

Analysis of the Relationship between Physical Education Teacher Candidates' Academic Life Satisfaction and Their Beliefs in Teaching Profession: A Study on Physical Education and Sports Teachers (Sample of the Mediterranean Region)

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Abstract

In this study, it was aimed to examine the relationship between physical education and sports teacher candidates' academic life satisfaction and their beliefs in the teaching profession. The population of the research consisted of 1482 physical education and sports teacher candidates studying in the Mediterranean region. The sample group consisted of 318 teacher candidates who participated in the study in this universe. Volunteers were asked to fill in the personal information form, the academic life satisfaction and professional belief scales. It was decided to apply non-parametric tests in the statistical analysis of the data obtained. Spearman correlation analysis was applied to reveal the relationships between the scores obtained from the scales. As a result; it was determined that the academic life satisfaction levels of the teacher candidates were above the average, and the average of the scores they got from the total professional belief scale and the sub-headings of the scale were found to be high. It was found that there is a moderate relationship between academic life satisfaction and professional beliefs. It is thought that the results of the present study are due to the fact that physical education and sports teacher candidates learn the sportive knowledge and skills that may be necessary in their future profession, theoretically and practically, at the highest efficiency level in the undergraduate programs they study, and that they can actively apply this knowledge and skills in the field with different internship applications.

Keywords: Physical education and sports, Academic life satisfaction, Professional belief

1. Introduction

Education and training is a system that is carried out around the world together with stakeholders. There are individuals and institutions in this system. First of all, students and teachers are the most important elements of this system. Teachers are the most important element of education so that it can be more qualified, continuous and widespread (Gençer, 2002). The pedagogical knowledge and skill levels, personal characteristics, professional beliefs and competencies that teachers should have in the education system are considered extremely important in terms of continuity in the profession and student development as they are the main parts of the education system. The physical education teacher, who is in the education system and trained himself in the field and are at a professional level, should have the necessary knowledge and skills, professional performance and the necessary understanding in terms of professional belief in order to fulfill his duties and responsibilities in terms of his field of work (Ünlü, 2008). Teaching profession has an important key role in reaching the goal of education in terms of its duties and responsibilities. While teachers are in the position of pre-professional individuals, they may experience positive or negative feelings of satisfaction in terms of work, family, economy and health, and their satisfaction in these areas may affect their quality of life and productivity. In addition, it is known that there are studies that show that the satisfaction, self-esteem (Hawi & Samaha, 2017), psychological resilience (Ülker Tümlü & Reçepoğlu, 2013) and life goals (Olcara et al., 2019) of teachers as individuals before entering the profession affect their academic success, self-efficacy and stress levels (Antaramian, 2017). In other words, they take their satisfaction from different areas of life into account in order to comprehend their life satisfaction values as an individual. Happiness in the fields of life in terms of occupation, health and economy are freely effective in predicting life satisfaction in general (Ilies et al., 2018).

It is known that the number of studies on academic life satisfaction, which is accepted as a special area in life, is in the minority, as there are studies that examine people's satisfaction with their entire lives with different variables. However, the life experiences of teacher candidates in the university are seen as a complex structure that shows the quality of adaptation to academic life. In addition to all these, it is known that academic life satisfaction includes positive emotions and attitudes of teacher candidates towards learning activities (Nogueira et al., 2019). In the literature limited to academic life satisfaction, it is observed that teacher candidates' academic life satisfaction is negatively related to academic procrastination, academic performance, negative belief, and negative affect while it is stated that it is positively related to positive affect and self-regulation skills (Balkis, 2013; Balkis & Duru, 2016; Balkis & Duru, 2017). It seems likely that physical education teacher candidates can achieve their goals in life, spend their university education years productively, and have an academic life. In the light of all these developmental features and information, it is seen that there are limited studies in the literature that reveal the relationship between teacher candidates' academic life satisfaction in terms of different psychological variables. In addition, in the literature review, there are studies reporting that prospective teachers' beliefs and motivations to start their profession vary by considering the geographical characteristics

of different countries (Su et al., 2001; Wong et al., 2014). However, no study has been found that examines the relationship between physical education and sports teacher candidates' academic life satisfaction and their beliefs in the teaching profession. In this study, it was aimed to examine the relationship between physical education and sports teacher candidates' academic life satisfaction and their beliefs in the teaching profession.

2. Method

2.1 Research Model

In the research, the correlational survey model was used in the descriptive survey method, which is included in the general survey method (Karasar, 2012).

2.2 Forming Volunteer Groups

The population of the research consisted of 1482 physical education and sports teacher candidates studying in the physical education and sports teaching department of the sports sciences faculties of the state universities within the higher education institution in the Mediterranean region. The sample group consisted of 318 teacher candidates who participated in the study in this universe.

Table 1. Demographic features of the participants

	Variables	N	%
Gender	Female	156	49.1
	Male	162	50.9
Age	18-20	171	53.8
	21-23	131	41.2
	24+	16	5.0
Weekly study time	0-5	213	67.0
	6-10	77	24.2
	11+	28	8.8
Place of residence	Homestay	70	22.0
	Dormitory	121	38.1
	Apart and Other	127	39.9

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that according to gender, 49.1% of the participants are female, 50.9% are male; according to age groups, 53.8% are 18-20, 41.2% are 21-23, 5% are 24 and more; according to the weekly study hours, 67% of them study 0-5 hours, 24.2%

study 6-10 hours, 8.8% study 11 hours or more, and according to the place of residence, 22% of them stay near their families, 38.1% stay in dormitories, 39.9% stay in apartments and other.

2.3 Data Collection Tools

Volunteers participating in the research were asked to fill in the personal information form prepared by the researcher and the academic life satisfaction and professional belief scales found in the literature. The data collection process was carried out from the form application section of the search engine on the internet.

2.3.1 Academic Life Satisfaction Scale

The Academic Life Satisfaction Scale was developed by Nogueira et al. (2019) in order to determine the satisfaction of individuals from their academic life. The items were created in a 5-point Likert order between “1” strongly disagree and “5” strongly agree, and the scale consists of a total of 8 items, including the sub-dimensions of personal satisfaction and satisfaction with the academic environment. As a result of the reliability analysis of the scale adapted to Turkish, it was found that the internal consistency coefficient for the personal satisfaction dimension was .78, for the academic environment satisfaction sub-dimension was .73, and for the overall scale was .82 (Odacı et al., 2021).

2.3.2 Professional Belief Scale

The scale developed by Fan et al. (2018) was developed in English in order to determine the level of belief in the profession of physical education teacher candidates. In its Turkish version, the first dimension “Desire to Work” and the second dimension “Value Attached to Physical Education” consisted of 6 items each. Factor loading values were calculated to be between 0.58 and 0.74. Cronbach’s alpha values were found to be 0.87 in the first dimension, 0.81 in the second dimension and 0.83 in the total scale. The scale form is on a 7-point Likert scale and the items are scored as “strongly disagree (1)” and “strongly agree (7)” and consist of 11 items and 2 sub-dimensions (Uğraş & Dindar, 2019).

2.4 Data Analysis

The data obtained in the research were analyzed in the computer environment. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to determine the normality distribution. According to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results, it was determined that the obtained data did not show normal distribution. It was decided to apply non-parametric tests in the statistical analysis of the data obtained. The scores of the participants are presented as arithmetic mean and standard deviation $X \pm Sd$. Spearman correlation analysis was applied to reveal the relationships between the scores obtained from the scales. Statistical significance level was accepted as $p < 0.05$.

3. Results

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the scores of the participants from the academic life satisfaction scale

Scale	n	Min	Max	X±SD
Academic Life Satisfaction	318	11.0	40.00	33.293±5.535

The mean scores of the volunteers participating in the study from the academic life satisfaction scale were found to be 33.293±5.535 (Table 2).

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of the scores of the participants from the professional belief scale

Scale	n	Min	Max	X±SD
Desire to Work	318	5.00	35.00	29.752±6.162
Value Given to Physical Education	318	10.00	42.00	38.953±4.630
Professional Belief Total	318	15.00	77.00	68.704±9.730

It was determined that the mean scores of the volunteers participating in the study from the professional belief scale total were 68.704±9.730. It was determined that the average of the scores obtained from the sub-headings of the professional belief scale; the desire to work was 29.752±6.162 and the value given to physical education was 38.953±4.630 (Table 3).

Table 4. The relationship between participants' academic life satisfaction and professional belief

		Desire to work	Value Given to Physical Education	Professional Belief Total
Academic Life Satisfaction	r	.465	.357	.453
	p	.000	.000	.000
	n	318	318	318

In Table 4 it was found that there was a moderately positive relation between the participants' academic life satisfaction, desire to work for their professional beliefs ($r = .465$, $p < .000$) and

the value given to physical education ($r = .357, p < .000$) and professional belief in total ($r = .453, p < .000$).

4. Discussion

Teachers are in a key position in terms of their duties and responsibilities in achieving the goals and objectives of education. Teachers who step into the teaching profession learn all the knowledge and skill details of the profession during their education before they gain knowledge about the profession. When the literature is examined, it is predicted that teachers' reasons for choosing the profession, the value they give to the profession, their expectations of the profession, their academic life satisfaction, their attitudes towards the profession affect their job performance (Bergmark et al., 2018; Balkis, 2013; Fokkens-Bruinsma & Carrinus, 2012; Altuntaş et al., 2016).

Because the pre-service teachers' defining themselves as teachers, their belief in the profession will be a driving force in overcoming the problems they will encounter in their professional careers, as well as their belief preferences of being a teacher, as well as their permanence in the profession (Dündar, 2014).

It was determined that the scores of the volunteers participating in the study from the academic life satisfaction scale were above the average. When the literature is examined, no study has been found that deals with the satisfaction they feel towards their academic life as a special area of life. Academic life satisfaction is a complex and very effective structure that shows the life experiences of teacher candidates in the university and the quality of their adaptation to the academic environment. Based on this, there are studies that include academic life satisfaction and positive feelings and attitudes towards students' learning functions (Nogueira et al., 2019). In the present study, it is thought that the prospective teachers think that they can meet the university environment they expect, the quality of education, and economic satisfaction in their business life, and it is considered to be met in terms of academic life satisfaction.

It was determined that the average scores of the volunteers participating in the study from the professional belief scale total and the sub-headings of the desire to work and the value given to the teaching profession are at a high level. In the literature review conducted by the researcher, in some countries the reason for choosing the profession (Azman, 2013) is economic, and in some countries, geographical features affect belief and motivation to start the profession (Su et al., 2001; Wong et al., 2014), is pedagogical knowledge (König & Rothland, 2012). The studies in Turkey were reported that physical education and sport teacher candidates were related to starting the profession and their attitudes (Abbasoğlu & Öncü, 2013; Pehlivan, 2010; Ünlü, 2013; Yanık & Çamlıyer, 2013). In different studies, it was emphasized that it is important for teacher candidates to be named as teachers at the beginning of the education process (Bergmark et al., 2018), and it is known that belief in the teaching profession affects persistence in the profession as well as choice (Dündar, 2014). In the present study, it is thought that teacher candidates have a high belief in the teaching profession because they are satisfied with the education they received during the education process, they are satisfied with being qualified as a teacher at the beginning of the process,

they are more willing to start the profession, they have job opportunities and they find it economically sufficient.

A moderately positive relationship was found between the participants' academic life satisfaction, their desire to work related to their professional beliefs, the value given to physical education and the total professional belief. In the literature review conducted by the researcher, no study examining the relationship between life satisfaction and professional belief was found. In literature in various sample groups, while studies on the topics such as academic/life satisfaction and psychological needs (Çivitçi, 2012), cognitive flexibility (Yelpaze & Yakar, 2019), self-sensitivity (Tel & Sarı, 2016), burnout (Pinar et al., 2015) and the attitude towards the future teaching profession (Pepe, 2021) were found, there was no study that examined the relationship between belief in the teaching profession and any subject.

In addition to fulfilling the academic goals and wishes of teacher candidates in school life, the quality of university education, the contribution they make to professional life, the relationship between students, and the positive effect of academic staff on students increase the quality of academic life satisfaction. With the influence of the academic staff, the awareness of gaining teaching status by making a domino effect on the belief in the teaching profession can play an active role. On the other hand, it is thought that the professional love, job performance, dynamic working conditions, economic satisfaction, desire to work with children and the desire to take professional responsibility of the physical education and sports teachers, who are taken as role models, are important in increasing the professional beliefs of the teacher candidates.

As a result; in the study, it was determined that the academic life satisfaction levels of the teacher candidates were above the average, and the average of the scores they got from the total professional belief scale and the sub-headings of the desire to work and the value given to the teaching profession were found to be high. It was found that there is a moderate relationship between academic life satisfaction and professional beliefs. It is thought that the results of the present study are due to the fact that physical education and sports teacher candidates learn the sportive knowledge and skills that may be necessary in their future profession, theoretically and practically, at the highest efficiency level in the undergraduate programs they study, and that they can actively apply this knowledge and skills in the field with different internship applications.

5. Recommendations

- Larger scale studies can be conducted on physical education and sports teacher candidates.
- The current status of academic life satisfaction and professional beliefs of physical education and sports teacher candidates studying in different geographical regions can be examined.

- The relationships between academic life satisfaction and professional beliefs of physical education and sports teacher candidates studying in different geographical regions can be examined.
- Comparisons can be made with the academic life satisfaction and professional beliefs of teacher candidates in different branches.

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