



Gender Comparison of the College and Family Life Problems of the Preschool Teacher Candidates

Research Article

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ABSTRACT

Following the heightened number of male teachers at the early and primary levels of education, the pros and cons of being a male teacher have been studied from various perspectives within the last decade. This study focused on the common problems faced by the Turkish preschool teacher candidates in their family and college life and how these problems have been differentiated according to gender. A total of 366 females and 366 males participated in this research. The Problem Screening Inventory and Health Problems Screening Form and the socio-demographic questionnaire were applied to the sample. The hierarchical stepwise regression analysis was run to compare the common problems of the male and female students. Specifically, the problems in the college and family life were detected and the effects of health problems, socio economic and academic variables on those problems were measured. The IVs in this study were the health score, family monthly income, education level of mother and father, the rank order of preschool program choice, grade point average (GPA), number of siblings, and the grade. As a result, the problems of male students were affected by more diverse variables compared to the females. One of the most striking findings of this research was to find out that the rank order of the program choice appeared as the source of problems of male students in four areas; future work life, family relationships, social/friendship relations, personal perception and emotional condition whereas this variable did not add any variance to the problems of female students. The findings were discussed within the related literature.

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Keywords:

College life; early childhood education; preservice teachers; Turkey

Introduction

In the Turkish educational system, the terms of early childhood education (ECE) and preschool education signify the same period of education. The significant improvement of ECE in Turkey dates back to the 1960s, after then the number of children, teachers, and schools has been increased dramatically up to date.

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The public and private sector offer preschool education in Turkey both through self-governing preschools or preschool classes of the elementary schools. The self-governing preschools called as maternal schools serve the children between 36-66 months. The preschool classes of the primary schools called maternal classrooms serve the children between 48 and 66 months (Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2014). Although there had been large growth and expansion of ECE in Turkey regarding the number of teachers, schools, and children in the last decade, it is still not developed enough to meet the needs of the young population compared to the developed countries (Aksoy & Eren-Deniz, 2018). The net schooling ratio of the five years olds in the educational year of 2016/2017 was 58.79 % (MoNE, 2017) which was far below of the 80.6 % of the OECD and 82.6% of the EU averages (OECD, 2014).

ECE is defined as a dominantly female profession in the world and Turkey because of its nature of love and care for young children has been traditionally accepted as feminine across cultures (Moosa & Bhana, 2018; Saigol & Danish, 2016; Tezel Şahin & Sak, 2016; Xu & Waniganayake, 2018). Although the gender stereotyping begins to lose importance for some professions, the number of male ECE teachers did not increase significantly in the last decade because of the perception of that profession as a female job in Turkey (Anliak and Beyazkurk, 2008; İnan, Bayındır, Doğan-Temur, & Bartan, 2010). Brody (2015) stated that hence men working with young children are challenged for their masculine roles because of the caring nature of the profession, they are found to reconstruct their masculine identity around charisma, initiative, daring, and playfulness together with observing the children's needs. Although male ECE and primary school teachers are seen as the beneficial role models for the boys (Brownhill, 2015), Besnard and Letarte (2017) revealed that there had been a relationship between good classroom arrangement, instructional support, and better social adaptation of children, regardless of the gender of teachers. Brandes, Andrä, Röseler, and Schneider-Andrich (2015) also confirmed that there was no significant difference between male and female ECE workers concerning professional standards and interaction with children. Although the number of male teachers in ECE appears to increase in Europe and Turkey in the last years, it is still predominantly regarded as a female profession (Peeters, Rohrmann, & Emilsen, 2015; Tezel Şahin & Sak, 2016). However, the majority of female ECE teachers appeared to have a positive attitude through the involvement of male teachers in ECE in Turkey (Sak, Sahin, & Sahin, 2012).

Teaching is a popular profession in Turkey as in the other developing economies and attracts the candidates with low-income levels because of its state security and other financial benefits. Today, most of the ECE teachers in Turkey have four-year undergraduate degrees. In the last ten years, there has been a great increase in the number of ECE teachers and institutions as well as the faculties with departments of ECE (Unal & Kurt, 2018). This fast-growing trend of the last decade has also raised the quality issues for the ECE. The number of ECE teachers has been raised from 17,511 (694 males, and 16,817 females) in 2003 to 77,109 (4,429 males, and 72,680 females) in 2016. As seen in these figures, the increase in the number of male teachers has been faster than females. The socio-economic status of the ECE teacher candidates has been documented in detail in another study by Unal and Kurt (2018). In the same study, it is also documented that the low-income levels of students and their strong desire to be appointed by the state and studying for the centralized placement exams keep the students away from social and cultural activities at the universities and has detrimental effects on their quality college lives. The students also explained some problems encountered at the universities which hamper their satisfaction with the higher education. In this study, such problems and their possible reasons were delineated.

It's a well-known fact that the health problems are highly associated with the overall quality of college life (Storrie, Ahern, & Tuckett, 2010), especially for the college students dealing with the financial insecurities (Roberts et al., 2000) which is the case for the sample of this study recruited from a low-level income population. The main effects of financial difficulties are easily observable in students' nutrition and housing,

as well as school expenditures. Those general health concerns and other socio-economic characteristics as conceptualized in this study have a high impact on the college and family life of undergrad students. Hence, they were all operationalized as the independent variables in this study and their magnitudes of effect on the common problems of male and female preschool teacher candidates were measured within the scope of this study.

There have been two socioeconomic profile studies done with the preservice ECE teachers in Turkey. One of them had been undertaken by the authors of this study (Unal & Kurt, 2018) and the other by Erkan et al. (2002). The studies indicated that the percentage of male students at the colleges of education in Turkey is raised from 7.3% to 17.3% in the past fifteen years. The Eurostat (2017) statistics indicated that 4.64% of pre-primary teachers including early childhood teachers in Europe were males. The percentages were even lower for Middle East countries like Jordan where the ratio of male preschool teachers is lower than 1% (Ahmad, Al-Zboon, Alkhaldeh, & Al Khatib, 2018). The comparatively high number of male students and ECE teachers in Turkey is promising since it signifies a more positive attitude towards the profession by the males. On the other hand, it is indicated that the teaching profession is desirable because it is seen as a secure job offered by the state with a stable salary and other benefits. Since the number of male students in the ECE profession is on the rise, this study was carried out to understand the common problems that the ECE students had at the universities and how they were differentiated according to the gender. The research questions of this study were;

- (1) What are the sociodemographic compositions of the preschool teacher candidates?
- (2) What are the health problems of the preschool teacher candidates?
- (3) What are the common problems of the preschool teacher candidates in their college and family life?
- (4) What are the predictors of the common problems of the preschool teacher candidates in their college and family life?

Method

Research design

This research was a predictive correlation design looking for the multiple correlations to reveal the relative predictive power of IVs on the DVs (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, Demirel, 2012; Field, 2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Urdan, 2001). The IVs and DVs of this research are presented in Table 1 and 2 together with their descriptive values.

Sample

The sample of this study was recruited from a large-scale socio-demographic profile study which explored the socio-demographic characteristics of the ECE teacher candidates enrolled at the universities at the East and Southeast regions of Turkey. A total of 2115 students had been included in that study, and the socio-demographic characteristics were delineated in detail in another research (Unal & Kurt, 2018). All the participants had received the socio-demographic questionnaire, the PSI, and the HPSF. Among this population, there were 366 male students enrolled at the ECE programs. The same number of females were randomly selected from the data file of the socio-demographic study. As a result, a group of 366 males and 366 females composed the sample of this study. The socio-demographic characteristics and problems of the sample is described in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the IVs

| Independent Variables | Males | | Females | |
|--|----------|------------------|----------|-------------------|
| | <i>n</i> | <i>M (SD)</i> | <i>n</i> | <i>M (SD)</i> |
| Health Problems Screening Form (HPSF) | 366 | 1.98 (.53) | 366 | 2.05 (.51) |
| Family monthly income | 366 | 2062.8 (1345.33) | 366 | 2066.73 (1282.11) |
| Education of mothers | 366 | .67 (.77) | 366 | .84 (.77) |
| 0= Illiterate, literate | | | | |
| 1= Primary | | | | |
| 2= Elementary and higher | | | | |
| Education of fathers | 366 | .33 (.47) | 366 | .39 (.48) |
| 0= Illiterate, literate, primary, elementary | | | | |
| 1= High school and higher | | | | |
| Rank order of choice (1-30) | 366 | 8.49 (8.12) | 366 | 7.13 (7.33) |
| GPA (1-4) | 366 | 2.69 (.41) | 366 | 2.92 (.41) |
| Number of siblings | 366 | 4.31 (2.91) | 366 | 3.92 (2.6) |
| Grade (1-4) | 366 | 2.4 (1.10) | 366 | 2.49 (1.02) |

A closer look at Table 1 revealed that the female students were coming from slightly more advantageous families as their mothers and fathers were more educated and their number of siblings were relatively low compared to the male students. It was also apparent that the females had higher GPAs and placed their program choice in the first ranks compared to the males.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the DVs

| Dependent Variables | Males | | Females | |
|--|----------|---------------|----------|---------------|
| | <i>n</i> | <i>M (SD)</i> | <i>n</i> | <i>M (SD)</i> |
| PSI-1 Physical Learning Environment (PLE) | 366 | 3.43 (.77) | 366 | 3.5 (.66) |
| PSI-2 University / Faculty Services (UFS) | 366 | 4.01 (.76) | 366 | 3.96 (.67) |
| PSI-3 Teaching Learning Process (TLP) | 366 | 3.25 (.76) | 366 | 3.02 (.69) |
| PSI-4 Future Work Life (FWL) | 366 | 2.82 (.72) | 366 | 2.67 (.69) |
| PSI-5 Family Relationships (FR) | 366 | 2.3 (.6) | 366 | 2.15 (.68) |
| PSI-6 Social/Friendship Relationships (SFR) | 366 | 2.51 (.69) | 366 | 2.44 (.68) |
| PSI-7 Personal Perception and Emotional Condition (PPEC) | 366 | 2.94 (.78) | 366 | 3.01 (.75) |
| Problem Screening Inventory (PSI) Total | 366 | 2.97 (.42) | 366 | 2.91 (.39) |

Table 2 reveals that the means of DVs for females and males were close to each other. The problems associated with the university/faculty services (UFS) had the higher means both for males and females.

Implementation

A list of the universities in the East and Southeast regions of Turkey that have active pre-school education undergrad programs within their bodies were listed and one academic fellow from each university was contacted to explain the research purpose and the implementation of the scales. The research permission was sought from each university. The scales were hard copied and sent to the respective academic fellows by mail. The scales were implemented during the appropriate class hours in the spring semester of 2014-2015. Upon the completion of the surveys, they were sent back to the researchers by mail. Out of 2115 students, there were 366 male students in total and the same number of female students were randomly selected from this data.

Research instruments

The Problem Screening Inventory (PSI) used in this study was developed by Ersay and Yazçayır (2014) to determine the problems that the college students might have at the Turkish universities. Ersay and Yazçayır (2014) applied this survey to 563 students at the Faculty of Vocational Education at the Gazi University, Ankara and assured its validity and reliability. The respective Cronbach alphas for each subscale were varied between .65 and .78. As a result of the exploratory and conformity factor analyses, the PSI revealed seven subscales; those are presented below with a sample item.

PSI1 Physical Learning Environment (PLE) - 9 items (e.g., The technological equipment of educational environments is insufficient.),

PSI2 University/Faculty Services (UFS) - 5 items (e.g., The library services at the university is inadequate.),

PSI3 Teaching Learning Process (TLP) - 6 items (e.g., The communication of academic staff with students is insufficient.),

PSI4 Future Work Life (FWL) - 6 items (e.g., I will not be able to have desired working conditions in the future),

PSI5 Family Relationships (FR) - 8 items (e.g., My family disapproves my department at the university.),

PSI6 Social/Friendships Relationships (SFR) - 10 items (e.g., The friendships around are not honest and sincere.),

PSI7 Personal Perception and Emotional Condition (PPEC) - 10 items (e.g., My nerves are shot easily.).

These subscales constituted the DVs of this study. The PSI is rated on a five-point Likert type scale. The higher the scale score, the higher the problems perceived. In this study, the participants also received a general Health Problems Screening Form (HPSF) to reveal their general health and psychological problems. The scale was developed and sent to the first author of this study by E. Ersay (February 8, 2015). There were 20 health problems stated, and the participants were required to mark their responses on a five-point Likert type scale. Higher scores indicated higher degrees of health problems. Some of the problems presented on the scale included; headache, anemia, insomnia, oral and dental diseases, dermatologic disorders, cancer, weight problems, depression, anxiety disorder, subnutrition, and allergic diseases. Since the HPSF was a kind of health screening form without the confirmed factors, the validity studies were not undertaken for this scale. The Cronbach alpha was .83 for this scale.

In addition to the HPSF, the participants in this study received a socio-demographic questionnaire related to their family and college lives. The socio-demographic questionnaire included many variables since the questionnaire, the PSI and HPSF were applied to a universe of 2115 students for a large-scale socio-demographic profile study (Unal & Kurt, 2018). Among these socio-demographic variables, the ones that had more predictive powers on the common problems of students were chosen to include in the analysis of this study. The IVs in this study were the HPSF score, family monthly income, education level of mother and father, the rank order of preschool program choice, grade point average (GPA), number of siblings, and the grade.

Analysis

The hierarchical stepwise regression analysis (HSRA) was run to test the predictive power of the IVs on the DVs. The DVs were the seven subscales of the PSI, and each subscale was tested with a HSRA for males and females. In total, seven HSRA were run. In each HSRA, the HPSF score which had the greatest effect on the DVs was entered in the first step, and the remaining IVs were entered in a stepwise fashion at the second

step. At the second step, the stepwise procedure revealed the significant IVs according to their predictive powers.

Findings

In this section, the findings of the research questions were explained through correlations and HSRA. First, the intercorrelation matrix among the IVs was provided to clarify all the correlations among the IVs. Then, the HSRA was run for each DV.

Table 3. Intercorrelation matrix for the IVs

| Males | | | | | | | | Females | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|---------|---------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------------|--------|--------------------|-------|
| HPSI | Family income | Ed. of mothers | Ed. of fathers | Rank order of program choice | GPA | Number of siblings | Grade | HPSI | Family income | Ed. of mothers | Ed. of fathers | Rank order of program choice | GPA | Number of siblings | Grade |
| HPSI | .00 | - | - | -.02 | -.04 | .11* | - | .06 | -.05 | - | -.03 | .03 | .03 | .09* | |
| | 7 | .22** | .14** | | | | .00 | | | .09 | | | | | |
| | | * | | | | | 6 | | | * | | | | | |
| Family income | | -.27** | .27** | -.06 | -.002 | -.11* | .11 | | -.28** | .32 | -.08* | -.03 | -.09* | .04 | |
| | | * | * | | | | * | | * | *** | | | | | |
| Ed. of mothers | | | .44** | -.009 | -.03 | - | - | | | .4* | .07 | .00 | - | -.01 | |
| | | | * | | | .42** | .00 | | | ** | | .4 | .45*** | | |
| | | | | | | * | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| Ed. of fathers | | | | .05 | -.05 | - | .00 | | | - | .03 | -.07 | - | -.07 | |
| | | | | | | .41** | 8 | | | | | | | .32*** | |
| | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | |
| Rank order of program choice | | | | | -.07 | .03 | - | | | | - | -.1* | -.02 | -.09* | |
| | | | | | | | .19 | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | *** | | | | | | | | |
| GPA | | | | | | .14** | .24 | | | | | - | -.002 | .3*** | |
| | | | | | | | *** | | | | | | | | |
| N. of siblings | | | | | | | - | | | | | | - | .06 | |
| | | | | | | | .01 | | | | | | | | |
| Grade | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

The intercorrelation matrix showed that some significant relationships were detected among the IVs. However, none of the correlations were too strong to identify multicollinearity. The most significant correlations were observed between the family related IVs such as family income, education of mothers and fathers, and the number of siblings.

The following tables represented the best predictors of students' problems. Since the health problems were highly correlated with the general problems, the HPSI was introduced as the first block to the analysis, then the remaining IVs were defined at the second step, and the stepwise procedure determined the significant ones. The Durbin Watsons statistics for all the regression was close to 2, signifying that there was no autocorrelation in the sample.

Table 4. HSRA results for PSI-1 Physical Learning Environment (PLE)

| Predictors | Males | | | | | Females | | | | |
|----------------|-------|-----|---------|--------|--------------|---------|-----|---------|-------|--------------|
| | B | SE | β | R^2 | ΔR^2 | B | SE | β | R^2 | ΔR^2 |
| Step1 | | | | .04*** | .04*** | Step1 | | | .02* | .02* |
| HPSF | .3 | .07 | .21*** | | | HPSI | .19 | .06 | .14** | |
| Step 2 | | | | .07*** | .03*** | Step 2 | | | .06* | .04* |
| HPSF | .3 | .07 | .21*** | | | HPSI | .16 | .06 | .12* | |
| Grade | .13 | .03 | .18*** | | | Grade | .13 | .03 | .2** | |
| Step 3 | | | | .08* | .01* | | | | | |
| HPSF | .28 | .07 | .2*** | | | | | | | |
| Grade | .13 | .03 | .18*** | | | | | | | |
| N. of siblings | .03 | .01 | .11* | | | | | | | |

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

As indicated in Table 4., grade and number of siblings added significant variance (3% and 1%, respectively) to the male students' problems in the physical learning environment. For the female students, the grade added significant variance (4%) to the problems of the physical learning environment. The β values were positive and statistically significant which means that a positive correlation was observed between the PLE and HPSF, grade, and the number of siblings.

Table 5. HSRA results for PSI-2 University / Faculty Services (UFS)

| Predictors | Males | | | | | Females | | | | |
|---------------|-------|-----|---------|-------|--------------|---------|-----|-----|-------|--------------|
| | B | SE | β | R^2 | ΔR^2 | B | SE | B | R^2 | ΔR^2 |
| Step1 | | | | .012* | .012* | Step1 | | | .01* | .01* |
| HPSF | .15 | .07 | .1* | | | HPSI | .15 | .06 | .11* | |
| Step 2 | | | | .03** | .019** | Step 2 | | | .02* | .01* |
| HPSF | .16 | .07 | .11* | | | HPSI | .13 | .06 | .1* | |
| GPA | .25 | .09 | .13** | | | Grade | .07 | .03 | .1* | |
| Step 3 | | | | .041* | .01* | | | | | |
| HPSF | .16 | .07 | .11* | | | | | | | |
| GPA | .25 | .09 | .11** | | | | | | | |
| Family income | .00 | .00 | .1* | | | | | | | |
| Step 4 | | | | .051 | .01* | | | | | |
| HPSF | .12 | .07 | .08 | | | | | | | |
| GPA | .24 | .09 | .13* | | | | | | | |
| Family income | .00 | .00 | .13* | | | | | | | |
| Ed. of mother | -.11 | .05 | -.11* | | | | | | | |

*p<.05 **p<.01

Table 5 showed that the GPA, family income and education of mother has respectively accounted for the 2%, 1%, and 1% of the variance in problems related with the university/faculty services for male students. There was a negative relationship observed between the education of mother and the UFS for males. For female students, the grade added 1% variance to the UFS scores.

Table 6. HSRA results for PSI-3 Teaching Learning Process (TLP)

| Predictors | Males | | | | | Females | | | | |
|---------------|-------|-----|---------|--------|--------------|---------|-----|-----|-------|--------------|
| | B | SE | β | R^2 | ΔR^2 | B | SE | B | R^2 | ΔR^2 |
| Step1 | | | | .001 | .003 | Step1 | | | .01* | .01* |
| HPSF | .08 | .07 | .05 | | | HPSF | .17 | .07 | .12* | |
| Step 2 | | | | .018** | .02** | | | | | |
| HPSF | .08 | .07 | .05 | | | | | | | |
| Grade | .09 | .03 | .14** | | | | | | | |
| Step 3 | | | | .029* | .014* | | | | | |
| HPSF | .04 | .07 | .03 | | | | | | | |
| Grade | .09 | .03 | .13** | | | | | | | |
| Ed. of mother | -.11 | .05 | -.12* | | | | | | | |

*p<.05 **p<.01

While the grade and education of mother added significant variance to the problems about teaching and learning processes for male students, those problems were found to be only affected by the health concerns for female students. The education of mother and TLP scores were negatively correlated for the male students as indicated in Table 6.

Table 7. HSRA results for PSI-4 Future Work Life (FWL)

| Predictors | Males | | | | | Females | | | | |
|------------------------|-------|-----|---------|--------|--------------|---------|-----|---------|--------|--------------|
| | B | SE | β | R^2 | ΔR^2 | B | SE | β | R^2 | ΔR^2 |
| Step1 | | | | .04*** | .043*** | Step1 | | | .03*** | .03*** |
| HPSF | .28 | .07 | .2*** | | | HPSF | .25 | .06 | .19*** | |
| Step 2 | | | | .062** | .024** | Step 2 | | | .04* | .01* |
| HPSF | .28 | .06 | .21*** | | | HPSF | .24 | .06 | .18*** | |
| Rank of program choice | .01 | .00 | .15** | | | Grade | .07 | .03 | .11** | |
| Step 3 | | | | .072* | .012* | | | | | |
| HPSF | .29 | .06 | .21*** | | | | | | | |
| Rank of program choice | .01 | .00 | .16** | | | | | | | |
| GPA | .19 | .08 | .11* | | | | | | | |

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

As shown in Table 7, the rank of program choice and grade added significant variance to the problems about future work life for males and females (%2 and %1 respectively). GPA also created a significant source of variance for males (1%). The IVs were in a positive relationship with the FWL for males and females.

Table 8. HSRA results for PSI-5 Family Relationships (FR)

| Predictors | Males | | | | | Females | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-----|---------|---------|--------------|---------------|------|---------|--------|--------------|
| | B | SE | β | R^2 | ΔR^2 | B | SE | β | R^2 | ΔR^2 |
| Step 1 | | | | .118*** | .12*** | Step 1 | | | .07*** | .07*** |
| HPSF | .39 | .05 | .34*** | | | HPSF | .36 | .06 | .27*** | |
| Step2 | | | | .13** | .016** | Step2 | | | .09** | .02** |
| HPSF | .39 | .05 | .35*** | | | HPSF | .35 | .06 | .26*** | |
| Rank of program | .01 | .00 | .12** | | | Ed. of mother | -.14 | .04 | -.16** | |
| Step 3 | | | | .142* | .013* | Step 3 | | | .11* | .01* |
| HPSF | .39 | .05 | .35*** | | | HPSF | .36 | .06 | .27*** | |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-------|---------------|------|-----|-------|
| Rank of program | .00 | .00 | .12* | Ed. of mother | -.13 | .04 | -.12* |
| Family Income | - | .00 | -.11* | Family income | .000 | 0 | -.12* |

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

As it is seen in Table 8, the rank order of program choice and family income were significantly predictive on the variance of family relationships (%2 and %1 respectively) for males, whereas the education of mother and family income added variance (2% and 1%) to the problems of family relationships for females. Overall the source of biggest variance was the health problems for the males (12%) and females (7%).

Table 9. HSRA results for PSI-6 Social/Friendship Relationships (SFR)

| Predictors | Males | | | | | Females | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-----|--------|----------------|-----------------|---------|----|-----|----------------|-----------------|
| | B | SE | β | R ² | ΔR ² | B | SE | β | R ² | ΔR ² |
| Step1 | | | | .117*** | .119*** | Step1 | | | .09*** | .09*** |
| HPSF | .44 | .06 | .34*** | | | HPSF | .4 | .06 | .3*** | |
| Step 2 | | | | .126* | .011* | | | | | |
| HPSF | .44 | .06 | .34*** | | | | | | | |
| Rank of program | .00 | .00 | .1* | | | | | | | |

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Table 9 represented the IVs predictive on social/friendship relationships. As seen while the health problems were predictive for the variance for males (12%) and females (9%), the rank order of program choice appeared to explain 1% of the variance in relationships with others for males.

Table 10. HSRA results for PSI-7 Personal Perception and Emotional Condition (PPEC)

| Predictors | Males | | | | | Females | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-----|--------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|------|-----|----------------|-----------------|
| | B | SE | β | R ² | ΔR ² | B | SE | B | R ² | ΔR ² |
| Step1 | | | | .089*** | .091*** | Step1 | | | .05*** | .05*** |
| HPSF | .44 | .07 | .3*** | | | HPSF | .35 | .07 | .24*** | |
| Step 2 | | | | .101* | .014* | Step 2 | | | .06* | .01* |
| HPSF | .43 | .07 | .29*** | | | HPSF | .35 | .07 | .24*** | |
| GPA | -.22 | .09 | -.12* | | | N. of siblings | -.03 | .01 | -.12* | |
| Step 3 | | | | .111 | .012* | Step 3 | | | .07* | .01* |
| HPSF | .43 | .07 | .3*** | | | HPSF | .36 | .07 | .24*** | |
| GPA | -.21 | .09 | -.11* | | | N. of siblings | -.03 | .01 | -.12* | |
| Rank of program | .01 | .00 | .11* | | | GPA | -.2 | .09 | -.15* | |

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Table 10 showed the significant IVs predictive for personal perception and emotional condition. Accordingly, the GPA (1%) and the rank order of program choice (1%) added significant variance to the PPEC scores of males, whereas the number of siblings (1%) and GPA (1%) added variance to the PPEC scores of females.

Discussion

The statistical results revealed that the number of variables explaining the problems of male students was higher than the females. It is seen that the health problems were unquestionably effective on all kind of problems that the students would have in their college life. One of the most striking findings of this research

was to find out that the rank order of the program choice appeared as the source of problems of male students in four areas stated as; future work life, family relationships, social/friendship relations, personal perception, and emotional condition whereas this variable did not add any variance to the problems of female students. Examining the professional identity of Turkish early childhood education teachers, Doğan and Erdiller Yatmaz (2018) concluded that gender was one of the variables influential on the professional identity in Turkey. Male teachers perceived the profession as less valuable and attractive compared to their female counterparts. Rodriguez (1997) also reported that trust issues with parents and low salary levels were some disadvantages for male ECE teachers. It is apparent in this research that as the male students placed the ECE department at the last ranks for the college entrance, it resulted in more problems in college and family life. Although in some countries like the U.S., the low numbers of male preschool teachers were explained by the low levels of salary (Barnard et al., 2000), that's not the case in Turkey. While the students explained that the appointment by the state upon graduation was among the very first reasons of their program choice (Aldemir & Kurt, 2014; Unal & Kurt, 2018), the financial security would force the male students to opt for this teaching profession even they would not opt this choice wholeheartedly.

It is seen that the grade had added significant variance to the problems with the physical learning environment, university faculty services, and teaching-learning process. That finding might imply that as the students pass to the higher grades, their problems with the educational surroundings multiply. As the students proceed to the higher grades, they might encounter with more problems as the content of the undergrad curriculum would be more demanding and more subject-oriented courses had been added such as drama, art education, and practicum courses. Courses like drama, handcrafting, music would require more specialized equipment and space which are not available in all the colleges included in this study. The practice demanding nature of the curriculum would give rise to more problems in the educational settings. Besides, as the students become more competent, they would be more critical of the physical aspects and faculty services. Another explanation would be the heightened level of stress because of having centralized exams to be appointed by the state as a teacher. Most of the senior students attend to the supportive courses to be successful at the centralized exams; those courses bring extra responsibility and stress to the students' lives (Tümekaya, Aybek, & Çelik, 2007).

While the grade added significant variance to the problems about the physical environment, the number of siblings added variance to that area just for male students. As it is seen in the correlation matrices, the number of siblings were in a negative relationship with the other variables of socioeconomic wellbeing of the family. Hence, a higher number of siblings would be associated with more problems in college life for males. The GPA had added variance to the problems to the university faculty services together with the family income and education of mother for males. The GPA had also added significant variance to the male students' problems with the future work life together with the rank of program choice. As the GPA heightens, the males appeared to have more problems in those areas.

It is interesting to find out that the education of mother had added significant variance to the males' problems in the educational areas, and the females' in one area which was family relationships. It is seen that the decrease in the mothers' level of education had resulted in more problems for male students in the college life. Mothers had a profound effect on their children's lives, and more educated mothers could guide their children to get more success and satisfaction through their college and family life. While the education levels of mothers added variance to the students' problems, father education did not bring any significant variance. Interestingly, the higher family income was a source of variance giving increase to the university/faculty related problems for male students. The higher the monthly income of families, the more problematic perceptions of the university/faculty services. One could assume that a better financial situation would result in questioning the quality of their education.

Overall, the family related variables such as the number of siblings, family income, education of mother appeared to affect the males' problems related with the university and faculty life whereas those variables did not affect the female students' problems in this area. The only variable affecting female students' problems with the university and faculty appeared as the grade, as they proceed to the higher grades, that increased the number of problems perceived. For males, as they placed the choice of the ECE program at the latter ranks, that resulted in more problems with the family, peers, and personal perception. Park (2009) also found out that some personal issues such as estrangement from the nearby people including family were among the problems that male ECE teachers met in South Korea. Pirard, Schoenmaeckers, and Camus (2015) also found out that some male workers in ECE faced strict opposition from their families when they decided to enroll in the training program because of the incomprehension of the profession.

For females, the education level of mother, income, number of siblings, and GPA seemed to create variation in the social and personal wellbeing but not in the educational aspects of this research. Tezel Şahin and Sak (2016) investigated the difference in job satisfaction among female and male preschool teachers and found that female teachers' satisfaction in various areas were significantly higher than the males in Turkey. For instance, the females had more friendly and warmer relationships with each other at the ECE schools. The same could be true for the relationships with friends and staff at the university.

There was a negative relationship between the number of siblings and the problems in the area of personal perception and emotional condition for female students. Although the higher number of children in the family signifies the socioeconomically disadvantaged levels especially in the east of Turkey, this finding is quite remarkable. In the families with a higher number of children, the girls are expected to take care of their smaller ones, or they are raised by their older female ones. This situation in the family could result in more emotionally satisfying relationships between siblings and positive self-perceptions. Indeed, having a playful and satisfactory childhood in the presence of siblings could result in a healthier socio-emotional developmental span. That finding was just based on the number of siblings and the gender of participants in this research. More research with well-defined variables such as the ages and genders of siblings are needed about the personal perception and emotional condition for emerging adults.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This research aimed to find out the variables affecting the problems of preschool teacher candidates based on gender. It seems that opting for this level of teaching is not an easy decision for young adult males in Turkey because of the societal norms and beliefs associated with gender roles. Going one step further Koch and Farquhar (2015) emphasized that there were glass doors not allowing males to be represented in early childhood education equally as females. They suggested that gender equity policies such as increasing the proportion of men in the field would help. As suggested by Heikkilä and Hellman (2017), the authors also believe that the dialogue and discussion about the gender and equality in schools and society would help in coming over the gender bias and resolve the problems associated with the male teacher involvement in the early years. It's also important to keep in mind that the advancement of ECE especially in developing countries is hand in hand with the increase in the female working force. Hence it is promising that the number of studies concerning the male preschool teachers and teacher candidates is on the rise in Turkey as well as in other countries.

As cited by previous research (eg., Aldemir & Kurt, 2014; Unal & Kurt, 2018), to be placed by the government at the end of the graduation is one of the main reasons for the selection of the preschool teaching undergrad program for the teacher candidates. Hence, this tendency is justified in the developing countries wherein a secure job placement is an important concern. Those financial insecurities and concerns about the job guarantee might cause some male teacher candidates to opt for preschool teaching profession and the related problems arising out of that option. However, as observed by the authors of this study and preschool

teachers in the field, the male preschool teacher candidates are highly motivated by the successful male preschool teachers during their practicum courses. There also have been some teacher candidates witnessing that the actual preschool teaching does not comply with their personality and ability. Therefore, the authors of this study suggest that the preschool teacher candidates should carefully observe the necessities of the preschool teaching profession in the actual field, share their experiences and observations with the preschool teachers, and academic staff. Considering the demanding nature of preschool teaching, it's concluded that opting for the preschool teaching profession should not be an immediate decision, but the end of a process of observing and change during the undergrad education and actual experiences at the teaching field. Another recommendation would be providing better counseling about the common health concerns of the students. Since this sample comes from a low socio-economic background (Unal & Kurt, 2018), the students would be in need for more efficient counseling in dealing with health-related problems and their consequences. Considering the previous studies and the bigger sample depicting the low socio economic levels of students and associated problems, it's inferred that the colleges in developing countries should not only aim to educate students in specific professions but improve the students' ability to increase their life quality through providing better services both at the personal, social, and academic spheres. The health problems of students in this study were conceptualized as a whole score and evaluated as a fixed factor in the analysis, without breaking it into physical and mental factors, or into other subfactors. The future studies concerning more about the detailed analysis of health problems and their detailed effects on college life should implement other scales related with their scope of research.

The actual early childhood teacher experiences of males, their problems and ways of dealing with those problems in Turkey needs further investigation. Especially the long-term studies concerning the problem areas of male students in the profession during their college and professional lives would help to improve the training and practice of male ECE teachers. Since the data collection of this research involved a high number of participants, the researchers had only used the self-reports. Hence using individual and focused group interviews as well as the observations in the practicum settings with similar samples is suggested for further research.

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Okul Öncesi Öğretmen Adaylarının Aile ve Üniversite Hayatında Karşılaştıkları Problemler: Cinsiyete Dayalı Bir Karşılaştırma

Çalışmanın problemi ve amacı

Değişik kültürlerde yapılan araştırmalar, okul öncesi öğretmenliğinin küçük çocuklar için sevgi ve şefkat gerektirmesinden dolayı, bir kadın mesleği olarak algılandığını ortaya koymaktadır (Moosa & Bhana, 2018; Saigol & Danish, 2016; Tezel Şahin & Sak, 2016; Xu & Waniganayake, 2018). Aynı nedenden ötürü, okul öncesi eğitim ülkemizde annelerin bir görevi olarak görülmekte ve bu durum küçük çocukların okula gönderilme oranını düşürmektedir. Buna karşılık son yıllarda ülkemizde erkek okul öncesi öğretmen sayısındaki artış umut vericidir. Bununla birlikte okul öncesi öğretmenlik mesleğinin devlet tarafından istihdam sağlanan, ekonomik olarak güvenli bir meslek olarak algılanmasının da bu mesleği tercih etmekte etkili olduğu görülmektedir. Özellikle son on yıl içinde çalışmalar okul öncesi ve ilkökul kademelerinde erkek öğretmen olarak çalışmanın avantaj ve dezavantajlarına yoğunlaşmıştır. Son zamanlarda erkek okul öncesi aday öğretmen sayısının artması ve bu durumun lisans eğitiminde ve alanda yarattığı değişiklikler sonucunda bu çalışma, okul ve aile hayatında aday okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin yaşadıkları problemleri ve bunların olası nedenlerini belirlemeye yönelik olarak yapılmıştır.

Yöntem

Bu çalışmanın örneklemini, Doğu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu bölgelerindeki üniversitelerde öğrenim görmekte olan ve büyük bir sosyo demografik çalışmanın popülasyonunu oluşturan aday okul öncesi öğretmenleri oluşturmaktadır. Toplamda 2115 öğrencinin sosyo demografik yapısının belirlendiği bu çalışma Unal ve Kurt (2018) tarafından yapılmıştır. Çalışmadaki tüm öğrenciler sosyo demografik soru formu, Problem Tarama Envanteri ve Sağlık Problemleri Formu'nu doldurmuşlardır. Bu popülasyon içinde toplamda 366 erkek okul öncesi öğretmen adayı çalışmaya katılmıştır. Bu çalışmada da bu sayıya denk gelecek 366 kadın okul öncesi öğretmen adayı, sosyo demografik çalışma popülasyonundan rastgele örnekleme ile seçilmiştir. Sonuçta bu çalışmanın örneklemini 366 erkek ve 366 kadın okul öncesi öğretmen adayı oluşturmuştur.

Bu araştırma, bağımsız değişkenlerin bağımlı değişkenler ile çoklu ilişkilerini ortaya çıkarmaya çalışan bir yordayıcı ilişki desendir. Çalışmada Ersay ve Yazçayır (2014) tarafından geliştirilen Problem Tarama Envanteri kullanılmıştır. Problem Tarama Envanteri'nin 7 alt ölçeği bu çalışmanın bağımlı değişkenlerini oluşturmuştur: PTE1 Fiziksel Eğitim Ortamı; PTE2 Üniversite/Fakülte Hizmetleri; PTE3 Öğretme-Öğrenme Süreci; PTE4 Gelecek İş Yaşamı; PTE5 Aile İlişkileri; PTE6 İnsan/Arkadaşlık İlişkileri ve PTE7 Kişisel Algı ve Duygu Durumu. Bu çalışmanın bağımsız değişkenleri ise; Sağlık Problemleri Tarama Formu ortalama puanı, aile aylık geliri, anne ve babanın eğitim durumu, okul öncesi eğitimi tercih sırası, lisans not ortalaması, kardeş sayısı ve sınıf şeklindedir. Formda taranan sağlık problemlerinden bazıları; baş ağrısı, kansızlık, uykusuzluk, ağz ve diş hastalıkları, deri hastalıkları, kanser, kilo problemleri, depresyon, kaygı bozuklukları, yetersiz beslenme ve alerjik hastalıklardır. Bağımsız değişkenlerin, bağımlı değişkenler üzerindeki yordama gücünü belirlemek için basamaklı hiyerarşik regresyon analizi uygulanmıştır. Problem Tarama Envanteri'nin 7 alt boyutu için ayrı ayrı 7 adet basamaklı hiyerarşik regresyon analizi uygulanmıştır. Her bir analizde bağımlı değişken üzerinde etkisi en büyük olan Sağlık Problemleri Tarama Formu puanı ilk basamakta bağımsız değişken olarak analize katılmış ve ikinci basamakta diğer bağımsız değişkenler etki değerlerine göre analize katılmıştır.

Sonuç ve Tartışma

Sonuçta, erkek öğrencilerin problemlerinin, kadın öğrencilere kıyasla çok daha çeşitli değişkenlerden etkilendiği bulunmuştur. Bu çalışmanın en çarpıcı bulgularından biri, okul öncesi öğretmenliği programını

tercih sırasının erkek öğretmenlerin dört ana alanda problemlerinin kaynağı olarak bulunmasıdır. Bu alanlar, gelecek iş yaşamı, aile ilişkileri, insan/arkadaşlık ilişkileri, kişisel algı ve duygu durumudur. Okul öncesi öğretmenliğini tercih sırası ise, kadın öğrencilerin problemleri ile ilişkili bulunmamıştır. Benzer örneklerle yapılan çalışmalarda (ör., Aldemir ve Kurt, 2014; Ünal ve Kurt, 2018), okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin programı tercih sebeplerinin başında devlet tarafından atanma garantisi gösterilmiştir. Bu sonuçlar birlikte düşünüldüğünde, okul öncesi öğretmenliğinin atanma olasılığının ve ekonomik garantisinin yüksek olarak algılanmasının, erkek öğrencilerin tercihinde bir rolü olduğu düşünülebilir.

Çalışmanın ilgi çekici bulgularından biri anne eğitim düzeyinin, erkeklerin eğitimsel alandaki problemlerine, kadınların ise yalnızca aile ilişkilerine etki etmesidir. Anne eğitim seviyesindeki düşüş, erkek öğrenciler için üniversite yaşamında algılanan problemlerin artmasına yol açmaktadır. Annelerin çocuklarının hayatlarındaki etkisi büyüktür. Yüksek anne eğitim düzeyi, çocukların akademik ve aile hayatlarında annelerinden daha iyi rehberlik almalarına ve bu alanlarda algılanan problemlerin azalmasına yardımcı olabilir. Anne eğitim düzeyi, öğrencilerin algıladıkları problem düzeyini değiştirirken, baba eğitim düzeyi etkili bulunmamıştır. Bunun yanında, artan aile aylık geliri erkekler için üniversite/fakülte boyutunda daha çok problemle ilişkili bulunmuştur. Bu noktada, artan gelirin eğitimsel anlamda daha çok sorgulama ve algılanan problemlerin artışıyla ilişkili olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Genel olarak, kardeş sayısı, aile geliri, anne eğitim düzeyi gibi aile ile ilgili değişkenler, erkeklerin üniversite ve fakülte yaşamıyla ilgili problemlerle ilişkili bulunurken, aynı değişkenler kadınların üniversite ve fakülte yaşamıyla ilgili problemlerle ilişkili bulunmamıştır. Kadın öğrencilerin üniversite ve fakülte hayatındaki problemleriyle ilişkili bulunan tek değişken sınıf olmuştur. Kadın öğrencilerin okudukları sınıf kademesi yükseldikçe, algıladıkları problemler artmıştır. Okul öncesi öğretmenliği lisans programında sınıf kademesi yükseldikçe, drama, sanat eğitimi ve uygulama gerektiren derslerin sayısı artmaktadır. Bu dersler uygulama anlamında daha çok para, emek ve zaman gerektirdiğinden, öğrenciler tarafından daha fazla problem kaynağı olarak görülebilir. Bunun yanında, öğretmenlik eğitiminde üst sınıflara ilerlemek aynı zamanda istihdam ve sınav kaygısı ve KPSS kursları için fazladan emek ve zaman ayırma gibi sorunları da beraberinde getirmektedir.

Öneriler

Erkek okul öncesi öğretmen adaylarının alan deneyimleri, problemleri ve bu problemlerle başa çıkma stratejileri daha çok araştırılması gereken konular olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Özellikle okul öncesi öğretmen adaylarının lisans eğitimi sırasında ve sonrasında öğretmen olarak karşılaştıkları problemlerin boylamsal olarak çalışılmasının, alanda çalışan ya da çalışmayı düşünen erkek okul öncesi öğretmenleri için katkı sağlayıcı olacağı düşünülmektedir. Çalışmada, öğrencilerin sağlık sorunlarının üniversite ve aile ile ilgili problemlere direk etkisi gözetildiğinde, özellikle de düşük sosyo ekonomik düzeye sahip öğrenci örneklemini için sağlık alanında daha fazla rehberlik ve yönlendirme hizmetlerinin verilmesi gerektiği açıktır. Diğer gelişmekte olan ülkelerdeki gibi, öğretmen adayları için üniversite eğitimi yalnızca akademik içeriğe bağlı kalmamalı aynı zamanda bu genç yetişkin nüfusun kişisel, sosyal ve akademik alanda daha yetkin yetiştirilmesine olanak sağlamalıdır. Bu çalışmanın katılımcı sayısı nicel bir araştırma modeline uygun olduğundan, veriler istatistiksel analizlerle değerlendirilmiştir. İlerideki çalışmalar, bireysel ve grup mülakatları, alan gözlemleri gibi niteliksel ve çalışma grubuna özgü verileri kullanabilir.

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