



# Investigation of University Students' Tolerance and Self-Esteem Levels According to Different Variables

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## Abstract

This study aimed to examine the tolerance and self-esteem levels of prospective teachers according to different variables. The study was conducted in a relational screening design in accordance with the quantitative paradigm. The sample group of the study consisted of 238 prospective teachers studying in Kyrgyzstan. Simple random sampling technique was used in the selection of the sample. As a result, it was determined that the tolerance and self-esteem levels of the students were moderate. While there was no differentiation in students' self-esteem according to gender variable, it was found that tolerance levels differed significantly in favor of women. It was determined that there was no differentiation according to age and class variables. Finally, it was observed that there was a low level of positive correlation between tolerance and self-esteem.

**Keywords:** Tolerance, Self-Esteem, University Students

## Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Hoşgörü ve Benlik Saygısı Düzeylerinin Farklı Değişkenlere Göre İncelenmesi

### Öz

Bu çalışmada öğretmen adaylarının hoşgörü ve özsaygı düzeylerinin farklı değişkenlere göre incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Çalışma nicel paradigmaya uygun olarak ilişkisel tarama deseninde yürütülmüştür. Araştırmanın örneklem grubu Kırgızistan'da öğrenim gören

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238 öğretmen adayından oluşmuştur. Örneklemin seçiminde basit tesadüfi örnekleme tekniğinden yararlanılmıştır. Veri toplama aracı olarak benlik saygısı ölçeği ve hoşgörü ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Sonuç olarak öğrencilerin hoşgörü ve özsaygı düzeylerinin orta düzeyde olduğu belirlendi. Öğrencilerin benlik saygısında cinsiyet değişkenine göre bir farklılaşma görülmezken, hoşgörü düzeylerinin kadınlar lehine anlamlı düzeyde farklılaştığı tespit edildi. Yaş ve sınıf değişkenlerine göre herhangi bir farklılaşmanın olmadığı belirlendi. Son olarak hoşgörü ile benlik saygısı arasında düşük düzeyde pozitif bir ilişkinin olduğu gözlemlenmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Hoşgörü, Benlik Saygısı, Üniversite Öğrencileri

## Introduction

Work plays an integral role in meeting the needs of individuals in society (Hepper, 2016). Beyond the time spent on work activities, one's career significantly influences overall quality of life. Many scientific researchers (Gorny, 2018; Guest, 2002; Hofstede, 1983) have addressed work life and the choice of profession, which forms the basis of work life, with its holistic effects on the individual's life. In this context, when education is considered a profession, it is inevitable that teachers' doing this job as both a lifestyle and a profession will have positive effects on their work motivation.

Teachers are individuals who have a very important function in terms of the preservation and development of societies (Karataş, 2020). The reason for this is the duration of human life. People are born, live and die. Those who die are replaced by newborns. The future of humanity depends on the qualities that newborns will have in the future. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping newborns into individuals who contribute positively to society and humanity. In this respect, the aim of this research is to examine the self-esteem and tolerance levels of prospective teachers and to determine their quality. Thus, it is possible to increase the quality of education by making various changes in the trainings given to prospective teachers according to the results of the examinations.

Although many researchers have worked on self-esteem, one of the pioneers in this field was Rosenberg. Rosenberg (1965) defined self-esteem as an individual's general positive evaluation of himself. According to Rosenberg, people with high self-esteem do not consider themselves superior to others, do not think that they are perfect, and do not reflect their feelings that they are very talented and successful. An individual with high self-esteem simply respects himself/herself and sees himself/herself as a valuable personality in society. Individuals with low self-esteem are defined as individuals who reject their own selves, are maladjusted and have a sense of inferiority.

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The concepts of self and self-esteem are among the most influential concepts affecting an individual's life. The state of the quality of self-esteem directs how an individual's life will be shaped. It is very difficult for an individual with low self-esteem to have a high quality of life. Self-esteem, which affects the quality of life in all areas of an individual's life, has a very important place in the context of the quality of an individual's work life.

One of the biggest reasons for this is that, as in all areas of life, individuals have to communicate with each other. This obligation is quite high in business life. In general, it is unpredictable with whom we will communicate in business life. An individual with low self-esteem may have various difficulties in business life as in all areas of life. Individuals with low self-esteem cannot show their full performance in business life because they see themselves as inferior to what they are. In this context, especially in a profession such as teaching, which is considered very important for society and the future, the importance of the quality of self-esteem of prospective teachers who will perform this profession increases even more.

The concept of tolerance, which is another variable of my research, has a very important place in human relations. Human beings are social beings and people have the obligation to communicate with each other all over the world. It is thought that the concept of tolerance is very important in the healthy execution of this inevitable situation.

Globalization, migration, international trade and policies bring people's living spaces closer to each other. Borders between countries and cultures are decreasing. Changes in political, cultural and social spheres lead to the emergence of different lifestyles, the gradual disappearance of traditional and social environments and the emergence of new communities with different ethnic and cultural characteristics. In this context, individuals with different values and belief systems may have to live together. It is impossible not to feel the impact of this situation on the living conditions of individuals. In this context, the coexistence of individuals with different values and beliefs can bring individuals face to face with various difficulties. In order to cope with these difficulties and to ensure that individuals with different cultures, thoughts and value systems live together in a healthy way, the quality of the education given to individuals is very important (Weidenfeld, 2002).

Through education, individuals are made aware of the necessity of living together in society and that it is important to accommodate differences in parallel with this necessity. The values adopted by the society are very effective in giving this awareness. The trainings to be given to individuals about the necessity of the coexistence of differences and how to ensure that

these differences can coexist together without any problems will make great contributions to the happiness of individuals, social peace, peace, in short, to provide better living conditions for all humanity (Kolaç, 2010).

If these values are not assimilated by individuals, negative behaviors can be observed, such as people exhibiting negative behaviors towards themselves and the people around them. Unfortunately, there are people who do not respect differences, who are intolerant towards people who think differently and have different beliefs, and who apply physical pressure and violence. The existence of such individuals who are far from the concept of tolerance shows us the importance and value of tolerance education (Doğanay, 2007).

### **Purpose of the research**

In the study, while the question "How are the self-esteem and tolerance levels of prospective teachers?" was addressed as the main problem, answers to the following sub-problems were also sought.

- Self-esteem and tolerance levels of pre-service teachers;
  - Gender,
  - Age,
  - Does it differ according to class variables?
- What is the level of relationship between self-esteem and tolerance?

### **Method**

In this section, the research model, determination of the participants, the population and sample, the data collection tools used in the research, and the methods and techniques used in the analysis of the data obtained in the research are explained.

### **Research Model**

In this study, a descriptive survey design designed in accordance with quantitative research methods was used. Survey models are research approaches that aim to describe an emerging situation by preserving the way it exists and define the event, individual or object in its own conditions and as it is. It is not aimed to change and influence the situation and the event, individual or object that is connected to the situation in any way (Karasar, 2012). Survey research is used to test hypotheses derived from previous theory developments or to extend theories by establishing new connections with bodies of literature (van Meerkerk et al., 2019). Survey research aims to collect data from a specific sample and generalize the results to the population (Jones et al., 2013).

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Descriptive research is generally used to systematically describe any existing situation, phenomenon, phenomenon or service (Kumar, 2011). In the descriptive research model, there is no change in the existing situation and its elements or manipulation of variables. The application area of descriptive research is the environment where the existing situation occurs naturally. The main purpose of the descriptive research model is to describe a situation and its related characteristics. The data required by the descriptive method used to describe a situation are usually obtained by using tools such as observation, questionnaire or scale (Gall, et al., 2007).

### Study Group

The data of the study were collected from students in the faculty of education studying in Kyrgyzstan in the 2021-2022 academic year by random sampling technique. Simple random sampling technique is a sampling technique in which all participants have an equal chance to participate in the research (Akarsu, 2015). Of the students, 138 were female students (58%) and 100 were male students (42%). The distribution of the research group according to their classes is given in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Distribution of the Sample Students by Class

Preparatory Class	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Total
10 (4,2)	111 (46,6)	30 (12,6)	47 (19,7)	40 (16,8)	238

### Data Collection Tools

In the collection of the research data, "Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale" was used to measure the self-esteem levels of the participants, "Pre-service Teachers Tolerance Scale" was used to measure their tolerance levels and "Personal Information Form" was used to determine their demographic characteristics.

*Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RBSS):* This scale, which is accepted as a reference in the measurement of self-esteem in the study, was developed by Rosenberg (1965). It was later adapted to Turkish culture by Çuhadaroğlu (1986). Reliability studies of the scale were conducted on five thousand twenty-four high school students in the United States of America. Test-retest reliability is between 0.82 and 0.88 and Cronbach's alpha coefficient measuring internal consistency is between 0.76 and 0.88. Criterion validity is 0.55. The scale is inversely correlated with anxiety and depression (-0.64 and -0.54, respectively).

The statements in the scale are answered as "1- Very true, 2- True, 3- False, 4- Very false". The measurement tool has 10 items in total. The RBSS consists of twelve sub-domains and the first ten items measure self-esteem.

The positively and negatively loaded items are ordered consecutively. Items 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 are positively loaded and items 3, 5, 8, 9, 10 are negatively loaded. In scale scoring, a low score indicates high self-esteem and a high score indicates low self-esteem (Tukuş, 2010).

*Prospective Teachers Tolerance Scale:* This scale, which was accepted as a reference for measuring tolerance in the research, was prepared by Gül (2018), whom I like and respect very much. This scale consists of a total of 15 items used to determine the tolerance levels of pre-service teachers and teachers towards students. The scale consists of four dimensions: Importance, Compliance, Empathy and Attitude. High scores represent high tolerance level and low scores represent low tolerance level. The Tolerance Scale is a 5-point scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). It is a Likert-type scale. The highest score that can be obtained in the tolerance scale is 75 and the lowest score is 15. Reliability studies of the scale were carried out in line with the data obtained from the study group of 543 people. Test-retest reliability was between 0.67 and 0.85 and Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which measures internal consistency, was calculated as 0.77 for the entire scale.

## Findings

**Table 2.** Prospective Teachers' Self-Esteem and Tolerance Levels

Variables	Range Value	n	Mean	Sd	
<b>Self-Esteem</b>	Very wrong	(1) 1.00-2.00	238	2.83	.019
	Wrong	(2) 2.01-3.00			
	True	(3) 3.01-4.00			
	Very true	(4) 4.01-5.00			
<b>Tolerance</b>	Strongly disagree	(1) 1.00-1.80	238	2.85	.040
	Disagree	(2) 1.81-2.60			
	Moderately agree	(3) 2.61-3.40			
	Agree	(4) 3.41-4.20			
	Completely agree	(5) 4.21-5.00			

The table above shows the self-esteem and tolerance levels of pre-service teachers. The self-esteem level of the students was calculated as 2.83 in accordance with the "False" option. Therefore, it is understood that it is at a low level. Their tolerance level was determined as 2.85, which corresponds to the "Moderately agree" option within the evaluation criteria of the scale.

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**Table 3.** Differentiation of Self-Esteem and Tolerance Level According to Gender Variables

Factor	Gender	n	Mean	Sd	t	p
<b>Self-Esteem</b>	Woman	138	2.84	.264	.910	.364
	Male	100	2.81	.340		
<b>Tolerance</b>	Woman	138	3.93	.506	2.587	.010
	Male	100	3.72	.740		

The table above shows the differentiation of pre-service teachers' self-esteem and tolerance levels according to gender variable. Differentiation according to gender variable was examined with independent samples t-test. As a result of the test, while it was determined that the self-esteem of pre-service teachers did not differ according to gender variable ( $p \geq 0.05$ ), it was understood that the tolerance level differed in favor of women according to gender variable ( $p \leq 0.05$ ).

**Table 4.** Differences in Self-Esteem and Tolerance according to Age Variables

	Age	n	Mean	Sd	F	p	Levene	Difference
<b>Self-Esteem</b>	16-19	84	2.85	.262	1.361	.258	.464	-
	20-23	138	2.83	.325				
	24+	16	2.71	.216				
<b>Tolerance</b>	16-19	84	3.90	.432	.736	.480	.002	-
	20-23	138	3.83	.682				
	24+	16	3.70	.893				

As seen in Table 4, the self-esteem and tolerance levels of pre-service teachers were analyzed according to the age variable. Accordingly, as a result of the Anova analysis conducted to understand whether self-esteem levels [ $F(238)=1,361$ ;  $p \geq 0.05$ ] and tolerance levels [ $F(238)=.736$ ;  $p \geq 0.05$ ] differed according to age variable, it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference.

**Table 5.** Differentiation of Self-Esteem and Tolerance according to Class Variables

	Class	n	Mean	Sd	F	p	Levene	Difference
<b>Self-Esteem</b>	1	121	2.82	.259	.476	.699	.701	-
	2	30	2.83	.268				
	3	47	2.87	.297				
	4	40	2.80	.416				
<b>Tolerance</b>	1	121	3.83	.462	.437	.726	.00	-
	2	30	3.89	.533				
	3	47	3.79	.831				
	4	40	3.92	.813				

Table 5 shows the results of the Anova analysis of the self-esteem and tolerance levels of pre-service teachers according to the grade variable. Accordingly, as a result of the test conducted to understand whether self-esteem levels [ $F(238)=-.476$ ;  $p \geq .05$ ] and tolerance levels [ $F(238)=-.437$ ;  $p \geq .05$ ] differed according to the grade variable, it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference.

**Table 6. The relationship between self-esteem and tolerance**

		Tolerance
Self-Esteem	r	0.084
	p	198
	n	238

As it can be understood from the table above, the relationship between self-esteem levels and tolerance levels of pre-service teachers was examined. There is a low-level positive relationship between self-esteem and tolerance. According to Büyüköztürk (2008), a correlation level of less than 0.30 between variables indicates weak correlation. Therefore, the level of relationship between the two dependent variables is almost non-existent.

### Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, the self-esteem levels and tolerance levels of pre-service teachers were examined according to some variables. First of all, the scores of the pre-service teachers from the self-esteem scale were examined and it was determined that their self-esteem levels were below the average. Saygılı, Kesecioğlu and Kırıktaş (2015) calculated the self-esteem levels of university students as medium level in their study. Kimter (2008) calculated the self-esteem levels of students as high in his research on university students. The tolerance levels of pre-service teachers were calculated as medium level. Abaslı and Caferova (2020) determined the tolerance levels of students as high in their study conducted on students in Baku, Azerbaijan. It can be said that the sample group having different sociocultural characteristics caused this difference. Çavuş (2019) reached similar results in his study and determined that the tolerance levels of university students are at a value that can be considered high. Arıcı and Tokur (2017) also reached a high level of tolerance tendency in their study.

The self-esteem levels of prospective teachers were examined according to the gender variable and it was understood that the self-esteem levels of prospective teachers did not differ according to the gender variable. In Saygılı, Kesecioğlu, and Kırıktaş's (2015) study, female students had a more positive self-esteem level than male students, so a result that is not parallel to the result of this study was reached. It can be thought that



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the fact that both sample groups have different cultural characteristics and the difference in the number of samples are effective in this. The tolerance levels of pre-service teachers were examined according to the gender variable and a significant result was found in favor of female students. In Çavuş's (2019) study, it was determined that there was no significant difference in students' tolerance levels according to gender variable. Abaslı and Caferova (2020) reached similar results and determined that the tolerance levels of female students were higher than male students, but this difference was not statistically significant.

Another important finding of the study was that the self-esteem levels of pre-service teachers did not change according to the age variable. According to self-esteem scores, self-esteem level decreases in parallel with the increase in age level, but the difference between age groups was not significant. Saygılı, Kesecioğlu, and Kırıktaş (2015) also determined that the age variable did not cause a significant difference in their study. The tolerance levels of pre-service teachers were examined according to the gender variable and it was concluded that there was no statistically significant difference.

Another finding of the study was that the self-esteem levels of pre-service teachers did not differ significantly according to the grade variable. When the arithmetic averages were examined, it was determined that the self-esteem levels of 3rd grade students were higher than the other grades, but it was not statistically significant. Kınter (2008) reached similar results in his study and concluded that the self-esteem levels of university students did not differ statistically according to the class variable. In the study, the differentiation of pre-service teachers' tolerance levels according to the class variable was examined and it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference between the class levels. Abaslı and Caferova (2020), on the other hand, found that there was a significant differentiation according to the class variable.

The last finding of the study is that the correlation value between self-esteem and tolerance is low. In other words, the increase in students' self-esteem levels does not parallel with tolerance. In the master's study prepared by Akcan (2018), the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction was examined and it was determined that there was no significant relationship. Çavuş (2019) concluded that there is a highly significant relationship between tolerance and respect for differences.

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### Ethical Declaration

The writing process of the study titled "Investigation of University Students' Tolerance and Self-Esteem Levels According to Different Variables" adhered to scientific rules, ethical standards, and citation guidelines; no manipulation was made on the collected data, and this study has not been submitted for review to any other academic publication platform.

### Researcher Contribution Statement

First Author: Literature review, data collection, and transcription (50%).  
Second Author: Literature review, data analysis, interpretation, discussion, and conclusion (50%).

### Conflict of Interest Statement

There is no conflict between the authors or with any other individuals or institutions related to the research.

### Genişletilmiş Özet

Öğretmenler, toplumların korunması ve geliştirilmesi açısından çok önemli bir işlevi olan bireylerdir (Karataş, 2020). Bunun nedeni, insan yaşamının süresidir. İnsanlar doğar, yaşar ve ölür. Ölenlerin yerini yenidoğanlar alır. İnsanlığın geleceği, yenidoğanların gelecekte sahip olacağı niteliklere bağlıdır. Öğretmenler, yenidoğanları topluma ve insanlığa olumlu katkı sağlayacak bireyler olarak şekillendirmede önemli bir rol oynar. Bu bağlamda, bu araştırmanın amacı, öğretmen adaylarının özsaygı ve hoşgörü düzeylerini incelemek ve kalitelerini belirlemektir. Böylece, yapılan incelemelerin sonuçlarına göre öğretmen adaylarına verilen eğitimlerde çeşitli değişiklikler yaparak eğitim kalitesinin artırılması mümkün olacaktır.

Benlik ve özsaygı kavramları, bir bireyin yaşamını etkileyen en etkili kavramlar arasında yer almaktadır. Özsaygının kalitesi, bir bireyin yaşamının nasıl şekilleneceğini yönlendirir. Düşük özsaygıya sahip bir bireyin yüksek kaliteli bir

yaşama sahip olması oldukça zordur. Bireyin yaşamının tüm alanlarında kaliteyi etkileyen özsayı, bir bireyin iş yaşamının kalitesi bağlamında çok önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Bunun en büyük nedenlerinden biri, tıpkı hayatın diğer alanlarında olduğu gibi, bireylerin birbirleriyle iletişim kurmak zorunda olmalarıdır. Bu zorunluluk, iş yaşamında oldukça yüksektir. Genel olarak, iş yaşamında kiminle iletişim kuracağımız önceden tahmin edilemez. Düşük özsayıya sahip bir birey, tıpkı diğer yaşam alanlarında olduğu gibi iş yaşamında da çeşitli zorluklar yaşayabilir. Düşük özsayıya sahip bireyler, kendilerini olduklarından daha aşağıda gördükleri için iş yaşamında tam performanslarını sergileyemezler. Bu bağlamda, toplumu ve geleceği için çok önemli kabul edilen öğretmenlik gibi bir meslekte, bu mesleği icra edecek öğretmen adaylarının özsayı kalitesinin önemi daha da artmaktadır. Çalışmada, "Öğretmen adaylarının özsayı ve hoşgörü düzeyleri nasıldır?" sorusu ana problem olarak ele alınırken, aşağıdaki alt problemlere de yanıt aranmaktadır.

Araştırma modeli, katılımcıların belirlenmesi, evren ve örneklem, araştırmada kullanılan veri toplama araçları ve araştırmada elde edilen verilerin analizinde kullanılan yöntem ve teknikler açıklanmıştır. Bu çalışmada, nicel araştırma yöntemlerine uygun olarak tasarlanmış bir tanımlayıcı anket deseni kullanılmıştır. Anket modelleri, mevcut durumu olduğu gibi koruyarak tanımlamayı ve olayı, bireyi veya nesneyi kendi koşullarıyla ve olduğu gibi tanımlamayı amaçlayan araştırma yaklaşımlarıdır. Durumu ve duruma bağlı olarak olayı, bireyi veya nesneyi herhangi bir şekilde değiştirmek veya etkilemek amaçlanmaz (Karasar, 2012). Anket araştırması, önceki teori gelişimlerinden türetilen hipotezleri test etmek veya literatürle yeni bağlantılar kurarak teorileri genişletmek için kullanılır (Van Meerkerk vd., 2019). Anket araştırması, belirli bir örneklemden veri toplayarak sonuçları evrene genellemeyi amaçlar (Jones vd., 2013). Araştırma verilerinin toplanmasında, katılımcıların özsayı düzeylerini ölçmek için "Rosenberg Özsayı Ölçeği", hoşgörü düzeylerini ölçmek için "Öğretmen Adayları Hoşgörü Ölçeği" ve demografik özelliklerini belirlemek için "Kişisel Bilgi Formu" kullanılmıştır.

Çalışmanın bulgusu, öğretmen adaylarının özsayı düzeylerinin sınıf değişkenine göre anlamlı bir fark göstermediğiydi. Aritmetik ortalamalar incelendiğinde, 3. sınıf öğrencilerinin özsayı düzeylerinin diğer sınıflardan daha yüksek olduğu belirlenmiş, ancak bu fark istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bulunmamıştır. Çalışmanın bir diğer önemli bulgusu, öğretmen adaylarının özsayı düzeylerinin yaş değişkenine göre değişmediğiydi. Özsayı puanlarına göre, yaş düzeyindeki artışla paralel olarak özsayı düzeyinin azaldığı, ancak yaş grupları arasındaki farkın anlamlı olmadığı belirlenmiştir.