believe we receive intensive training in our audition course, but I don’t have self-confidence in teaching such subjects as solmization and dictation, which are quite simple compared to the subjects we have learnt. I still have difficulty in intervals while decoding a piece of music. I have problems with harmonic analysis, counterpointing, and consorting.” (6)

“I learnt how to teach a song in the special teaching methods course, and I feel proficient in this respect, but I feel lacking in preparing lesson plans and presentation of the lesson according to the constructivist approach. Our senior friends explained different methods of teaching, but we concentrated on song teaching.” (10)

“special teaching course was a one-semester course and it was just at the level of theoretical knowledge. We didn’t have opportunities to have applications. So I don’t feel competent.” (2)

Based on the above mentioned views, it may be said that courses about audition and music theory were partly efficient in training proficient and qualified teachers in the related branch. The fact that almost all the pre-service music teachers felt insufficient in being able to offer education to students with special educational needs is thought to have stemmed from the fact that Special Education course is taught by educators who are not in the field of music education and only 2 hours a week in the final semester.

Table 2. Pre-service Music Teachers’ Views Concerning the Teaching-Education of Intrument Playing and Singing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>Participants stating</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teaching of instrument playing and singing</td>
<td>Being able to use voice effectively</td>
<td>2,4,8,11,13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being able to use the instrument effectively</td>
<td>1,4,9,11,13,14,15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being able to use the school instruments (guitar, etc) effectively</td>
<td>2,4,5,9,11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being able to form voice and instrument groups</td>
<td>1,3,4,9,10,12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being able to determine teaching content for a group</td>
<td>1,3,4,5,9,12,14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being able to conduct music groups</td>
<td>1,2,3,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 2, one third of pre-service music teachers said that they could use their voice and school instruments effectively while two thirds said that they felt inadequate in being able to determine teaching content for differing learning groups, in being able to form voice and instrument groups, and using the piano effectively in consorting. Almost all of the pre-service teachers stated that they felt proficient in conducting music groups. Some samples from the interview statements are as in the following:

“I don’t think voice training course, which I take at the undergraduate level, is sufficient. I don’t believe our classes are efficient. Besides, I am anxious because I am nervous. Especially while consorting a song with the piano or while conducting the group during the national anthem I feel tense, and this makes me feel not confident.” (5)

“I think the most useful instrument when I become a teacher is the saz. I had a good start with it, but in order to use it in front of students in schools, the weekly hours of the school instruments course should be increased. Because I don’t think we become competent enough to use for teaching.” (8)

The views stated showed that courses for voice training and school instruments were insufficient in terms of attaining the goals, and that sufficient training was not offered in using the piano as the consorting instrument. That they did not consider themselves sufficient in being able to conduct music groups stemmed from the fact that the orchestra conducting course is not supported by the chorus conducting course.

Table 3. Pre-service Music Teachers’ Views Concerning the Efficacy in the Teaching-Education of Music Creation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>Participants stating</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teaching-education of</td>
<td>Being able to vocalize the songs selected from the school music content</td>
<td>4,5,6,8,11,12,14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being able to make students do composition and improvisation</td>
<td>4,8,13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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</table>
According to Table 3, nearly all the students found themselves insufficient in making students do composition and improvisation work, and in using technological tools in music education whereas about two thirds thought they were insufficient in preparing aids and materials appropriate to the topic, and almost half thought they were inadequate in vocalizing the pieces selected from the school music content. Some of the views stated were as in the following:

“I am at the point of graduating, but I still have difficulty in using technological tools related to music. We do not have any courses for this at the undergraduate level. But this is very important. For example, the content of Teaching Technologies and Material Design course could be organised accordingly.” (3)

“I think we go through an unsatisfactory process of education in terms of composing and improvisation. Composing and arrangement work is scarce. Our composition course could have been considered so as to include improvisation work. I feel proficient in that.” (8)

Based on those views, it may be said that pre-service teachers need courses for increasing the efficiency of composition and improvisation work and facilitating the use of technological tools during their undergraduate education.

According to Table 4, two thirds of the pre-service teachers considered themselves adequate in being able to introduce the national music and instruments while they thought they were inadequate in transferring the national music. Almost all of them stated that they were proficient in introducing international music and instruments and in transferring international music; one third believed they were sufficient in making self-improvement in current and popular music. Two thirds of them considered themselves sufficient in being able to introduce the national music and instruments, and insufficient in being able to transfer the national music, which was catching attention. Some samples are quoted below for these sub-themes:

“We usually met our needs in terms of our national music and national instruments thanks to our interest in them. We took part in the university folk music chorus and in activities outside the school with most of the friends. However, despite all the experiences I had, I have doubts as to transferring our national music to our students.” (12)

“I can easily introduce international music and instruments to the students in the future because I believe I have had opportunities to improve in this respect. Yet I cannot say the same for the pieces in national music.” (4)

The views stated demonstrated that pre-service teachers did not consider the education received in national, current and popular music.

According to Table 5, two thirds of the pre-service teachers considered themselves adequate in being able to plan activities for listening to music whereas about two thirds thought they were sufficient in being able to plan activities for listening to music. One third believed they were adequate in being able to plan activities for listening to music. Two thirds of them considered themselves adequate in being able to plan activities for listening to music whereas about two thirds thought they were sufficient in being able to plan activities for listening to music. Some samples are quoted below for these sub-themes:

“We usually met our needs in terms of our national music and national instruments thanks to our interest in them. We took part in the university folk music chorus and in activities outside the school with most of the friends. However, despite all the experiences I had, I have doubts as to transferring our national music to our students.” (12)

“I can easily introduce international music and instruments to the students in the future because I believe I have had opportunities to improve in this respect. Yet I cannot say the same for the pieces in national music.” (4)
According to Table 5, nearly all of the pre-service teachers considered themselves competent in planning activities for listening to music and approximately one third in introducing conscious music listeners to the society. A few sample statements reflecting the shared views in relation to the sub-themes were as in the following:

“I am planning to conduct music listening activities for my students when I become a teacher. Because I think our listening culture is lacking. I can also say that I have a god archive for this.” (7)

“I don’t think I will be able to raise qualified music listeners through 40- minute courses that I will teach. No matter how much effort you make, children will encounter poor quality music.” (1)

The above mentioned views showed that pre-service teachers thought society’s level of awareness of the need for high quality music was high but that they were not optimistic about meeting the need.

4. Conclusions

In consequence of the self-evaluations concerning the occupational field efficacies, it was found that pre-service music teachers thought they were adequate in performing teaching in audition training, in conducting music groups, in preparing materials appropriate for the topic, in transferring national music and instruments, and in planning music listening activities whereas they considered themselves insufficient in performing teaching in music theory, in applying the methods of music teaching, in offering education to students with special needs, in using the voice effectively, in using the school instruments effectively, in improving the self in current and popular music, in determining teaching content for different groups, in forming voice and instrument groups, in playing the piano effectively to consort, in vocalizing the songs selected from the school music content, in making students do composition and improvisation work, in using technological tools in music education, in transferring the national music, and in introducing conscious music listeners to the society. The results obtained comply with the findings obtained by Deniz & Gündoğdu (2008) claiming that music teachers did not usually find their colleagues proficient in terms of efficacy in music education. In several research studies it was found that practiseing music teachers as well as pre-service music teachers considered themselves insufficient in consorting with the piano (Batbay & Aydinoğlu, 2006; Çizili, 2000; Deniz & Gündoğdu, 2008; Kutluk, 1996; Özen, 1998; Öztürk, 2001; Piji, 2007). The findings reached in the current research is also supportive of this. The findings with regard to applying music teaching methods, using technological tools in music education, transferring the national music, and offering education to students with special needs are parallel to the ones obtained by Deniz & Gündoğdu (2008), Barışeri, Özdek and Can (2006), Sevinç & Koldemir (2009), Seferoğlu (2004), Varış (2010), and Yöndem- Öztosun (2003). Music teachers views concerning their own efficacy are directly proportional to the structure of the programmes through which the efficacies are facilitated and to the instructor applying the programme. Efforts to improve pre-service teachers’ efficacies during pre-service training should be considered important and be handled carefully. It is believed that the research results will be leading to the related institutions in that they could see their students’ efficacies, that it could give an idea about activities which are done or which should be done for the personal development of those who are in in-service training (Seferoğlu, 2004). As is pointed out by Barışeri, Özdek & Can (2006), instructors who will do the teaching should be slected on the basis of their efficacy. Research studies conducted in relation to music teaching proficiency should be extended to include various sample groups and should contribute to upgrading the music teaching efficacy.

References


