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## Investigation of Book Reading Habits of Teacher Candidates

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**Abstract:** The aim of this study is to reveal the reading habits of teacher candidates. In the study, it was tried to determine what the pre-service teachers' reading habits were. In the research, open-ended questions developed by the researcher were presented to the teacher candidates as a data collection tool. In the research, using the interview method, which is one of the qualitative research methods, the data obtained from 40 teacher candidates studying in different departments of Gaziantep University in the 2020-2021 academic year were analyzed by content analysis method. As a result of the research, teacher candidates, regarding reading books; They stated that it benefits people in many ways. Teacher candidates participating in the research; They stated that they could not spare enough time for reading because of the exam rush, but they still tried to read books as regularly as they could. In addition, the teachers who participated in the research said that they mostly preferred sports books, personal development books and exam preparation books because of the kpss exam. In addition, it was concluded that reading books in the research group improves people's imagination, gains effective communication skills, and gains the ability to recognize and express themselves more effectively.

**Keywords:** Teacher Candidate, Reading Books, Habit

### Introduction

The teacher is the most important and indispensable building block of the education system. (Abazaoglu, Yıldırım & Yıldızhan, 2014). Teaching is a fast-paced profession that requires a lot of effort and dedication, and teachers are responsible for managing and controlling events by thinking quickly and rationally in fast and sudden events or possible events (Ceyhan, 2014).

Aksaçlıoğlu and Yılmaz (2008), "It is the activities carried out in order to make use of free time, to follow the economy, culture and technology, and to obtain new information. According to the definition of Calp (2010), reading is "a psychomotor skill and a mental, psychological and physiological activity, which is the activity of making sense of and recognizing symbols in a text". Batur, Gülveren and Bek (2010) defined reading as the easiest way for the individual to understand and express himself and Aytaş (2005) defined it as a complex activity consisting of various movements of the five sense organs and the mind's effort to comprehend meaning. At the same time, it reveals the effect of being able to read at every stage of life in terms of achieving success in different fields and exams, making a career, creating a healthy environment and making better use of time (Ülper and Çeliktürk, 2013). This study was prepared to examine the reading habits of teacher candidates. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought. Teacher candidates;

1. What are their general views on reading books?
2. What are the benefits of reading a book?

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## **Method**

Interview method, which is one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the research. Qualitative research is a method that offers flexible action to the researcher compared to quantitative research, and offers different approaches to data collection method, analysis and research design (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006). Qualitative research is defined as research in which qualitative data collection methods such as observation, interview and document analysis are used, and a qualitative process is followed to reveal perceptions and events in a natural environment in a realistic and holistic way. Qualitative research is an approach that focuses on researching and understanding social phenomena in their environment with an understanding based on theory building (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

## **Research Group**

The open-ended question form, which was prepared to examine the reading habits of teacher candidates, was applied to 40 teacher candidates studying in different departments of Gaziantep University. The data about the research group are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Personal Characteristics of the Research Group (N = 40)

Variables	Groups	n	%
Department of Education	Turkish teacher	10	32
	Classroom teaching	8	28
	Math teaching	8	24
	Social studies teacher	7	16
	Physical Education and Sports Teaching	7	
Gender	Male	22	64
	Woman	18	36

When we look at the classroom of the prospective teachers participating in the research, it is seen that 8 (32%) 1st grade, 7 (28%) 2nd grade, 6 (24%) 3rd grade, 4 (16%) 4th grade teacher candidates. When we look at the gender, it is seen that 16 (64%) pre-service teachers are male and 9 (40%) pre-service teachers are female.

## **Preparation and Application of the Open-Ended Questionnaire**

In the research, a semi-structured interview form consisting of 2 items was used to collect qualitative data. Through the interview technique, which is frequently used in qualitative research, the researcher tries to understand unobservable situations such as attitudes, experiences, intentions, thoughts, mental perceptions, comments and reactions (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). In order to prepare the interview form, a comprehensive literature review was conducted and the interview form was prepared. Then, the questions created by three experts were examined and the semi-structured interview form was finalized. In the research, interviews were conducted with 40 volunteer teacher candidates studying in different departments of Gaziantep University, using a semi-structured interview form. The interviews were recorded with a voice recorder and then these recordings were transcribed.

## **Analysis of Data**

The data obtained from the interview form used in the research were analyzed with the content analysis method used in qualitative research. In qualitative research, content analysis is used to analyze theoretically unclear themes and, if any, sub-themes (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). The obtained data were recorded separately, grouped and coded. These groupings and codings were presented to the experts in the field, their final form was given according to the evaluations of the experts and prepared for analysis. With the content analysis, themes were determined for each question and the frequencies and percentages of the given themes were calculated and tables were created. Descriptive analysis was used to evaluate the data. Finally, a report was made and the findings were presented.

## **Findings and Interpretation**

In this section, the findings obtained as a result of the interviews conducted to determine the reading habits of the teacher candidates participating in the research are included.

Table 2. Distribution of the research group's views on reading books.

Themes	n	%
Giving a positive perspective	32	24.4
Developing our problem-solving skills	26	19.9
It keeps us positive	26	19.9
Developing our communication skills	24	18.3
Developing our personality	23	17.5
Total	131	100

Table 2 shows the distribution of the research group's views on reading books. When the general thoughts of the participants about reading books were examined, 5 themes emerged. It was observed that the participants expressed more than one theme. According to the percentage order among these themes; It was seen that the themes of giving a positive perspective (24.4%), improving our problem-solving skills (19.9%), keeping us positive (19.9%), improving our communication skills (18.3%) and developing our personality (17.5%) came to the fore.

Table 2. Distribution of the opinions of the research group about the benefits of reading books.

Themes	N	%
Giving a positive perspective	36	20.1
Developing our vocabulary	34	19.3
Contributing to our self-realization	30	17
Developing our thinking skills	28	15.9
It relaxes physically and mentally	25	14.2
It contributes to our more effective use of Turkish	24	13.5
Total	177	100

Table 2 gives the distribution of the opinions of the research group about the benefits of reading books. Six themes emerged from the participants' views on the benefits of reading books. It was observed that the participants expressed more than one theme. According to the percentage order among these themes; It gives us a positive perspective (20.1%), improves our vocabulary (19.3%), contributes to our self-realization (17%), improves our thinking skills (15.9%), relaxes us physically and spiritually (14.2%), helps us to use Turkish more effectively. It was seen that the themes of making a contribution (13.5%) came to the fore.

## Results and Discussion

In this part of the research, the results obtained as a result of the interviews with the teacher candidates about the habit of reading books are given. When we look at the opinions of the research group about their thoughts about reading in general, they state that reading gives a positive perspective. In addition, the research group stated that reading improves problem-solving skills, improves positive aspects, improves communication skills and contributes to the development of individuals' personalities. Therefore, based on these thoughts of the research group, it can be said that reading books contributes positively to the development of many characteristics of people.

Kuş and Türkyılmaz (2010) stated that the participants in their research generally read in order to learn new information. Yılmaz (2007) stated that the students in his research read in order to obtain more information and sometimes they read in order to get away from people. Geçgel and Burgul (2009), on the other hand, concluded in their research that students want to obtain some information among the reasons for reading.

When we look at the views of the research group on the benefits of reading books; It is seen that they develop their imagination, gain a positive perspective, improve their vocabulary and contribute to their realization. In addition, the teachers participating in the research together with reading books; They stated that their comprehension and expression skills improved, their communication skills improved, their thinking skills improved and they used Turkish more effectively.

Studies have shown that the vocabulary and thinking skills of children who acquire the habit of reading in the early stages of their age increase, and as a result; It has been observed that creative intelligence, listening and

speaking skills have increased (Örteş, 2010). Yalman et al. (2013) in his study of reading; He stated that it enables the development of culture, enables individuals to be appreciated in the society, and improves people's vocabulary and imagination. Yılmaz et al. (2009) stated in his study that university students should acquire reading habit skills.

## **Conclusion**

As a result of the research, teacher candidates, regarding reading books; They stated that it benefits people in many ways. Teacher candidates participating in the research; They stated that they could not spare enough time for reading because of the exam rush, but they still tried to read books as regularly as they could. In addition, the teachers who participated in the research said that they mostly preferred sports books, personal development books and exam preparation books because of the kpss exam. In addition, it was concluded that reading books in the research group improves people's imagination, gains effective communication skills, and gains the ability to recognize and express themselves more effectively.

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