



Araştırma Makalesi • Research Article

Exploring the Relationship between Preservice Preschool Teachers' Views about the Teacher Effectiveness Training Model and Their Communication Skills

Okul Öncesi Öğretmen Adaylarının Etkili Öğretmenlik Eğitim Modeline İlişkin Görüşleri ile İletişim Becerileri Arasındaki İlişkinin İncelenmesi

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Abstract: The aim of this survey-based quantitative study was to examine the relationship between 221 preservice preschool teachers' views about Gordon's Teacher Effectiveness Training (TET) model and their communication skills. Also, their views about the TET and their communication skills were examined based on their demographic characteristics. Data were collected through a demographic information form, the Discipline Strategies Questionnaire, and the Communication Skills Scale with the approval of Social and Humanities Research and Publication Ethics Committee of Van Yüzüncü Yıl University (Date: 01/10/2020; Number: 2020/10-04). This revealed that the views of the female preservice teachers about the TET model were more positive than those of their male colleagues, and that the former group's communication skills were also better – reflecting the generally positive relationship between the respondents' views of the TET model and their communication skills. However, neither TET views nor communication skills varied significantly by age group. Results show that for preservice teachers to put this style of classroom management into practice, they should be given more opportunities to gain classroom-management experience.

Keywords: Teacher Effectiveness Training Model, Communication Skills, Preservice Preschool Teachers

Öz: Bu çalışma tarama modelinde desenlenmiş nicel bir araştırmadır. Çalışmanın amacı, 221 okul öncesi öğretmen adayının Gordon'un Etkili Öğretmenlik Eğitimi Modeline ilişkin görüşleri ile adayların iletişim becerileri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. Ayrıca öğretmen adaylarının demografik özelliklerine göre de model hakkındaki görüşleri ve iletişim becerileri incelenmiştir. Veriler, Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşerî Bilimleri Yayın Etik Kurul Başkanlığı'nın 01/10/2020 tarih ve 2020/10-04 sayılı onayı ile, demografik bilgi formu, Disiplin Stratejileri Anketi ve İletişim Becerileri Ölçeği aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Çalışmanın bulguları, kadın öğretmen adaylarının Etkili Öğretmenlik Eğitimi Modeline ilişkin görüşlerinin erkek adaylardan daha olumlu olduğunu ve

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yine kadın adayların iletişim becerilerinin erkek öğretmen adaylarından daha iyi olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca katılımcıların Etkili Öğretmenlik Eğitimi Modeline ilişkin görüşleri ile iletişim becerileri arasında olumlu bir ilişki olduğu görülmüştür. Ancak, öğretmen adaylarının modele ilişkin görüşleri de iletişim becerileri de yaşlarına göre anlamlı bir farklılık göstermemiştir. Sonuçlar, öğretmen adaylarının Etkili Öğretmenlik Eğitim Modelini uygulayabilmeleri için sınıf yönetimi konusunda daha fazla deneyim fırsatlarına ihtiyaçları olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Etkili Öğretmenlik Eğitimi Modeli, İletişim Becerileri, Okul Öncesi Öğretmen Adayları

Introduction

Effective classroom management, a goal that all teachers share (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016), facilitates learning and achievement of learning goals (Bulger et al., 2002). It is also essential to increase children's success (Franklin & Harrington, 2019; Nagro et al., 2019), and therefore it is a useful proxy measure of the quality of education (Emmer & Stough, 2001). A number of classroom-management models and strategies have been proposed, with a variety of aims. These include boosting children's social skills, supporting their emotional development (Pereira & Smith-Adcock, 2011; The Evidence for Learning Team, 2020), increasing their academic success (Adeyemo, 2012; Canter, 2014), and correcting and improving their behaviours (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016); reducing school violence (Donat et al. 2018; Mayer, 2002; Yurtal & Yaşar, 2018); and increasing family and community support for learning (Wettach & Owen, 2015).

Effective classroom-management strategy can be broken down into some broad types of actions, aimed at creating a safe and encouraging learning environment, establishing good teacher-student relationships, organising social relations and student behaviour, minimising students' behavioural problems, and managing planning and programming activities (Durmaz et al., 2020; Egeberg et al., 2016). Teachers who are focused on increasing the quality of their classroom management by addressing these dimensions tend to avoid traditional and teacher-centred approaches, and to prefer child-centred ones (Fashiku, 2018). Teacher-centred approaches – in which the learning environment and instructional process are planned and managed by the teacher (Tedmem, 2019) – are characterised by their strict disciplinary rules, the implementation and enforcement of which can be very time-consuming, leaving relatively less time for education per se (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). A teacher who has a child-centred approach, on the other hand, communicates effectively with them (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016); observes and evaluates their behaviours non-judgementally; cares about their needs and requests (Samuelowicz & Bain, 2001; Sau et al., 2020); regards each one's values, thoughts, and culture as valuable (Le Roux, 2002; Weinstein et al., 2004); and gives them frequent opportunities to make choices (Pereira & Smith-Adcock, 2011).



Minimum teacher power

Relationship-Listening:

Gordon's T.E.T. model

Confronting-Contracting:

Dreikurs' social discipline model

Glasser model of discipline

Maximum teacher power

Rules-and-Consequences:

Behavioral change theory

Canter's assertive discipline

Figure 1. Power Continuum of Teacher Action

Specific strategies and models for effective classroom management have notably included Skinner's (1938) behavioural change theory, Kounin's (1970) model, Gordon's (1974) teacher effectiveness training (TET) model, Canter's (1976) assertive discipline model, Dreikurs' (1982) social discipline model, and Glasser's (1990) model of discipline (Celep, 2004; Erdem, 2011; Tertemiz, 2003). TET, which focuses on the quality of the relationship that the teacher establishes with his or her students rather than on what is taught, is highly preferred today by education scholars and teacher-educators because it has been found to help teachers become skilful at communication and conflict resolution. As mentioned in Figure 1, Wolfgang (1996) delineated a power continuum from minimum teacher power

on the left-hand side to maximum teacher power on the right-hand side. In it, Gordon's TET model appears on the left-hand/minimum-power side, in the area labelled relationship-listening.

The two main foci of TET are the development of 1) clear and reliable communication, and 2) positive teacher-child relationships, because these dynamics lay the groundwork for children's interactive exploration of the world around them (Leshchenko & Isaieva, 2014). The causes and effects of problematic behaviours must both be analysed if they are to be eliminated, since such behaviours can result from either the teacher or the child (Gordon, 1974). Thus, solutions require clear teacher-child communication, effective teacher-child cooperation, and good role modelling on the part of the teacher (Malmgren et al., 2005; Yang et al.; 2021), as well as respect, acceptance, and empathy (Gordon, 1996).

The TET model also attaches importance to active listening, non-directing expressions, and inspiring questions (Glickman & Tamashiro, 1980; Tertemiz, 2003). For instance, when seeking to eliminate classroom problems, TET holds that it helps to ask, "Whose problem is it?" The teacher should express feelings about the problem situation with I-language (Edwards, 2004) because you-language makes children feel embarrassed, sad, guilty, judged, and criticised (Gordon, 1976; Thomas & Montgomery, 1998). This lowers their self-confidence, which leads to resistance to change (Gordon, 1988).

Teachers' communication skills are central to the TET model. Indeed, without effective communication in the classroom, learning goals cannot be achieved (Kruger & Van Schalkwyk, 1997). Therefore, as well as being an important aspect of classroom management, successful communication is crucial to good education more generally (Hoon et al., 2017). Nevertheless, it is not necessarily easy to establish a good communicative environment in a classroom consisting of diverse, unique individuals (Le Roux, 2002).

For the sake of effective classroom management, teachers should also be able to support children's communication skills (Shindler, 2009), and to create classroom environments where all children can express themselves freely and know that their thoughts and viewpoints are accepted and valued (Kruger & Van Schalkwyk, 1997). A collateral benefit of the latter approach is that it helps children cope with emotional stress (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Put another way, classroom communication can be deemed to be effective when the teacher gives confidence to children, shows empathy towards them in problematic situations, maintains good listening skills, and communicates openly and honestly (Hoon et al., 2017; Johnson, 1999). And, when it is effective, solutions to conflicts that satisfy both sides can be found more readily, and students are more able and willing to change their attitudes, thoughts, and behaviours (Aylor, 2003). This, in turn, facilitates the achievement of learning goals and helps to increase children's success (Marzano et al., 2003).

Several prior studies have linked classroom-management strategies, communication skills and the TET model. Oktay (2019) found that preservice teachers preferred student-centred, democratic discipline models. It has also been reported that they mostly prefer the logical consequences model (Dreikurs, 1982) and TET model, and to focus on verbal communication when dealing with inappropriate behaviours. Şahin-Sak et al. (2018a) found that preschool teachers usually accepted a child-centred approach. However, half the preservice preschool teachers studied by Şahin Sak (2015) were only somewhat effective at managing a classroom. Ritz et al. (2014) concluded that preschool teachers used preventive classroom management strategies to increase the self-regulation skills of individuals as a key means of preventing misbehaviour. Özer's (2013) preservice teacher participants believed themselves to be competent at relationship management in the classroom, but to be less competent when it came to the management of teaching. In short, it would appear that, despite an awareness of child-centred approaches, in-service and preservice teachers' classroom management skills leave much to be desired.

Polat et al. (2013) concluded that preservice preschool teachers preferred a particular classroom-management strategy, the communication-listening model, in which the level of teacher authority was low. O'Neill and Stephenson (2012) found that taking a classroom-management course improved preservice teachers' skills in using classroom-management models and strategies, and improved their

self-confidence. Yılmaz and Altunbaş (2012), on the other hand, reported that preservice teachers' communication skills were the biggest predictor of their classroom-management skills. Lewis et al. (2011), meanwhile, found that teachers' personal characteristics affected the strategies they used to cope with problematic behaviours in the classroom. Taken together, these studies clearly indicate that the communication skills of in-service and preservice teachers were important to effective classroom management.

That being said, studies of effective classroom management that cover the child-centred approach to it, teachers' awareness of it, the specific strategies they employ, and the roles of interaction and communication in it have been relatively rare. The exceptions (Oktay, 2019; Şahin-Sak et al., 2018a; Talvio et al., 2013) help to fill important gaps in the classroom-management literature. However, it should be borne in mind that, according to Öztürk and Gangal (2016), teachers express preferences for multiple classroom-management strategies, but usually implement traditional ones; while Rosas and West (2009) found that preservice teachers in their study did not know what strategies they would use to intervene when misbehaviour occurred their classrooms. Therefore, more studies in this vein are called for, if more effective professional-development programs for teachers – capable of contributing to the implementation of high-quality and child-centred classroom-management models – are to be created. Also, such research can potentially provide both a clearer theoretical foundation and greater systematicity to the study of classroom management. Accordingly, this study seeks a detailed examination of the relationships among preservice preschool teachers' views about the TET model, their communication skills, and their demographic characteristics. In pursuing this aim, it will be guided by the following research questions.

- (1) What are preservice preschool teachers' views about the TET model?
- (2) Are there any significant differences between male and female preservice preschool teachers' views about the TET model?
- (3) Are there any significant age-related differences in preservice preschool teachers' views about the TET model?
- (4) Are any significant differences in preservice preschool teachers' views about the TET model linked to what type of high school they graduated from?
- (5) How do the sampled preservice preschool teachers' communication skills rate on the Communication Skills Scale?
- (6) Are there any significant differences between male and female preservice preschool teachers' communication skills?
- (7) Are there any significant age-related differences in preservice preschool teachers' communication skills?
- (8) Are any significant differences in preservice preschool teachers' communication skills linked to what type of high school they graduated from?
- (9) Is there any discernible relationship between preservice preschool teachers' views about the TET model and their own communication skills?

Method

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative, survey-based approach which is appropriate to its aim of capturing a past or present situation (Karasar, 2005). Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) noted that this method is more appropriate than individual interviews to the collection of representative data on a population's skills, opinions, attitudes, beliefs and/or knowledge. In the current study, the data were collected from a sample recruited to reflect our population of interest.

Participants

The population of this study consisted of preservice preschool teachers who were students at universities in Turkey. Three Turkish universities having a preschool education department were selected through purposeful sampling method. Then, preservice preschool teachers in these universities were determined through the random sampling method. The initial pool of 235 participants were selected randomly from among preservice preschool teachers attending the Preschool Education departments of three Turkish universities: Van Yüzüncü Yıl, Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen, and Gaziosmanpaşa. After the exclusion of 14 of these participants for reasons that will be explained below, this left a final sample of 221, whose background characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Participants' Background Characteristics

		n	%
Gender	Female	153	69.2
	Male	68	30.8
Age	21-22	92	41.6
	23-24	86	38.9
	25-28	43	19.5
Type of High School	Girls' Vocational and Technical High School	45	20.4
	Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School	38	17.2
	Anatolian High School	138	62.4
University	Van Yüzüncü Yıl	51	23.1
	Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen	112	50.7
	Gaziosmanpaşa	58	26.2

As Table 1 indicates, most of the participants were female (69.2%), and under 25 years old (80.5%). Approximately half (50.7%) were from Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University. Most had graduated from Anatolian high schools, which offer general education classes. In the table, Girls' Vocational and Technical High School refers to schools where girls are prepared for particular professions, while a Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School provides a four-year education that combines general education classes and applied workshops. The necessary ethics-committee approval was obtained from Social and Humanities Research and Publication Ethics Committee of Van Yüzüncü Yıl University (Date: 01/10/2020; Number: 2020/10-04).

Data Collection Tools

A demographic information form, the Discipline Strategies Questionnaire (DSQ) and the Communication Skills Scale were used as data-collection tools in the current study. The Demographic Information Form was developed by the researchers to gather information including the participants' genders, ages, and high-school types. The other two instruments are each described in turn below.

Discipline Strategies Questionnaire (DSQ)

In this questionnaire, developed by Koç (2011), all items are answered via a five-point Likert-type scale, with responses ranging from 1= "Don't agree at all" to 5= "Totally agree". Although this instrument covers all six of the disciplinary models discussed above (i.e., Behavioural Change Theory, Dreikurs' Social Discipline Model, Canter's Assertive Discipline Model, Glasser's Model of Discipline, Kounin's Model, and Gordon's TET Model), only those items pertaining to TET were used in the current study, in line with its aims and scope (Koç, 2011). Two sample DSQ items pertaining to the TET model are "A teacher should define the problem together with her children when she encounters an undesirable behaviour" and "A teacher should believe sincerely that children can solve their own problems."

Communication Skills Scale

This scale, which the researchers used to obtain information about the sampled preservice preschool teachers' communication skills, was developed by Korkut Owen and Bugay (2014). It consists

of 25 items, all answered via five-point Likert scales with responses ranging from 1= “Never” to 5= “Always”. The lowest score it can yield is therefore 25, and the highest, 125, with higher scores indicating better communication skills (Korkut Owen & Bugay, 2014). Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis were used by its originators to assess its construct validity, and revealed that it has a four-factor solution. These four factors are Communication Principles and Basic Skills (10 items), Personal Expression (four), Nonverbal Expression (six), and Willingness to Communicate (five). Collectively, these four factors explained 45.95% of the total variance, and their factor loadings were between .30 and .70 (Korkut Owen & Bugay, 2014). The confirmatory factor analysis results for current study were $\chi^2(261)=609,253$, $p<.0001$; $\chi^2/df\text{-ratio}=2.334$; CFI=.92, NFI=.87, IFI=.92, TLI=.91, RMSEA=.078, and RMR=.052. The Cronbach’s alpha internal-consistency coefficients were .89 for the whole scale, .88 for Communication Principles and Basic Skills, .84 for Personal Expression, .83 for Nonverbal Expression, and .85 for Willingness to Communicate in current study. Sample items for each of this instrument’s four dimensions are “I accept people as they are” (Communication Principles and Basic Skills), “I can express my thoughts clearly whenever I want” (Personal Expression), “I can understand the emotions underlying what is being said while listening to someone” (Nonverbal Expression), and “I can easily start a conversation with other people” (Willingness to Communicate).

Data Analysis

Upon checking the collected instruments, it was found that 14 participants’ responses were incomplete, and these were excluded from further evaluation. The data from the remaining 221 individuals were analysed using a statistics software. First, the researchers checked whether these data were distributed normally, using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and skewness / kurtosis coefficient. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test confirmed that it was distributed normally ($n=221$, $p>.05$). Skewness value for TET Model was -1.628 and Kurtosis value for TET Model was 1.822. Skewness value for Communication Skills was .107 and Kurtosis value for Communication Skills was -.465. When Skewness and Kurtosis values between -2 and +2, it can be accepted as normal distributed (Field, 2009). Therefore, parametric tests were used for further data analysis. Table 2 sets forth the statistical techniques that were used to analyse the data relevant to each research question.

Table 2. Statistical Analysis Methods by Research Question

Research question	Statistical technique
(1) What are preservice preschool teachers’ views about the TET model?	Descriptive analysis (means, standard deviations)
(2) Are there any significant differences between male and female preservice preschool teachers’ views about the TET Model?	Independent-samples <i>t</i> -test
(3) Are there any significant age-related differences in preservice preschool teachers’ views about the TET model?	One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA)
(4) Are any significant differences in preservice preschool teachers’ views about the TET model linked to what type of high school they graduated from?	One-way ANOVA
(5) How do the sampled preservice preschool teachers’ communication skills rate on the Communication Skills Scale?	Descriptive analysis (means, standard deviations)
(6) Are there any significant differences between male and female preservice preschool teachers’ communication skills?	Independent-samples <i>t</i> -test
(7) Are there any significant age-related differences in preservice preschool teachers’ communication skills?	One-way ANOVA
(8) Are any significant differences in preservice preschool teachers’ communication skills linked to what type of high school they graduated from?	One-way ANOVA

(9) Is there any discernible relationship between preservice preschool teachers' views about the TET model and their own communication skills?

Pearson correlation

Results

Preservice Preschool Teachers' Views about the TET Model

Table 3. Preservice Preschool Teachers' Views of The TET Model

n	Minimum	Maximum	\bar{x}	SD
221	9.00	45.00	36.76	9.24

Note. SD=standard deviation

Based on the means of the preservice preschool teachers' answers regarding their views of the TET model, it can be said that they strongly agreed with it (Table 3).

Comparison of Preservice Preschool Teachers' Views About the TET Model, By Gender

Table 4. Results of T-Tests, Preservice Preschool Teachers' Views of The TET Model, by Gender

Gender	n	\bar{x}	SD	t	p
Female	153	39.24	6.11	6.515	.000
Male	68	31.19	12.27		

Note. SD=standard deviation

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the participants' views about TET based on their gender, and a statistically significant difference was found ($t_{221}=6.515$, $p<.05$). Specifically, the mean scores assigned to it by females ($\bar{x}=39.24$) were significantly higher than those assigned by males ($\bar{x}=31.19$) (Table 4).

Comparison of Preservice Preschool Teachers' Views About the TET Model, By Age

Table 5. Preservice Preschool Teachers' Views of The TET Model by Age: Means, Standard Deviations, and One-Way ANOVA Results

Age	n	\bar{x}	SD	df	F	p
21-22	92	38.23	7.22	2/218	2.012	.136
23-24	86	35.67	10.56			
25-28	43	35.81	10.06			

Note. SD=standard deviation

The respondents were divided into three groups according to their ages (Group A: 21-22, Group B: 23-24 and Group C: 25-28), and a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted to compare these groups' views about the TET model. This revealed no statistically significant differences among them ($F_{218}=2.012$, $p>.05$) (Table 5).

Comparison of Preservice Preschool Teachers' Views About the TET Model, By High-School Type

Table 6. Preservice Preschool Teachers' Views of TET by High-School Type: Means, Standard Deviations and One-Way ANOVA Results

High-school type	n	\bar{x}	SD	df	F	p	Significant difference
A	45	40.08	4.67	2/218	4.014	.019	A-B A-C
B	38	34.94	10.09				
C	138	36.18	9.89				

Note. A=Girls' Vocational and Tech. High School; B=Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School; C=Anatolian High School; SD=standard deviation

The respondents were divided into three groups according to their high-school type (Group A: Girls Vocational and Technical; Group B: Vocational and Technical Anatolian; and Group C: Anatolian), and a one-way ANOVA conducted to compare these groups' views about the TET model. This, followed by Bonferroni testing, revealed statistically significant differences ($F_{218}=4.014$, $p<.05$) between Group A and Group B ($\bar{x}=40.08$ vs. $\bar{x}=34.94$), and between Group A and Group C ($\bar{x}=40.08$ vs. $\bar{x}=36.18$) (Table 6).

Preservice Preschool Teachers' Communication Skills

Table 7. Preservice Preschool Teachers' Communication Skills Scale Scores

	n	Minimum	Maximum	\bar{x}	SD
Communication Principles and Basic Skills	221	10.00	50.00	39.39	8.39
Personal Expression	221	4.00	20.00	15.61	3.58
Nonverbal Expression	221	6.00	30.00	23.62	4.93
Willingness to Communicate	221	5.00	25.00	18.89	4.40
<i>Total</i>	<i>221</i>	<i>25.00</i>	<i>125.00</i>	<i>97.53</i>	<i>19.95</i>

Note. SD=standard deviation

When Table 7 is examined, it is seen that the mean of the participants in the Communication Principles and Basic Skills sub-dimension is $\bar{x}=39.39$, the mean in the personal expression sub-dimension is $\bar{x}=15.61$, the mean in the Nonverbal Expression sub-dimension is $\bar{x}=23.62$, and the mean in the Willingness to Communicate sub-dimension is $\bar{x}=18.89$. In addition, the mean of the participants in the sum of the communication skills scale is $\bar{x}=97.53$. It shows that the sampled preservice preschool teachers' mean scores for communication skills were fairly high, both overall and in all sub-dimensions (Table 7).

Comparison of Preservice Preschool Teachers' Communication Skills, By Gender

Table 8. Results of T-Tests, Preservice Preschool Teachers' Communication Skills Scale Scores, by Gender

	Gender	n	\bar{x}	SD	t	p
Communication Principles and Basic Skills	Female	153	41.83	4.39	7.196	.000
	Male	68	33.89	11.97		
Personal Expression	Female	153	16.57	2.24	6.461	.000
	Male	68	13.47	4.90		
Nonverbal Expression	Female	153	25.07	2.85	7.267	.000
	Male	68	20.36	6.77		
Willingness to Communicate	Female	153	20.23	2.69	7.615	.000
	Male	68	15.88	5.81		
<i>Total</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>153</i>	<i>103.79</i>	<i>9.63</i>	<i>7.793</i>	<i>.000</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>83.61</i>	<i>28.51</i>		

Note. SD=standard deviation

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the male and female preservice preschool teachers' communication skills, and this revealed statistically significant differences both in these two groups' overall Communication Skills Scale scores, and in their scores on all of that scale's sub-dimensions ($t_{221}=7.793$, $p<.05$), with the female participants scoring higher than the male ones in each case (Table 8).

Comparison of Preservice Preschool Teachers' Communication Skills, By Age**Table 9.** Preservice Preschool Teachers' Communication Skills Scale Scores by Age: Means, Standard Deviations and One-Way ANOVA Results

	Age	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	F	p
Communication Principles and Basic Skills	21-22	92	39.45	7.82	2/218	1.219	.298
	23-24	86	40.16	8.14			
	25-28	43	37.72	9.92			
Personal Expression	21-22	92	15.68	3.35	2/218	.026	.974
	23-24	86	15.58	3.52			
	25-28	43	15.55	4.23			
Nonverbal Expression	21-22	92	23.67	4.69	2/218	1.294	.276
	23-24	86	24.08	4.70			
	25-28	43	22.60	5.79			
Willingness to Communicate	21-22	92	18.78	4.36	2/218	.342	.711
	23-24	86	19.18	3.98			
	25-28	43	18.55	5.27			
Total	21-22	92	97.59	18.91	2/218	.751	.473
	23-24	86	99.01	18.84			
	25-28	43	94.44	24.04			

Note. A=21-22; B= 23-24; C=25-28; SD=standard deviation

The respondents were divided into three groups according to their ages (Group A: 21-22, Group B: 23-24 and Group C: 25-28). A one-way ANOVA conducted to compare these three groups' communication skills found no statistically significant differences among them, either for overall Communication Skills Scale score or any sub-dimension thereof ($F_{2,18}=.751$, $p>.05$) (Table 9).

Comparison of Preservice Preschool Teachers' Communication Skills, By High School Type**Table 10.** Preservice Preschool Teachers' Communication Skills by High-School Type: Means, Standard Deviations and One-Way ANOVA Results

	High School	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	F	p
Communication Principles and Basic Skills	A	45	41.46	5.26	2/218	2.108	.124
	B	38	39.89	9.09			
	C	138	38.57	8.93			
Personal Expression	A	45	16.37	2.76	2/218	1.273	.282
	B	38	15.50	3.79			
	C	138	15.40	3.75			
Nonverbal Expression	A	45	25.02	3.19	2/218	3.018	.051
	B	38	24.10	5.43			
	C	138	23.03	5.18			
Willingness to Communicate	A	45	19.71	3.26	2/218	1.315	.270
	B	38	19.21	4.67			
	C	138	18.54	4.62			
Total	A	45	102.57	12.66	2/218	2.199	.113
	B	38	98.71	21.68			
	C	138	95.56	21.17			

Note. A=Girls' Vocational and Technical High School; B=Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School; C=Anatolian High School; SD=standard deviation

Next, the respondents were divided into three groups according to their high-school type (Group A: Girls' Vocational and Technical, Group B: Vocational and Technical Anatolian, and Group C: Anatolian). A one-way ANOVA conducted to compare these groups' communication skills indicated that, although the mean Communication Skills Scale scores of those participants who graduated from

Girls' Vocational and Technical schools were higher than the other two groups' mean scores, both overall and in all sub-dimensions, none of the observed differences were statistically significant ($F_{218}=2.199, p>.05$) (Table 10).

Relationships Between Preservice Preschool Teachers' Views of Gordon's Teacher Effectiveness Training Model and Their Communication Skills

Table 11. Relationships Between Preservice Preschool Teachers' TET Views and Their Communication Skills

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Communication Principles and Basic Skills						.348**
2. Personal Expression						.285**
3. Nonverbal Expression						.361**
4. Willingness to Communicate						.276**
5. Overall Communication Skills Scale Score						.348**
6. TET Model						1

** $p<.01$

Pearson correlations conducted to evaluate the relationship between the sampled teachers' views about the TET model and their communication skills revealed that there were significant positive relationships between their views about TET and their scores on every Communication Skills Scale dimension (Communication Principles and Basic Skills: $r=.348, p<.01$; Personal Expression: $r=.285, p<.01$; Nonverbal Expression: $r=.361, p<.01$; and Willingness to Communicate: $r=.276, p<.01$). Additionally, there was a significant and positive relationship between the respondents' views about TET and their overall Communication Skills Scale scores ($r=.348, p<.01$) (Table 11).

Discussion

This study's finding that Turkish preservice preschool teachers tended to express high levels of agreement with the principles of Gordon's TET model echoed those of Talvio et al. (2013), who concluded that teachers' attitudes towards this model were positive, as well as that it increased their knowledge and ability to access information. The present findings can also be said to parallel those of Şahin-Sak et al.'s (2018a) study of preschool teachers' views of different classroom-management models, in which the sampled teachers generally stated that they agreed with the child-centred components of various such models. Also, according to Wolfgang's (1996) diagram of the power continuum of teacher action, Gordon's TET model is part of the learner-centred group, where teachers' power is lowest, and strategies based on relationships and listening. In this sense, it can be said that the preservice teachers in this study endorsed a child-centred classroom-management approach.

Another key finding of the present study was that the views of female preservice preschool teachers about Gordon's TET model were more positive than those of their male counterparts. Şahin-Sak et al. (2018a) also reported that the mean agreement of female preschool teachers with this model's principles was higher than those of male ones. This may be because TET is a model that attaches great importance to communication, which women have frequently been found to be better at than men (e.g., Aylor, 2003; Frymier & Houser, 2000; Şahin-Sak et al., 2018a). In this context, it should also be borne in mind that women value their conflict-management, social-support and comforting skills more highly than men value theirs (Westmyer & Myers, 1996), and that this situation would logically tend to have a positive impact on women's communication skills. Nevertheless, a number of prior studies have reported that in-service and preservice teachers' classroom-management abilities, and their communication and interaction with children, are not affected by their genders (Brandes et al., 2015; Çakmak et al., 2008; Martin et al., 2006; Sak et al., 2015; Toran & Akkuş, 2016).

The current study's finding that the sampled preservice teachers' views about the TET model did not differ based on their ages was unsurprising, insofar as the age-range in question was rather narrow, and that all were studying the same university subject. However, the mean of those preservice teachers who had graduated from girls' vocational and technical high schools were higher than those of the graduates of the other two types of high school. This may be because graduates of the former type of school have more and lengthier exposure to children as part of their education, and thus gain relatively

more experience of both classroom management and communication with children. However, in line with the above-mentioned gender-related finding, the gender of preservice teachers who graduated from girls' vocational high schools may also have played a role in this finding.

The communication skills of the sampled preservice preschool teachers were generally quite good. This is an important finding, because it is expected in Turkey that preschool teachers should have developmentally appropriate classroom-management practices (Şahin-Sak et al., 2018b) within the boundaries of a child-centred preschool education program (Sak et al., 2016). In that context, therefore, effective relationship-building and communication skills emerge as key dimensions of classroom management (Martin & Sass, 2010; Şahin-Sak et al., 2018b); and as such, it is vital that preservice teachers, as the teachers of the future, are well-equipped with them. Moreover, positive influences of effective communication skills on several other skills of in-service and preservice teachers have been reported by various studies (Duta et al., 2015; Erkan & Avcı, 2014; Tepeli & Arı, 2011; Uyanık Balat et al., 2019).

Other findings of the current study were that the mean communication-skills scores of the female participants were higher than those of the males; and, although this difference was not statistically significant, the communication-skills means of graduates of girls' vocational and technical high schools were higher than those of graduates of other high-school types. Again, since graduates of girls' vocational and technical high school are females, these findings could be said to support each other. This echoes Ahmetoğlu and Acar's (2016) finding that female preservice teachers' empathy and communication skills were better than those of male preservice teachers, and Yılmaz et al.'s (2011) findings were similar. This may be due to female preservice teachers establishing a stronger bond with preschool teaching than their male peers do, as it is still considered a female-dominated profession (Barış, 2013; Sak et al., 2012; Sumsion, 2005). However, Malik et al. (2017) found no difference between the communication skills of female and male preservice teachers.

The non-significance of age to communication skills in the present study's sample could, again, be due to the relative narrow range of the participants' ages. Similarly, Yılmaz et al. (2009) reported that the communication skills of preservice preschool teachers did not differ significantly based on their ages.

Lastly, the present study's findings indicated a positive relationship between the sampled preservice preschool teachers' views about Gordon's TET model and their communication skills. Considering the importance that TET attaches to teacher-student interaction and communication, it is probably to be expected that as the communication skills of preservice teachers increase, their views of the model will become more positive.

As briefly mentioned in introduction, Wolfgang (1996) delineated a power continuum from minimum teacher power on the left-hand side to maximum teacher power on the right-hand side. In it, Gordon's TET model appears – alone among the six models discussed in this paper – on the left-hand/minimum-power side, in the area labelled relationship-listening. The positive relationship that the present researchers observed between preservice teachers' communication skills and their views of TET were therefore also in line with Wolfgang's continuum.

In conclusion, this study has determined that Turkish preservice preschool teachers' views were mostly compatible with Gordon's TET model, and that their communication skills were quite strong. While the female preservice teachers, as a group, scored higher on both these measures than their male counterparts did, age had no discernible relationship to either TET views or communication skills. While the views of girls' vocational and technical high school graduates were more congruent with the TET model than those of graduates of other high-school types, and had better communication-skills scores, these relationships were weak and might have been confounded by gender effects. Finally, this study revealed a positive relationship between Turkish preservice preschool teachers' views of Gordon's TET model and their communication skills.

Taken together, these results are promising to those looking to maintain and enhance developmentally appropriate, child-centred classroom management in Turkish preschools. However, for

preservice teachers to put this style of classroom management into practice, they should be given more opportunities to gain classroom-management experience. Especially in teaching practicum courses, students should be given opportunities not only to experience the instructional aspects of classroom management, but also its other dimensions, including organization of the physical environment and relationships, and management of children's behaviours. Teacher preparation process has an important effect on shaping preservice teachers' beliefs (La Paro et al., 2009). Therefore, faculty members play an important role in preservice teachers' behaviours, beliefs and practices. During undergraduate education process, the faculty members should be a good role model for communication skills and use child-centred classroom management strategies. The classrooms where preservice teachers are sent to work should be organized appropriately in terms of their physical environments, child-teacher ratios, materials, and so on.

In future studies, the views of preservice and in-service teachers about different classroom-management models could usefully be compared, along with the effect of teachers' and children's communication skills on classroom-management practices. A video review process can be followed to give more concrete pictures related to preservice preschool teachers' communication skills and discipline strategies in their practicum course during teacher preparation process.

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