Competencies of Music Teacher Candidates Taking Pedagogical Formation Training

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed by using both quantitative and qualitative study methods. This study has employed "criterion sampling method", one of the purposive sampling methods. The participants in the study consisted of 21 teacher candidates taking pedagogical formation training at Education Faculty at a university located in Mediterranean region of Turkey during spring semester of 2015-2016 academic year. A "Personal Information Form", "Music Education Specific Area Competency Questionnaire "and "performance indicators form" developed by the researcher were used as data collection tools. Based on the study results, it was determined that the teacher candidates considered themselves competent in specific areas. An evaluation of competencies associated with the teaching and learning process showed that prospective teachers were poorly qualified in planning the course, material preparation and organization of learning environments.

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Introduction

The teacher is a fundamental part of the teaching and learning process. According to MEB (2008), teacher is the person who constantly interacts with students, implements the curriculum, manages the teaching process, and evaluates both students and the teaching process.

Teacher's skills are a significant element that effect the quality of teaching and education. For teachers who practice professionally, the standards that have to be taken into consideration in the fulfillment of responsibilities as an instructor and the level of implementation of such standards, are particularly important (Gordon, 2013). Teacher's competencies are defined as, "the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that should be possessed in order to practice the teaching profession in an effective and efficient manner" (MEB, 2008).

In general, the training to provide the necessary teaching competencies to those who will not become a teacher is called "pre-service training", and the aim of this training is to prepare prospective teachers to the profession of teaching. Today, within the framework of the Turkish educational system (YÖK, 1998), faculties of education are the institutions responsible for the training of teachers . For this purpose, the curricula of faculties of education include courses on liberal education, content knowledge, and information and skills related to pedagogical formation.

Pedagogical formation training can be considered as teacher training programs authorized by the Council of Higher Education to enable graduates of faculties other than those of education to become teachers. This program involves providing pedagogical training for individuals who are already trained in

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particular fields so as to upskill them on how to teach their own fields. In this program, prospective teachers complete 10 courses, including Introduction to Educational Sciences, Development Psychology, Theories and Perspectives on Learning and Teaching, Curriculum Development and Teaching, Class Management, Guidance, Assessment and Evaluation, Teaching Technologies and Material Design, Special Teaching Methods, and Teaching Practice. One may consider this as a rather short (2 semesters) program in comparison to the period of study of students in faculties of education.

In the appointment process of music teachers, not only graduates of the department of music education, but also the graduates of other music departments who completed the pedagogical formation training are allowed to apply for vacant positions. In addition to content knowledge, prospective music teachers should also have the formation required by the teaching profession.

In order to improve the proficiencies that teachers need to possess to provide education services that satisfy the requirements of the time and the society's expectations, the Department of Teacher Training of MEB has conducted studies to identify general and specific field competencies, and to improve teaching competencies. According to MEB (2008) in these endeavours, the competencies, including knowledge, skills and attitudes that teachers should possess to improve themselves in their own fields, have been evaluated under the following two headings: a. General Competencies of the Teaching Profession (six main competencies including personal and professional values, professional development, familiarization with students, the teaching and learning process, monitoring and evaluation of learning and development, the relations between school, family and the society, and program and content information, as well as 31 sub-competencies related to these competencies, were identified), and b. Field-Specific Competencies.

In addition to main factors such as the student, teaching tools, and the curriculum, which play an effective role in the quality of music education, another significant factor is the music teacher herself who conducts the education (Sun, 1996). Studies on teacher competencies suggest that they significantly affect student success (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Rockoff, 2003; Goe and Stickler, 2008).

Thus, this study aims to identify and evaluate the state of competencies in the particular field and the learning-teaching processes of prospective music teachers who graduated from conservatory and have not received any pedagogical formation training on the field during their undergraduate education.

Specific Area Competencies of Music Teachers

In order to standardize the general qualifications that teachers must possess, the Ministry of National Education and the "Commission of Teacher Competencies," formed by representatives from higher education institutions, have designated a set of specific area competencies for music teachers. These specific area competencies consist of 32 competencies organized under 6 competency areas, and of 172 performance indicators associated with these competencies. The competency areas and sub-divisions that are considered within the scope of this study are listed below:

•**Planning and organization.** Includes the planning of music education; the ability to use methods and techniques that are part of music programs; the organization of environments suitable for the purposes of music education; the preparation of educational materials; and the ability to benefit from and make use of various sources (MEB, 2008).

•**Theoretical and practical knowledge and skills.** Includes the use of methods and techniques that are part of educational programs (and which are used for the conveying of information fundamental to music courses); activities regarding the musical hearing and literacy of students; the formation of sound by humans and instruments; the proper use of sounds; the preparation of musical works in accordance with the content of courses and the level of students; composition; improvisation; organization; adaptation; playing; singing; creative activities; and utilization of available objects and items as music instruments (MEB, 2008).

•**Music culture.** Includes the presentation of national music and international music; the acquisition of a general taste for music by listening to different music types; activities that provide students the opportunity to express themselves through the interpretation of the music they listen to; the interaction of students with musical environments; the study of Ataturk's thoughts concerning music; the recognition of

songs, folk songs and marches regarding Atatürk; and the consideration of students with special needs who require special education during the teaching of music culture (MEB, 2008).

•**Monitoring and evaluation.** Includes the monitoring and evaluation of students' development during music education (MEB, 2008).

•**Cooperation between school, family and community, and interdisciplinary cooperation.** Includes cooperation with families to support music education; measures for ensuring that social leadership becomes central to the culture and learning activities of the school; practices related to school ceremonies and organizations; and the association of music arts and music education with other disciplines (MEB, 2008).

•**Ensuring professional development.** Includes the teachers' tracking, monitoring, and evaluation of developments in music arts and music education, and activities related to the professional development of teachers during music education (MEB, 2008).

This study attempted to identify and evaluate the specific area and learning -teaching competencies of music teacher candidates taking pedagogical formation training. As such, answers were sought to the following questions:

•What is the competence level of teacher candidates in the area of planning and organization?

•What is the competence level of teacher candidates in the area of theoretical and practical knowledge and skills?

•What is the competence level of teacher candidates in the area of monitoring and evaluation?

•What is the competence level of teacher candidates in the area of cooperation between school, family and community, and interdisciplinary cooperation?

•What is the competence level of teacher candidates in the area of professional development?

•What is the competence level of teacher candidates in the area of learning and teaching process (planning the lesson, preparation of materials and organizing learning environments)?

Method

The study was designed by using both quantitative and qualitative study methods. "Mixed method focuses on collecting, analysing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p.5). This study has employed "criterion sampling method", one of the purposive sampling methods. According to (Patton, 1990, p. 169), "the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting in formation-rich cases for study in depth".

Participants

Participants of the research is consists of teacher candidates taking pedagogical formation training at Education Faculty at a university located in Mediterranean region of Turkey during spring semester of 2015-2016 academic year. Teacher candidates to be included into the study were selected among fourth-year and graduated Conservatory students who had completed their education on music. Demographic information about the participants is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic information regarding the music teacher candidates

Characteristics		N	%
Gender	Female	10	47.6
	Male	11	52.4
	Total	21	100
Academic Grade Average	1.75-2.50	17	81.0
	2.51-3.00	2	9.5
	3.01-4.00	2	9.5
	Total	21	100

Data Collection Tools

In this study, a "Personal Information Form", "Music Education Specific Area Competency Questionnaire" and "Performance Indicators Evaluation Form" developed by the researcher were used as data collection tools.

Personal information form. In order to collect data on variables such as the students' gender and the academic grade average, a personal information form developed by the researcher was used during the study.

Music education specific area competency questionnaire. The Music Education Specific Area Competency Questionnaire was developed through the adaptation of the Music Teacher Specific Area Competencies determined by the Ministry of National Education (MEB) into questionnaire items by the researcher. Expert opinions were taken to determine the validity of the questionnaire, a pilot study was made for reliability, and the survey questions were rearranged in the form of feedback from the students and finalized. "Pilot study is a phase in which the validity and reliability of the questionnaire are questioned on an observational basis. The pilot study application to be made on a group that has similar features to the target mass of the researcher who has the preliminary designation to identify the problems in the form of the questionnaire is a crucial step in obtaining valid and reliable results "(Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2009, p.136). In addition, to determine the reliability of the questionnaire used, the Cronbach Alpha method was used and the reliability coefficient α = 0.93. According to this result, it is determined that the data collection tool used is highly valid and reliable.

The specific area competency questionnaire was designed according to a 5 point Likert-type scale. The relevant categories were: "Strongly disagree (1)", "Disagree (2)", "Uncertain (3)", "Agree (4)", "Strongly agree (5)".

Performance indicators evaluation form. Performance Indicators Evaluation Form was developed through the adaptation of the Generic Teacher Competencies determined by the Ministry of National Education (MEB) into items by the researcher. For the validity and reliability of the observation form the opinions of three music education and measurement-evaluation researchers in the field was taken. It was designed according to a 3 point Likert-type scale. The relevant categories were: "Incompetent (1)", "Less competent (2)", "Competent (3)".

Procedure

By giving the teacher candidates subjects contained in the primary school music teaching program, they have been asked to draw up a 30-minute lesson plan about this subject. They shared the lesson plans and implementation activities with the lecturer and they prepared the lesson plan based on the feedback they have received. While teacher candidates doing presentation, the fellow prospective teachers have taken the role of students in the classroom. The researcher has assumed the role of participant observer. Course narration by students has been recorded by camera. Evaluation of the lessons have been made together in the classroom, and lecturer has provided suggestions and feedbacks. The personal information form and the questionnaire prepared by the researcher were applied, by obtaining teacher candidates opinions regarding the procedure. The video recordings of teacher candidates were evaluated by the researcher with the performance indicators. The data were examined separately by three field experts and evaluated as "opinion association" and have been identified. The reliability of the coding made using the reliability formula proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994,) was calculated [Reliability = Opinion Union / (Opinion Union + Opinion Separation)]. It is necessary to reach a reliability percentage of at least 70% in cases where more than one researchers work together in data analysis (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). The average of the inter-coder reliability values calculated for all competencies is .90.

Data Analysis

The SPSS statistical package program was used for the analysis of the data. The results were statistically expressed by using frequency (f), percentage (%), arithmetic mean, and standard deviation values. As for determining how pre-service teachers used abilities with respect to the process, micro teaching practices were performed in a classroom environment and recorded on camera. In evaluating the recorded

data, the performance indicators pertaining to the learning and teaching process were determined by two experts and a validity study was performed, by taking expert opinion. "Opinion association" have been identified. The reliability of the coding made using the reliability formula proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994,) was calculated [Reliability = Opinion Union / (Opinion Union + Opinion Separation)]. It is necessary to reach a reliability percentage of at least 70% in cases where more than one researchers work together in data analysis (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). The aims and goals of the course were taken into consideration while determining performance indicators.

Findings

In first section, the results obtained from questionnaires prepared in accordance to the areas determined by the MEB (2008) for identifying self-perception regarding specific area competencies among teacher candidates (planning and organization; theoretical and practical knowledge and skills; music culture; monitoring and evaluation; cooperation between school, family and community, and interdisciplinary cooperation; and professional development) were organized within the context of descriptive analyses, and presented in the tables below.

In second section, the competency of pre-service teachers' regarding the learning-teaching process results evaluated by the researcher with the performance indicators and were organized and presented in the tables 8,9 and 10.

Table 2. Teacher candidates'competencies regarding planning and organizing

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	$\overline{\mathrm{X}}$	Sd
I believe that I can perform the necessary planning and organization for music education.	F 4	16	1	-	-	4.14	.478
	%19.0	76.2	4.8	-	-		
I do not have the necessary competence for making use of the active methods and techniques that are part of education programs.	F 2	5	7	7	-	3.09	.995
	%9.5	23.8	33.3	33.3	-		
I believe that I can organize educational environments suitable for music education.	F 3	13	5	-	-	3.90	.624
	%14.3	61.9	23.8	-	-		
I believe that I possess the necessary competence for using the appropriate materials and resources for music education.	F 8	10	1	1	1	4.09	1.044
	%38.1	47.6	1.8	1.8	1.8		
I believe that I possess the necessary competence for using technological resources.	F 8	10	2	1	-	4.19	.813
	%38.1	47.6	9.5	4.8	-		
I am not capable of devising plans and procedures for studying theoretical knowledge and skills that take into consideration students with special needs who require special education.	F -	-	7	12	2	2.23	.624
	% -	-	33.3	57.1	9.5		

Music teacher candidates' competence in the area of "planning and organization" in Table 2 demonstrates that the large majority (95.2%) who responded "strongly agree" and "agree" described that they could perform the necessary planning and organizations for music education. These teacher candidates also expressed that they had the necessary competence for making use of active methods and techniques that are part of education programs (33.3%), to make use of the appropriate materials and sources for music education (85.7%), to make use of technological resources (94.8%), to organize environments suitable for

music education (85.7%), and to devise plans and procedures for studying theoretical knowledge and skills that take into consideration students with special needs who require special education (66.6%). The fact that the general mean for this area was 3.60 (which corresponds to the "I agree" option) indicated that the teacher candidates perceived themselves as being competent in the area of planning and organization for music education.

Table 3. Teacher candidates' competencies regarding theoretical and practical knowledge and skills

Items		Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	$\overline{X}$	Sd
I can effectively use the methods and techniques that are part of the program when conveying information that forms the basis of music courses.	F	2	17	2	-	-	4.00	.447
	%	9.5	81.0	9.5	-	-		
I cannot successfully develop the hearing skills of students.	F	-	1	1	18	1	2.09	.538
	%	-	4.8	4.8	85.7	4.8		
I can ensure that students learn about instruments and the formation of sounds.	F	4	15	1	1	-	4.04	.669
	%	19.0	71.4	4.8	4.8	-		
I can ensure that students use their own voice and instruments correctly, clearly, and effectively.	F	3	15	3	-	-	4.00	.547
	%	14.3	71.4	14.3	-	-		
I can ensure that students develop a good repertoire consisting of national and international musical works.	F	10	11	-	-	-	4.47	.511
	%	47.6	52.4	-	-	-		
I can ensure that students recognize various singing and instrument groups, and also become able to take part in these groups.	F	2	16	2	-	1	3.85	.792
	%	9.5	76.2	9.5	-	4.8		
I can ensure that students can compose polyphonic music.	F	3	5	12	1	-	3.47	.813
	%	14.3	23.8	57.1	4.8	-		
I can ensure that students create their own songs through the inspiration they acquire from their own environment and culture.	F	3	12	6	-	-	3.85	.654
	%	14.3	57.1	28.6	-	4.8		
I can ensure that students benefit from the available tools and items during music education.	F	11	10	-	-	-	4.52	.511
	%	52.4	47.6	-	-	-		

In Table 3, the item with the highest frequency (f=21) of "strongly agree" and "agree" responses in the area of "theoretical and practical knowledge and skills" was the statement, "I can ensure that students develop a good repertoire consisting of national and international musical works," and "I can ensure that students benefit from the available tools and items during music education" while the item with the lowest frequency (f=8) of "strongly agree" and "agree" responses was the statement, "I can ensure that students compose polyphonic music." The fact that the general mean for this area was 3.81 (which corresponds to the "I agree" option) indicated that the teacher candidates perceived themselves as being competent in the area of theoretical and practical knowledge and skills.

Table 4. Teacher candidates' competencies regarding music culture

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	$\overline{X}$	Sd
I can ensure that students recognize national and international music.	F 7	10	3	-	1	4.04	.973
	33.3%	47.6	14.3	-	4.8		
I believe that the students' environment can contribute to their ability to recognize music, and also to benefit from their musical environment.	F 10	11	-	-	-	4.47	.511
	47.6%	52.4	-	-	-		
I believe that I can instill the habit and listening to music among students by allowing them to appreciate quality in music.	F 6	10	5	-	-	4.04	.740
	28.6%	47.6	23.8	-	.-		
I believe that I can conduct activities related to musical culture that take into consideration students with special needs who require special education.	F 2	9	9	-	1	3.52	.872
	9.5%	42.9	42.9	-	4.8		

In Table 4, the item with the highest frequency (f= 21) of "strongly agree" and "agree" responses in the area of musical culture was the statement, "I believe that the students' environment can contribute to their ability to recognize music, and also to benefit from their musical environment." On the other hand, the item with the lowest frequency (f=11) of "strongly agree" and "agree" responses was the statement, "I believe that I can conduct activities related to musical culture that take into consideration students with special needs who require special education." The fact that the general mean for this area was 4.01 (which corresponds to the "I agree" option) indicated that the teacher candidates perceived themselves as being competent in the area of musical culture.

Table 5. Teacher candidates' competencies regarding monitoring and evaluation

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	$\overline{X}$	Sd
I do not believe that I am competent in interpreting the results of assessments performed to determine the musical development of students, and also in providing the necessary feedback to the students.	F 3	9	6	3	-	3.57	.925
	14.3%	42.9	28.6	14.3	-		
I believe that I can reflect the results of assessments and evaluations on the musical development of students onto my own educational practices.	F 7	8	5	-	1	3.95	1.02
	33.3%	38.1	23.8	-	4.8		
I believe that I am capable of effectively determining the goals of assessments and evaluations that I will perform regarding music education.	F 8	12	-	1	-	4.28	.717
	38.1%	57.1	-	4.8	-		
I do not believe that I will be capable of using assessment and evaluation tools and methods in music education.	F 2	10	8	-	1	3.57	.870
	9.5%	47.6	38.1	-	4.8		

In Table 5, it can be seen that teacher candidates considered themselves as competent both in determining the goals of assessments and evaluations that I will perform regarding music education, and in reflecting the results of assessments and evaluations on the musical development of students onto my own educational practices.; on the other hand, 57.1% considered themselves as inadequate in" interpreting the results of assessments performed to determine the musical development of students, and also in providing

the necessary feedback to the students" and using assessment and evaluation tools and methods in music education .

Table 6. Teacher candidates' competencies regarding cooperation between school, family and community, and interdisciplinary coordination

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	$\overline{X}$	Sd
I believe that it is possible to cooperate with families to ensure the development of students' musical skills.	F 8	13	-	-	-	4.38	.497
	38.1%	61.9	-	-	-		
I can ensure that students understand the meaning and significance of national feasts and ceremonies, and also ensure that they actively participate in these ceremonies.	F 4	14	3	-	-	4.04	.589
	19.0%	66.7	14.3	-	-		
I do not believe that I can manage and organize activities related to national feasts and ceremonies.	F -	-	-	17	4	1.80	.402
	- %	-	-	81.0	19.0		
I do not believe that I can associate music education and music art with other disciplines.	F -	-	3	13	5	1.90	.624
	- %	-	14.3	61.9	23.8		

In Table 6, teacher candidates' competence in the area of "cooperation between school, family and community, and interdisciplinary cooperation" showed that a large majority considered themselves capable of cooperating with families to ensure the development of students' musical skills (f=21); of ensuring that students understand the meaning and importance of national feasts and ceremonies, while also ensuring their active participation in these ceremonies (f=18); of managing and organizing activities related to a national feasts and ceremonies (f=21); and of associating music education and music art with other disciplines (f=18).

Table 7. Teacher candidates' competencies regarding their professional development

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	$\overline{X}$	Sd
I believe that I can follow and keep track of developments in music and music education.	F 8	13	-	-	-	4.38	.497
	38.1%	61.9	-	-	-		
I do not consider myself competent regarding the implementation of activities associated with professional development during music education.	F -	-	1	14	6	1.76	.538
	-%	-	4.8	66.7	28.6		

Table 7 shows that the large majority of teacher candidates considered themselves capable of following the developments in music and music education (f=21), and of implementing necessary activities for their professional development during their music education.

Competency of pre-service teachers' regarding the learning-teaching process

Table 8. Planning the lesson

Performance Indicators	Competent	Less competent	Incompetent	$\overline{X}$	Comment
	f-%	f- %	f-%		
Prepares a student-centred lesson plan	7/33.3	13/61.9	1/4.8	2.28	**Less competent**
Identifies objectives and attainments in the lesson plan.	19/90.5	1/4.8	1/4.8	2.85	Competent
Identifies activities for the objectives in the lesson plan.	7/33.3	14/66.7	-	2.33	Competent
Identifies methods and techniques for the objectives in the lesson plan.	11/52.4	10/47.6	-	2.52	Competent
Identifies sources and materials to be used in the lesson plan.	15/71.4	6/28.6	-	2.71	Competent
Mentions about how to use information and communication technologies in the lesson plan.	-	12/57.1	9/42.9	1.57	**Incompetent**
Identifies monitoring and evaluation activities in the lesson plan.	1/4.8	20/95.2	-	2.04	**Less competent**

In Table 8, it is seen that music teacher candidates are found to be less competent in "preparing student-centred lesson plan materials, "identifiying monitoring and evaluation activities in the lesson plan" and incompetent in "mentioning about how to use information and communication technologies in the lesson plan".

Table 9. Preparation of materials

Performance Indicators	Competent	Less competent	Incompetent	$\overline{X}$	Comment
	f-%	f- %	f-%		
Takes into account the individual differences while preparing and selecting materials	-	11/52.4	10/47.6	1.52	**Incompetent**
Makes use of computers and other technological means for preparation of materials	18/85.7	3/14.3	-	2.85	Competent
Takes into account student comments while preparing materials in the teaching-learning process.	-	8/38.1	13/61.9	1.38	**Incompetent**
Tries to prepare handy and economical materials.	19/90.5	2/9.5	-	2.90	Competent
Tries to prepare materials in accordance with the learning content.	6/28.6	7/33.3	8/38.1	1.90	**Less competent**
Benefits from environmental facilities in preparation of materials.	14/66.7	7/33.3	-	2.66	Competent
Tries to ensure that the material facilitates presentation of contents.	8/38.1	13/61.9	-	2.38	Competent

Table 9 shows that teacher candidates are found to be less competent in "preparing materials in accordance with the learning content" and incompetent in "taking into account the individual differences while preparing and selecting materials" and "taking into account student comments while preparing materials in the teaching-learning process".

Table 10. Organising learning environments

Performance Indicators	Competent	Less Competent	Incompetent	$\overline{X}$	Comment
	f-%	f- %	f-%		
Takes into account different past experiences of students while organising learning environments .	-	13/61.9	8/38.1	1.61	**Less competent**
Organises learning environments according to types of activities (individual, cooperative and etc.).	7/33.3	11/52.4	3/14.3	2.19	**Less competent**
Provides good physical conditions (temperature, light, sound and etc.) for the learning environment so as to support learning.	20/95.2	1/4.8	-	2.95	Competent
Considers principles of use for materials while organising learning environments	9/42.9	8/38.1	4/19.0	2.23	**Less competent**
Constitutes a model for efficient use of technological sources and teaches how to use them.	9/42.9	12/57.1	-	2.42	Competent
Organises learning environment so as to have a positive influence on aesthetic sensitivity of students	-	21	-	2.00	**Less competent**

When Table 10 is examined, it is seen that teacher candidates are found to be competent only in "providing good physical conditions (temperature, light, sound and etc.) for the learning environment so as to support learning" and "constituting a model for efficient use of technological sources and teaches how to use them". In the other performance indicators they are found to be less competent.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study attempted to identify and evaluate the specific area and learning -teaching competencies of music teacher candidates taking pedagogical formation training. According to the findings of the study, music teacher candidates perceive themselves qualified in terms of planning and organization, theoretical and practical knowledge and skills, music culture, cooperation between school, family and society and between different disciplines, and professional development, whereas they consider themselves unqualified in terms of sub-dimensions of certain specific field competencies such as identification of the purposes of assessment and evaluation practices related to music teaching, and assessment and evaluation of musical development of students. The results of the study are similar to the results obtained in the study conducted by Koca (2013). The above mentioned study also suggests that prospective teachers have a high level of perception of specific field competencies.

Several findings indicate that there are significant differences between teachers who fulfill the requirements of the teaching profession and teachers who do not possess the minimum required competencies, thus who fail to fulfill the requirements of the profession, and that teachers' fulfillment of the requirements of the profession have a direct effect on student success (Haycock, 1998). It may be suggested that the finding of the study indicating a high level of perception of field-specific competencies reflects professional self-confidence. One may presume that prospective teachers would achieve success in their professional lives by the same token.

A comparison of teacher competencies at national and international levels shows that the fundamental factor in student success is the teacher's ability to effectively organize the learning and teaching process rather than his/her theoretical knowledge (World Bank, 2005). An evaluation of competencies associated with the teaching and learning process through a performance indicators observation form prepared by the researcher showed that prospective teachers were poorly qualified in planning the course, material preparation and organization of learning environments. Based on the consideration that this may be a result of the fact that prospective teachers predominantly take theoretical courses, it is suggested that applied

courses should be given more weight, particularly in pedagogical formation training, and relevant arrangements should be made in this respect.

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