

Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Mesleki Tutumları ile Okul İklimi Algıları Arasındaki İlişki (*)

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The Relationship Between Pre-School Teachers' Professional Attitude and School Climate Perceptions (*)

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to determine the relationship between the preschool teachers' professional attitude and their perception on school climate. For this purpose, this study was carried out in a quantitative research design and relational survey model. The population of the research consists of 511 teachers working in pre-school education institutions in Sivas city centre and its districts. The population was taken as a sample, but the analyses were carried out on 291 data sets. 'Attitude towards Teaching Profession Scale' and 'School Climate Scale' was used as the data collection tools.

The results showed that the scores on attitude towards the teaching profession and school climate perception of pre-school teachers were high. A positive and moderate significant relationship was found between professional attitude and school climate perception of participants. In addition, a moderate positive relationship was found between the pre-school teachers' professional attitude and the school climate sub-dimensions. However, a low-level negative relationship was determined in conflict sub-dimension. School climate perception scores of pre-school teachers positively and significantly predict their attitude towards the teaching profession. In conclusion, it may be said that a positive school climate will increase teachers' commitment to the profession.

Keywords: Attitude, professional attitude, school climate, pre-school education.

Özet

Bu araştırmanın amacı, okulöncesi öğretmenlerinin mesleki tutumları ile okul iklimi algıları arasındaki ilişkinin belirlenmesidir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda araştırma, nicel araştırma deseninde ve ilişkisel tarama modelinde yürütülmüştür. Araştırmanın evreni, Sivas il merkezi ve ilçelerindeki okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarında görevli 511 öğretmenden oluşmaktadır. Evren, örneklem olarak alınmış ancak analizler 291 veri seti üzerinden gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmada, veri toplama aracı olarak Öğretmenlik Mesleğine İlişkin Tutum Ölçeği ve Okul İklimi Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın sonuçları, öğretmenlerin mesleğe yönelik tutum puanları ve okul iklimi algı puanlarının yüksek düzeyde olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Katılımcıların mesleki tutumları ile okul iklimi algıları arasında pozitif yönlü orta düzeyde anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmuştur. Ayrıca okulöncesi öğretmenlerinin mesleki tutumları ile okul iklimi alt boyutlarında da pozitif yönlü orta düzeyde istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir ilişki söz konusudur. Ancak çatışma alt boyutunda düşük düzeyde negatif bir ilişki belirlenmiştir. Okulöncesi öğretmenlerinin okul iklimi algıları, öğretmenlik mesleğine ilişkin tutumlarını pozitif yönde anlamlı düzeyde yordamaktadır. Sonuç olarak, olumlu bir okul ikliminin öğretmenlerin mesleğe olan bağlılıklarını artıracığı söylenebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tutum, mesleki tutum, okul iklimi, okulöncesi eğitim.

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Introduction

It can be said that the most important task of teachers in today's schools is to raise students in a safe, loving, and peaceful climate. Positive school climate contributes to teachers being more sensitive about focusing on the development of students by enabling them to have positive feelings towards the school. In this sense, it is predicted that a positive school climate will make teachers feel comfortable and safe in the school environment. On the other hand, it is assumed that teachers will exhibit positive professional attitude in a positive school climate, and this will reduce students' negative feelings such as teacher-induced fear, anxiety, and loneliness (Aydin, 2019). In this study, we focused on the relationship between the professional attitude and school climate perception of pre-school teachers.

The teaching profession has its own characteristics. These characteristics are generally expressed as self-sacrificing and hard work, following innovations, displaying patience and sensitivity, and being tolerant towards students, colleagues and parents (Richardson & Watt, 2005; Wagner & Imanuel, 2014). Moreover, the way to be successful in the teaching profession is to do this profession lovingly and willingly (Carless & Arnup, 2011; Yong, 1995). Teachers' commitment to their profession and their success in profession are closely related to their positive attitude towards the profession (Powell, 1997). Findings from numerous studies reveal that teachers who love the teaching profession are more devoted to the profession, more self-sacrificing, and idealistic (Miller, Brownell, & Smith, 1999; Tye & O'brein, 2002; Weiss, 1999).

The first definitions of the concept of 'attitude' are found in the literature, especially in social psychology studies based on Allport's (1961) theories. In most of these definitions, attitude is considered as an individual disposition that evaluates a social element (phenomenon, event, person) positively or negatively and therefore expresses a certain behavior towards it (Doron & Parot, 1999; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Katz, 1960). Similarly, Abric (2002) considers attitude as a mental and neurophysiological state that is determined by experience and creates a dynamic effect on individuals, preparing them to behave in a certain way. McGuire (1989) and Wood (2000) argue that the individual's attitude is formed in three basic dimensions as cognitive, affective, and behavioural; and are reflected in behavior. The cognitive dimension of attitude includes the individual's perceptions, beliefs and assumptions about events and phenomena. The emotional dimension describes emotional experiences and emotional responses to various events and phenomena. The behavioural dimension, on the other hand, shows intentions and predictions about how a person might act in the face of an event or phenomenon based on their assumptions and beliefs. It may be argued that teachers who have a positive attitude towards the profession will love the teaching profession and will try to do their job in the best way. In previous studies, it was determined that teachers who have a positive attitude towards the teaching profession increase the success of students (Altun, 2017; Buddin & Zamorro, 2009; Dannetta, 2002; OECD, 2009). Moreover, the results show that teachers who love their profession can bring positive attitude and behaviour to students (Askar & Erden, 1987; Sezer, 2018).

It is possible to express the school climate as the perceptions of the school community regarding the different aspects of the school atmosphere. School climate is understood as the working conditions in the school and the effect of these conditions on the employees (Şişman, 2018). Owens (1998) listed the factors affecting the school climate as culture, ecology, organization, and environment. *Culture* includes psychosocial characteristics, norms, belief systems, and values. *Ecology* is about physical factors, building size, building design, and technology used. *The organization* is explained by the structure of instruction, the curriculum, the decision-making process, and communication. *The environment*, on the other hand, defined the characteristics of individuals as

motivation, professional satisfaction, and morale. In the literature, it is stated that schools exhibit different climatic characteristics depending on their unique and environmental conditions. Hoy and Miskel (2001) mention different climate types in schools such as open climate, controlled climate, autonomous climate, paternal climate, family climate, and closed climate.

The most important factor in the development of a positive climate in schools is the attitudes of the stakeholders. When the literature is examined, the results of the studies show that there is a safer and more orderly working environment, teachers' job satisfaction increases, and their morale and motivation levels are high in schools where a positive and open climate is dominant (Bostancı & Kayaalp, 2011; Bozan, 2017). Arslan (2019) points out that the performances of teachers working in secondary schools increase depending on the positive school climate. In the research conducted by Aktan (2021), it is stated that negative school climate increases organizational silence, and it is emphasized that if the school climate is positive, organizational silence will decrease. Şahin (2005), determined a statistically significant relationship between the professional attitude of primary school teachers and their perceptions of school climate. In addition, it was concluded that the positive professional attitude of teachers affect their organizational climate perceptions positively. In Cardina and Fegley's (2016) study, the participants reported a positive attitude towards the teaching profession and a high level of satisfaction from the teaching profession. They also stated that the physical and social environment of the school was supportive. Moreover, a positive school climate is seen as a predictor of not only positive attitude of teachers towards teaching profession but also different types of learning outcomes at schools (Shochet et al., 2006; Way, Reddy, & Rhodes, 2007). It may be asserted that students learn more effectively in a positive and trust-based school climate. The results from a meta-analysis study conducted by Karadağ et al. (2016) reveal that positive school climate has a positive effect on students' academic achievement (Agnew, 1981; Bedford, 1987; Callison, 2002; Davis, 2010; Dimuzio, 1989; Farr, 1998; Hampton, 2008; Vasquez, 2011; Young, 1991).

When the literature is examined, it is seen that researchers mostly focus on the effect of school climate on organizational behaviors in school climate studies conducted in Turkey. These are the effect of school climate on job satisfaction (e.g., Çevik, 2010; Gündüz, 2008; Idi, 2017; Mert & Özdemir, 2019); organizational commitment (e.g., Kılıç, 2019; Korkmaz, 2011; Yüceler, 2009); organizational cynicism (e.g., Mumcu, 2018; Özden, 2013; Tatar & Ayık, 2020); organizational performance (e.g., Arslan & Yengin-Sarpkaya, 2020; Karadirek, 2022; Salan, 2017); organizational trust (e.g., Ayık, Savaş, & Çelikel, 2014; Gün & Söyük, 2017); organizational stress (e.g., Karadere, 2022; Kolaşınlı, 2019); self-efficacy (e.g., Dolapçı & Kavgacı, 2020; Gündoğan & Koçak, 2017); professional attitude (Şahin, 2005), and organizational justice (Kemer, 2021).

Preschool teaching requires more love, patience, and more dedication. First of all, teachers should be able to be role models to their students with their loving and sincere attitude (Powell, 1997). The fact that teachers do their jobs with love, establish good relations with their environment and exhibit positive attitude contributes to the formation of permanent learning (Carless & Arnup, 2011; Yong, 1995). In the literature, it is seen that the studies carried out in the context of school climate are generally based on the perceptions of teachers working in primary, secondary, and high schools. However, there was no study focusing on the relationship between the perceptions of school climate and professional attitudes of teachers working in pre-school education institutions. Determining the relationship between pre-school teachers' perception of school climate and their professional attitude is considered significant in terms of knowing how these attitudes are reflected on students. On the other hand, it is thought that determining the professional attitude and school climate perceptions of teachers working in pre-school education institutions will fill an important gap in the literature. Another dimension that makes this study important is that it serves as a reference for future studies in

this field. In this context, the main purpose of the research is to determine the relationship between the professional attitude of preschool teachers and their perceptions of school climate. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What is the level of pre-school teachers' attitude scores towards the profession?
2. What is the school climate perception score of preschool teachers?
3. What level of relationship is there between pre-school teachers' perceptions of their professional attitude and sub-dimensions and their perceptions of school climate and sub-dimensions?
4. Do preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate predict their professional attitude?

Method

The current study aims to describe the predictive relationships between professional attitude of preschool teachers and their perceptions of school climate. For this purpose, this research was carried out in a relational survey model (Karasar, 2022). Correlational research is concerned with the establishing relationships between two or more variables in the same population or between the same variables in two populations (Creswell, 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). In a correlational study the relation degree is described between two or more quantitative variables, and to do this it is used a correlation coefficient. Correlational research is also sometimes referred to as a form of descriptive research because it describes an existing relationship between variables (Freankel & Wallen, 2009).

Study Group

The population was 511 teachers working in pre-school education institutions in Sivas city centre and its districts in the 2021-2022 academic year. All population was selected as the sample group. However, no response was received from 201 pre-school teachers during the research period, and responses were received from 310 participants. Incomplete or incorrectly filled 19 forms were excluded from the data set. As a result, the data set was obtained from 291 participants. The demographic characteristics of participants were presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N=291)

Variable	Characteristics	N	%
Gender	Female	258	88.7
	Male	33	11.3
Age	21-26 years	46	15.8
	27-32 years	115	39.5
	33-38 years	57	19.6
	39 years +	73	25.1
School type	Kindergarten	152	52.2
	Nursery	139	47.8
Settlement	District	73	25.1
	City centre	194	66.7
	Village-town	24	8.2

Table 1 shows that 258 (88.7%) participants are female, and 33 (11.3%) participants are male. The number of participants in age group of 21-26 is 46, in age group of 27-32 is 115, in age group of 33-38 is 57, and the number of 39 years old and over is 73. The number of participants working in kindergarten is 152, and working in nursery is 139. The number of participants in district schools is

73, the number of participants in the schools in city centre is 194, and the number of participants in the schools in villages or towns is 24.

Data Collection Tools

In this study, Personal Information Form, Attitude towards Teaching Profession Scale, and School Climate Scale were used as the data collection tools.

Personal Information Form: The personal information form was created by the researchers to determine the demographic characteristics (gender, age, school type of the participants, and the settlement where the school is located) of the participants.

Attitude Towards Teaching Profession Scale: The scale was developed by Demirel and Ünişen (2018) to determine teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was determined as .94 by Demirel and Unisen (2018). The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale, which consists of 28 items in total, were calculated for this study as .92 for the *Appreciating* sub-dimension, .80 for the *Occupational Burnout* sub-dimension, .81 for the *Indifference* sub-dimension, and .66 for the *Openness to Professional Development* sub-dimension. The general internal consistency coefficient of the scale was determined by the researcher of this study as .94. Participants expressed their opinions using a 5-point Likert-type rating scale. Views range from (1) to 'strongly disagree' and (5) to 'strongly agree'. The fact that the average score obtained from the scale approaches 5 points indicates that the attitude of the participants is high; a score close to 1 indicates that their attitude is low.

School Climate Scale: The scale was developed by Canlı, Demirtaş, and Özer (2018) to measure teachers' attitude towards school climate. Canlı, Demirtaş, and Özer (2018) calculated the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale as .92 for the dimension of *Democracy and Dedication to School*; as .96 for *Leadership and Interaction* dimension; as .83 for the *Success Factors* dimension; as .91 for the *Sincerity* dimension, and as .95 for the *Conflict* dimension. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale were determined for this study as .91 for the *Democracy and School Dedication* sub-dimension, .90 for the *Leadership and Interaction* sub-dimension, .75 for the *Success Factors* sub-dimension, .85 for the *Sincerity* sub-dimension, and .73 for the *Conflict* sub-dimension. The general internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated by the researcher of this study as .92. In School Climate Scale, the participants expressed their views by using a 5-point Likert-type rating scale. The views can be expressed as (1) 'Never' (1), 'Rarely' (2), 'Sometimes' (3), 'Mostly' (4), and 'Always' (5). The fact that the average score obtained from the scale approaches 5 points indicates that the attitude scores of the participants are high; a score close to 1 indicates that the attitude scores are low.

Data Collection

The data collection tool was prepared electronically and delivered to all teachers in the population through communication networks accessible via smartphones and tablets. Except for the participants who were on administrative leave at the time of the research, the number of teachers to whom the data collection tool was transferred was 485. However, 310 forms returned. Incomplete or incorrectly filled 19 forms were excluded from the data set. As a result, 291 data set included in for analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed through the IBM 25 SPSS program. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage) techniques were used in data analysis. In determining the relationship between teachers' professional attitude and school climate perceptions, correlation

(Pearson Correlation Coefficient) analysis was conducted. When the absolute value of the correlation coefficient is between .70-1.00, it is ‘high’, when it is between .30-.70, ‘moderate’, and when it is between .00-.30, a ‘low’ relationship can be mentioned (Büyüköztürk, 2019). Regression analysis was conducted to determine the predicting level of the teachers’ professional attitude of their school climate perceptions. It was seen that the data analysis techniques used were sufficient to reveal the assumptions of the research.

Findings

In this part of the study, the findings were presented and interpreted in separate tables.

Attitude of the Participants towards the Profession

Table 2 shows the attitude scores of preschool teachers towards the profession.

Table 2.

Professional Attitude Scores (N=291)

Sub-Dimensions	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Appreciating	291	4.08	.855
Occupational Burnout	291	3.49	.824
Indifference	291	3.91	.571
Openness to Professional Development	291	3.84	.428
Professional Attitude (Total)	291	3.96	.643

In Table 2, the attitude of preschool teachers towards the teaching profession reflects the highest average in the sub-dimension of Appreciating ($M= 4.08$; $SD= .855$); on the other hand, it reflects the lowest mean value in the occupational burnout sub-dimension ($M= 3.49$; $SD= .824$). The results revealed that preschool teachers’ attitude scores towards the profession were at a moderate level in the dimension of Appreciating. The high average scores in the sub-dimensions of Occupational Burnout and Indifference revealed that the participants were not satisfied with their profession. In addition, it is understood that the average scores in the dimension of Openness to Professional Development are relatively low. Based on these results, it may be said that preschool teachers adopt a positive and moderate attitude towards the teaching profession, but have high levels of professional burnout and indifference. In addition, considering the importance of teachers closely following current developments in the profession for the teaching profession, the low openness to professional development scores of the participants can be considered as an important finding that needs to be considered.

Findings on Perception of School Climate

In Table 3, preschool teachers’ school climate perception scores were given.

Table 3.

School Climate Perception Scores (N=291)

Scale and Sub-Dimensions	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Democracy and School Dedication	291	4.23	.695
Leadership and Interaction	291	4.21	.794
Success Factors	291	4.15	.593
Sincerity	291	3.28	.508
Conflict	291	1.99	.846
School Climate (Total)	291	3.79	.461

In Table 3, it is seen that preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate are high in the sub-dimensions of Democracy and School Commitment ($M= 4.23$; $SD =.695$) and Leadership and Interaction ($M = 4.21$; $SD =.794$). Teachers' perceptions of school climate are moderate in the Success Factors ($M =4.15$; $SD = .593$) and Sincerity ($M = 3.28$; $SD = .508$) sub-dimensions. It is low in the conflict sub-dimension ($M = 1.99$; $SD= .846$). Based on these results, it may be said that preschool teachers have a relatively high level of positive perception for school climate. In particular, the high scores in the democracy and school commitment sub-dimensions of the school climate and the low scores in the conflict sub-dimension may be evaluated as the participants have positive perception related to their school climate.

The Relationship Between Teachers' Professional Attitude and Perceptions of School Climate

In Table 4, the results of the Pearson two-way correlation analysis performed to determine the relationship between preschool teachers' professional attitude and school climate perceptions were given.

Table 4.

The Relationship Between Professional Attitude and Perception of School Climate (N=291)

Scale	1	2
1. Attitude towards the Profession	1.00	.370**
2. School Climate	.370**	1.00

** $p \leq .01$

Table 4 showed that there was a positive, moderate and statistically significant relationship between preschool teachers' professional attitudes and school climate perceptions ($r= .370$, $p \leq .01$). Based on these results, it may be said that as preschool teachers' attitude scores towards the profession increase, their school climate perception scores will also increase.

The Relationship Between Teachers' Professional Attitude and Sub-Dimensions of School Climate

Table 5 shows the results of Pearson's two-way correlation analysis, which was conducted to determine the relationship between teachers' professional attitudes and school climate sub-dimensions.

Table 5.

The Relationship Between Professional Attitude and School Climate Sub-Dimensions (N=291)

Scale and Sub-Dimensions	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Professional Attitude	3.96	.643	-	.38**	.33**	.31**	.14*	-.17*
2. Democracy and School Dedication	4.23	.695		-	.74**	.73**	.36**	-.40**
3. Leadership and Interaction	4.21	.794			-	.62**	.20**	-.38**
4. Success Factors	4.15	.593				-	.50**	-.37**
5. Sincerity	3.28	.508					-	.11*
6. Conflict	1.99	.846						-

** $p \leq .01$, * $p \leq .05$

In Table 5, it is seen that there is a positive and moderate ($r=.38$; $p \leq .01$) statistically significant relationship between the professional attitude of preschool teachers and their perceptions of school climate in the sub-dimension of democracy and dedication to school. It is understood that there is a positive and moderate ($r=.33$; $p \leq .01$) statistically significant relationship in the leadership and interaction sub-dimension between teachers' professional attitude and school climate perceptions. In

addition, there is a positive and moderate ($r=.31$; $p\leq.01$) statistically significant relationship between preschool teachers' professional attitude and school climate perceptions in the sub-dimension of success factors. While it is seen that there is a positive and low-level ($r=.14$; $p\leq.05$) significant relationship between the professional attitude of preschool teachers and their perceptions of school climate, in the sub-dimension of sincerity; there is a low level of negative relationship ($r=-.17$; $p\leq.05$) in the conflict sub-dimension.

Based on these results, it may be said that there is a moderate relation between positive attitude of the participants towards the teaching profession and the sub-dimensions of the school climate. On the other hand, it can be stated that the effect of the attitude of the participants towards the teaching profession on the sincerity dimension, which is one of the sub-dimensions of the school climate, is low. The negative relationship between professional attitude and conflict sub-dimension can be considered as a felicitous result in terms of revealing that there is no place for conflict culture in a positive school climate.

The Relationship Between Teachers' Perceptions of School Climate and Sub-Dimensions of Professional Attitude

In Table 6, the results of the Pearson two-way correlation analysis performed to determine the relationship between preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate and the sub-dimensions of professional attitude were given.

Table 6.

The Relationship Between School Climate and Sub-Dimensions of Professional Attitude

Scale and Sub-Dimensions	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
1. School Climate	3.79	.461	1.00	.33**	.34**	.32**	.21**
2. Appreciating	4.08	.855		1.00	.65**	.67**	.55**
3. Occupational Burnout	3.50	.824			1.00	.71**	.50**
4. Indifference	3.91	.571				1.00	.41**
5. Openness to Professional Development	3.84	.428					1.00

** $p\leq .01$

In Table 6, it is seen that there is a positive moderate ($r=.33$; $p\leq.01$) statistically significant relationship between preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate and their professional attitude in the sub-dimension of appreciating. There is a statistically significant positive ($r=.34$; $p\leq.01$) correlation between teachers' school climate perceptions and their professional attitudes in the occupational burnout sub-dimension. In addition, there is a positive moderate ($r=.32$; $p\leq.01$) statistically significant relationship between teachers' school climate perceptions and their professional attitudes in the sub-dimension of indifference. However, it is seen that there is a low level of positive ($r=.21$; $p\leq.01$) statistically significant relationship between teachers' school climate perceptions and their professional attitude in the sub-dimension of openness to professional development. Based on these results, it may be said that if pre-school teachers' perceptions of school climate are positive, their professional attitude will be moderately affected. On the other hand, it may be thought that other factors may be effective in the low effect of positive school climate perception on openness to professional development.

The Prediction Level of Teachers' School Climate Perceptions on their Professional Attitude

Table 7 shows the results of simple linear regression analysis regarding the level of pre-school teachers' perceptions of school climate predicting their attitude towards the profession.

Table 7.

The Prediction Level of School Climate Perceptions on the Attitude towards the Profession

Variables	B	SE	β	t	p
Constant	2.741	.157	.370	17.425	.000*
Professional Attitude	.265	.039		6.766	.000*
R=.37 R ² =.137					
F=45.783 p= .000					

* $p \leq .01$

When Table 7 is examined, it is understood that the regression model is significant ($p < .01$). According to the results of the regression analysis, a significant positive correlation ($R = .370$, $R^2 = .137$, $F = 45,783$, $p < .01$) was found between preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate and their attitude towards the profession. It is seen that preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate predict their attitude towards the teaching profession ($\beta = .37$, $p < 0.01$) positively and significantly. Based on these results, it may be said that preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate (total score) affect their attitude towards the profession positively and moderately. When the independent t-test results regarding the regression coefficient significance are analysed, it can be said that preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate (total score) significantly predict their attitude towards the profession. The R^2 value was calculated as .137. This finding shows that preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate explain approximately 14% of their professional attitude.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, it was aimed to determine the relationship between the professional attitude of preschool teachers and their perceptions of school climate. The high average scores in the sub-dimensions of professional burnout and indifference revealed that the preschool teachers were not satisfied with their profession. The occupational burnout perceptions of the participants may be related to their age groups. In their study, Dolunay and Piyal (2011) determined that as teachers' ages and length of service increase, their professional burnout levels decrease. Therefore, as the age of the participants increases, professional depersonalization and professional exhaustion levels decrease. Similar results were also found in studies in the field of health. Ergin (1996) observed in his research that professional burnout is higher in young participants. In this sense, it is possible to make an inference that teachers feel more experienced and more successful as they get older, and that this situation motivates them. In addition, the average scores in the dimension of openness to professional development were relatively low. These results may be evaluated as the participants, who are teachers in kindergarten and nursery, are not willing to professional development. In literature, it is possible to find studies with similar or different results to the results of this study. In the study conducted by Kuyumcu (2019), it was concluded that teachers' professional attitude scores were high in the sub-dimensions of appreciating and openness to professional development, and low in the sub-dimensions of professional burnout and indifference. In a study conducted by Şahin-Sak, Sak and Tuncer (2019) with 417 pre-school teachers, it was found that the professional attitude scores of 6-year-old teachers were higher than those of 4-year-old and mixed age group teachers. Moreover, Özder, Konedralı, and Zeki (2010) found that prospective teachers' (pre-school, primary school) attitude towards the teaching profession were to be high. Similarly, Doğrul and Kılıç (2020), found that pre-school teacher candidates' attitude scores towards the teaching profession were high. Aslan and Akyol (2006)

concluded that teachers' positive attitude towards the profession are the most important factor in increasing their professional success and commitment.

The results showed that pre-school teachers' perceptions of school climate were high in the sub-dimensions of democracy and school dedication and leadership and interaction. It is possible to reach similar results in the literature. In a study conducted by Altay (2021), quite high average scores were found in the sub-dimension of leadership and school dedication. The mean scores on school climate were moderate level in success factors and sincerity sub-dimension. However, the mean scores were low in the conflict sub-dimension. In previous studies, there are results that teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment are high when the school climate is positive. Selçuk (2016) found that school climate perceptions of primary and secondary school teachers were high level. Similarly, İdi (2017) determined that there is a positive relationship between teachers' perceived school climate and their job satisfaction. These results show that if a democratic school climate prevails in schools, a positive relationship and communication network develops between teachers. It may be said that in schools with a positive and democratic school climate, the personal preferences and differences of the employees will be respected, and tolerance and understanding will prevail.

In this study, a positive, moderate and statistically significant relationship was found between preschool teachers' professional attitude and school climate perceptions. These results may be evaluated as teachers who have a positive attitude towards the teaching profession are willing to make a positive contribution to the school climate and have the potential to exhibit a constructive attitude in adapting to the school climate. Although the results of this study are unique, there are studies with similar results in the literature. Güneş (2019) found a moderately positive and significant relationship between pre-service teachers' attitude scores towards the teaching profession and their perceptions of school climate. Gündoğan and Koçak (2017) found a moderate, positive and statistically significant relationship between pre-service teachers' perceptions of school climate and academic self-efficacy beliefs. Similarly, in study conducted by İhtiyaroğlu and Ottekin-Demirbolat (2016), a positive and significant relationship was determined between supportive teacher behaviours, achievement-oriented and safe learning environments, which were sub-dimensions of school climate, and teacher effectiveness and student school engagement.

The results revealed that there was a positive and moderately statistically significant relationship between the professional attitude of pre-school teachers and the sub-dimensions of democracy and dedication to school, leadership and interaction, and success factors of school climate. In addition, a positive and low-level significant relationship between professional attitude and sincerity sub-dimension. However, there was a negative and low-level statistically significant relationship between professional attitude and conflict sub-dimension. Based on these results, it may be said that teachers' positive attitude towards the profession will positively affect the school climate.

There was a positive, moderate and statistically significant relationship between preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate and their professional attitude in the sub-dimensions of appreciating, professional burnout, and indifference. However, a positive low-level statistically significant relationship was determined between teachers' school climate perceptions and their professional attitude in the sub-dimension of openness to professional development. According to these results, it may be said that teachers' professional attitude will increase depending on their positive school climate perceptions. The regression analysis results revealed a positive and significant relationship between preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate and their attitude towards the profession. Preschool teachers' perceptions of school climate significantly predict their attitude towards the teaching profession in a positive way. It is possible to reach similar results in the literature. In the study conducted by Güneş (2019), it was concluded that there was a moderately

positive and significant relationship between the attitude of pre-service teachers towards the teaching profession and their perceptions of the school climate. Similarly, in the study conducted by İhtiyaroğlu and Ottekin-Demirbolat (2016), the results of multiple regression analysis significantly predict the sub-dimensions of school climate, teacher effectiveness and student school engagement. In the study of Gündoğan and Koçak (2017), it was found that the school climate perceptions of teacher candidates positively and significantly predict their academic self-efficacy beliefs.

As a result, it is very thought-provoking that preschool teachers have high scores for valuing the profession, but high indifference to the profession and professional burnout perception scores. However, considering the high average scores obtained from the sub-dimensions of democracy and school dedication, leadership and interaction, and success factors of the school climate, the indifference and burnout of preschool teachers may be considered as a natural result of the fatigue caused by spending time with young and very active children all day long. In conclusion, preschool teachers' perception of school climate is a significant predictor of their attitude towards the teaching profession.

Suggestions

In line with the findings obtained as a result of the research, different suggestions can be offered to policy makers, school administrators, teachers and researchers in the next education. It can be said that teaching should be accepted as a professional profession in order to increase the attitude of preschool teachers towards the profession in a positive way. In order to reduce the professional burnout and indifference attitude of preschool teachers, personal rights need to be improved. In-service programs for the professional development of preschool teachers can be planned, implemented and teachers can be improved. It is possible to reduce the professional burnout of teachers and increase their motivation by working to improve the working conditions of teachers working in pre-school education institutions in villages and towns. Conflict management training can be given to teachers with little professional experience. In-service training can be given to school administrators to create a positive school climate in the educational institutions where they are assigned.

Based on the results it may be asserted that, the factors that negatively affect teachers' professional attitude should be reduced, and teachers should be encouraged to contribute creating a positive school climate. Researchers can conduct research to determine the effect of teacher attitude on student achievement. In addition, research can be planned to determine the effect of the principal's management style on the formation of a positive school climate. Moreover, Qualitative research can be conducted to determine the reasons for teachers' professional burnout and indifference to the profession. Research can be conducted to determine the relationship between school climate and teacher attitudes and internal communication.

Declarations

Ethical disclosure: It is frankly declared that the procedures used in this study comply with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki. The ethics committee approval of the research was obtained with the decision of Yeditepe University Humanities and Social Sciences Ethics Committee, dated 04.11.2021 and numbered 22/2021. The data of the research were collected within the scope of the research approval dated 29.12.2021 and numbered 40112837 of the Sivas Provincial Directorate of National Education.

Informed consent statement: Informed individual consent form was prepared for all participants included in the study in different sample groups and their participation in the study was ensured on a voluntary basis.

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Author contribution: We would like to state that both authors take equal and joint responsibility in the preparation of the research for publication. However, we can state that the second author contributed to a great extent in collecting the data of the research and writing the introduction part. We can state that the first author contributed mostly to the method, data analysis, findings, and arrangement of the conclusion part of the study.

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