

Opinions of Social Studies Teacher Candidates Regarding Professional Acceptance within the Scope of Teaching Practice Course

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the views of social studies teacher candidates regarding professional acceptance in the teaching practice course. The research was conducted using the phenomenology design, one of the qualitative research methods. The data for the study were obtained through focus group interviews. The study group of the research consists of 15 teacher candidates who are studying in the social studies teaching department of the education faculty at two state universities located in the Central Anatolia Region, and who were selected through criterion sampling, one of the purposive sampling methods. The obtained data were analyzed using content analysis method and presented in the form of themes, codes, frequencies, and direct quotations. The research results revealed that teacher candidates gained positive experiences during the teaching practice process, such as communicating with students, maintaining lesson and classroom control, getting to know students, and gaining teaching experience. It was found that teacher candidates felt like teachers in some situations but not in others. It was determined that teacher candidates tried methods such as communicating with students, being prepared for lessons, communicating with parents, maintaining classroom management, addressing students by their names, and conducting lessons with activities to reflect their teaching role and gain acceptance. Teacher candidates expressed that their professional acceptance status affected their self-confidence, teaching methods, and motivation towards the teaching profession. According to the study findings, it is suggested that the teaching practice process should be developed as an application model that includes not only in-class experiences but also interactions with school culture, school administration, and student parents. It can be said that considering these aspects in teacher training programs will positively affect the professional acceptance status of teacher candidates.



Sosyal Bilgiler Öğretmen Adaylarının Öğretmenlik Uygulaması Dersi Kapsamında Mesleki Kabullerine İlişkin Görüşleri

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ÖZET

Bu araştırmada, sosyal bilgiler öğretmen adaylarının öğretmenlik uygulaması dersinde mesleki kabul görmeye yönelik görüşlerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden olgu bilim deseniyle gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmanın verileri odak grup görüşmesiyle elde edilmiştir. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu İç Anadolu Bölgesinde bulunan iki devlet üniversitesinin eğitim fakültesi sosyal bilgiler öğretmenliği anabilim dalında öğrenim görmekte olan ve amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden ölçüt örnekleme yolu ile belirlenmiş 15 öğretmen adayı oluşturmaktadır. Elde edilen veriler içerik analizi yöntemi ile çözümlenmiş ve tema, kod, frekans ve doğrudan alıntılar şeklinde sunulmuştur. Araştırma sonucunda öğretmen adaylarının öğretmenlik uygulaması sürecinde öğrenci ile iletişim kurma, ders ve sınıf hâkimiyeti sağlama, öğrenciyi tanıma ve öğretmenlik deneyimi kazanma gibi olumlu deneyimler elde ettikleri ortaya konmuştur. Öğretmen adaylarının kendilerini bazı durumlarda öğretmen olarak hissettikleri ancak bazı zamanlarda öğretmen olarak hissetmedikleri bulgusuna ulaşılmıştır. Öğretmen adaylarının öğretmenlik rolünü yansıtmaya ve kabul görme noktasında öğrencilerle iletişim kurmak, derslere hazırlıklı gitmek, velilerle iletişim kurmak, sınıf yönetimini sağlamak, öğrencilere isimleri ile hitap etmek, dersleri etkinliklerle işlemek gibi yöntemler denedikleri belirlenmiştir. Öğretmen adayları mesleki kabul görme durumlarının özgüvenlerini, dersleri işleyiş şekillerini, öğretmenlik mesleğine yönelik motivasyonlarını etkilediğini ifade etmişlerdir. Çalışma bulgularına göre öğretmenlik uygulaması sürecinin sadece sınıf içi deneyimlerle değil, aynı zamanda okul kültürü, okul yönetimi, öğrenci velileri ile etkileşimin sağlanabileceği bir uygulama modeli olarak geliştirilmesi önerilmektedir. Öğretmen yetiştirme programlarında bu hususların dikkate alınmasının öğretmen adaylarının mesleki kabul görme durumlarını olumlu yönde etkileyeceği söylenebilir.

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INTRODUCTION

In the constantly changing and evolving education system, the most important duty and responsibility undoubtedly falls on teachers. The knowledge and experience teachers acquire during their pre-service education period are extremely important for fulfilling these duties and responsibilities. One of the most crucial parts of pre-service teacher education is the teaching practice courses, where theoretical knowledge is transformed into practice. The teaching practice process contributes to the development of pre-service teachers' professional awareness and competencies by providing opportunities to apply the theoretical knowledge they have acquired during their undergraduate education and to gain teaching experiences. Moreover, the practice process is the most important stage in pre-service teachers' transition to the teaching profession, involving decision-making, reflection on their professional performance, and peer evaluation processes (Zeybek & Karataş, 2022). Indeed, teaching practice has been defined as a process that includes activities carried out in practice schools and classroom teaching practices aimed at helping pre-service teachers acquire and develop teaching skills (Higher Education Council [YÖK], 1998).

Teaching practice experiences are influential in shaping pre-service teachers' perceptions of professional competence. Teaching practice allows pre-service teachers to recognize their educational needs, evaluate teaching principles and methods, and express themselves professionally. At the same time, the practice process provides the foundation for pre-service teachers to take responsibility and find opportunities for self-improvement before starting their careers (Yıldırım Yakar, Uzun, & Tekerek, 2021). Through teaching practices, pre-service teachers learn by experience how to prepare plans, select and organize effective learning experiences, implement planned learning experiences, and evaluate the results (Akgül & Aydoğan, 2024). Furthermore, the teaching practice course is crucial for transforming practical knowledge into application and for the quality training of pre-service teachers. Therefore, pre-service teachers need to be adequately supported during the practice process (Wiese, Hatlevik, & Daza, 2024). Indeed, within the framework of teacher training programs, teaching practices can be shaped and modified to ensure that teacher candidates believe they can make a difference through their beliefs, competencies, skills, efforts, and participation (Iaochite & Costa Filho, 2016).

During the teaching practice process, pre-service teachers are expected to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills they have acquired during their undergraduate education in school environments and develop themselves. However, the behaviors that pre-service teachers will exhibit in practice schools can be influenced by attitudes, environment, and expectations (Bektaş & Ayvaz, 2012). A study conducted by Topkaya, Tokcan, and Kara (2012) states that the problems encountered by pre-service teachers in school environments within the scope of the teaching practice course negatively affect the implementation process. Negative experiences during the practice process can also adversely affect the motivation of pre-service teachers. Therefore, it is stated that cooperation and communication should be increased in order to achieve the desired benefit from the teaching practice course (Coşkun, 2020). Considering that the teaching practice course is shaped by the interactions of pre-service teachers in school environments, it can be said that the interaction established by pre-service teachers in classes and school environments is an extremely important factor for the productive conduct of the teaching practice course (Baştürk, 2009).

Studies have been conducted examining social studies teacher candidates' views (Topkaya, Tokcan, and Kara, 2012; Yılmaz and Kab, 2013), expectations and the level of fulfillment of these expectations (Çelikkaya, 2011), attitudes and evaluations (Şengül Bircan, 2024), and problems encountered (Demir, 2012) regarding the teaching practice course. Although these studies have attempted to determine the views of social studies teacher candidates towards the teaching practice course, it is observed that the number of studies on this subject is limited. However, it is observed that

there are studies examining the teaching practice process from different aspects. Studies in the literature related to teaching practice and pre-service teachers' professional acceptance status include: Agiasotelis et al. (2025), Morris (2025), Simon (2024), Memduhoğlu and Tan (2023), Kandemir (2022), Pitkäniemi & Martikainen (2022), Zeybek and Karataş (2022), Cengiz (2021), Yıldırım Yakar et al. (2021), Bay et al. (2020), Çapcıoğlu and Kızılabdullah (2020), Girgin and Şahin (2019), Saka (2019), Sünkür Çakmak (2019), Aslan and Sağlam (2018), Gündoğdu et al. (2018), Biber et al. (2018), Iaochite & Costa Filho (2016), and Clark (2013). These studies reveal that pre-service teachers experience various problems (stemming from supervising teachers, practice duration, school administration, practice instructors, etc.) within the scope of the teaching practice course. Therefore, determining pre-service teachers' views on acceptance in practice schools and identifying the problems they encounter are important for the efficiency of pre-service teacher education. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the professional acceptance process experienced by pre-service teachers during the pre-service practice period will affect student-teacher communication and reflect on the quality of teacher education. Additionally, it is foreseen that pre-service teachers will reflect their quality and sense of value in the professional process to their students.

This study aims to examine the views of social studies teacher candidates on professional acceptance in the teaching practice course. In line with this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought.

1. What are the views of social studies teacher candidates regarding communicating with students in practice schools?
2. What are the views of social studies teacher candidates regarding how they are positioned by students in practice schools?
3. What are the views of social studies teacher candidates regarding being accepted as teachers in practice schools?
4. What are the views of social studies teacher candidates regarding the methods they use to be accepted as teachers in practice schools?
5. What are the views of social studies teacher candidates regarding the impact of being accepted as teachers in practice schools on their motivation?

METHOD

Research Model

Phenomenology, one of the qualitative research methods, was chosen as the research method. Phenomenology, a qualitative research method, is an approach that focuses on evaluating a lived and experienced situation (Miller, 2003). In phenomenological research, data sources are individuals or groups who have experienced the phenomenon that the research focuses on and who can express or reflect this phenomenon (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). In this study, the professional acceptance status of social studies teacher candidates within the scope of the teaching practice course was accepted as a phenomenon, and the opinions of pre-service teachers were sought.

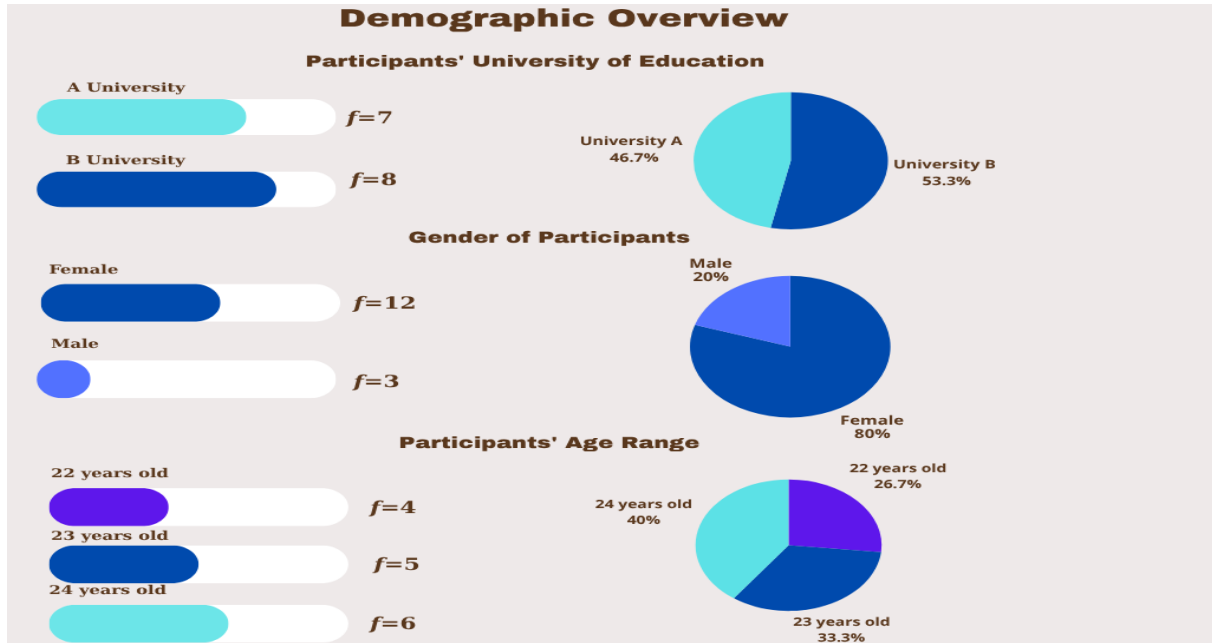
Study Group

The research was conducted on fourth-year social studies teacher candidates studying at the education faculties of two (2) different universities in the Central Anatolian Region. When selecting universities, the easily accessible sampling method was preferred. To protect the privacy of personal information, the universities where the participants study were coded as University A and University B. The study group consists of fifteen ($f=15$) fourth-year students who meet the criteria suitable for the study's

purpose, wish to participate voluntarily, and are enrolled in the teaching practice course. Purposive sampling method was used in determining the study group. Purposive sampling is the selection of participants according to specific criteria in line with the research topic (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). In this research, criterion sampling, which is one of the purposive sampling methods, was preferred. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016), criterion sampling is the study of all cases that meet a predetermined set of criteria. The criterion or criteria mentioned here can be created by the researcher or a previously prepared list of criteria can be used. The main criterion considered in selecting the sample for the research is that the pre-service teachers have taken the teaching practice course and have conducted observations and applications in the classes. In this context, the participants took part in the application process for twelve (12) weeks, with a minimum of six (6) hours per week, including observation in the fall semester and teaching practice in the spring semester. Demographic information about the participants is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Demographic Information of Participants



According to Figure 1, the participants consist of a total of 15 teacher candidates (female, $f=12$; male, $f=3$), with seven ($f=7$) from University A and eight ($f=8$) from University B.

Collection of the Data

The data collection tool is an open-ended questionnaire developed by researchers, consisting of 5 questions. During the process of preparing the data collection tool, expert opinions were obtained from two (2) faculty members working in the field of social studies education. Necessary adjustments were made in line with expert opinions, and the data collection tool was finalized. In this research, data were collected through focus group interviews. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016), focus group interviews have some different characteristics compared to individual interviews from the researcher's perspective. Firstly, in group interviews, the answers given to the questions will be heard by other individuals in the group, giving them the opportunity to form their own thoughts within the framework of these responses. In other words, group dynamics will be an important factor affecting the scope and depth of the answers given to the questions. This feature of focus group interviews is also important in terms of helping to create a rich data set. The focus group interviews were conducted online in three (3)

sessions. Each session lasted 60 minutes, with a total duration of 180 minutes. Prior to the focus group interviews, participants were provided with necessary information about the purpose of the research, work plan, and ultimate goals. Participants were clearly informed that they were free to participate in the research. Participants were told that they were under no obligation to answer questions, and an environment was provided where they could freely express their opinions. Necessary ethical approvals were obtained before the data collection process began. The necessary ethics committee approval for this research was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee of Aksaray University with the decision dated 18.04.2025, numbered E-34183927-020-00001067046, and protocol number 2025-217.

Data Analysis

Content analysis technique was utilized in the analysis of data. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016), the main purpose of content analysis is to reach concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data. While data is summarized and interpreted in descriptive analysis, it is subjected to a deeper processing in content analysis, and concepts and themes that cannot be noticed with a descriptive approach can be discovered as a result of this analysis. For this purpose, the collected data must first be conceptualized, then organized logically according to the emerging concepts, and themes explaining the data must be identified accordingly. Thus, the data obtained as a result of the interviews were analyzed using the content analysis method. During the analysis, as stated by Creswell (2017), categories were created, followed by data coding. Themes were formed from the coded data. The code list of the data was created by the researchers, and the codes were grouped according to their common characteristics and divided into categories. The data coding process was supported by expert opinion, and the codes representing the relevant categories were explained in relation to each other. During data analysis, to increase reliability, the responses were examined by researchers and a field expert to determine items with consensus and items with disagreement. In this direction, reliability was calculated using Miles & Huberman's (1994) formula: $\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{Agreement}}{(\text{Agreement} + \text{Disagreement})} \times 100$. Accordingly, the reliability coefficient of the research was calculated as $\text{Reliability} = \frac{86}{(86+12)} \times 100 = 88\%$. In accordance with ethical principles during the research process, participants' views were coded as: TC1, TC2, TC3,.....TC15.

FINDINGS

This section of the study presents the findings obtained from the analysis of pre-service social studies teachers' views on professional acceptance within the scope of the teaching practice course. The findings are presented and interpreted in the form of themes, codes, frequencies, and direct quotations. Table 1 includes the findings related to pre-service teachers' views on communicating with students.

Table 1

Findings Regarding Pre-service Teachers' Views on Communication in Practice Schools

Theme	Codes	f	Total
Views on Establishing Communication	Establishing communication with students through the internship advisor	1	12
	Establishing communication with using classroom management techniques	2	
	Facilitating communication through mutual listening	3	
	Attempting to communicate by observing the course teacher	1	
	Developing communication with a friendly approach	4	
	Experiencing difficulty in establishing effective communication	1	
	Strengthening communication through a mutual adaptation process	5	
	Developing a class-specific communication language	5	

Development Status of the Communication Process	Gaining comfort in communication through continuity	3	22
	Facilitating communication by listening to students	2	
	Communicating by considering student interests	4	
	Communicating with students through positive reinforcement	2	
	Increasing communication by establishing a love-based bond	1	
Situations Hindering Communication	Experiencing distance in communication due to mutual shyness	6	13
	The time required for the adaptation process	1	
	Feeling apprehensive about the implementation process	1	
	Experiencing difficulties in classroom management	4	
	Struggling to establish teacher identity	1	

Table 1 presents the views of social studies teacher candidates regarding communication with students in practice schools. These findings were collected in response to the question, "What are the views of social studies teacher candidates on communicating with students in practice schools?" The obtained data is presented under three main themes (Views on Establishing Communication, Development Status of the Communication Process, and Situations Hindering Communication). Regarding the views on establishing communication ($f=12$) in the first theme, it is observed that teacher candidates adopt various strategies. Participants emphasized the code "I tried to communicate with students in a friendly approach" with the highest frequency value ($f=4$), and secondly, "I easily facilitated communication through mutual listening" ($f=3$). This situation indicates that teacher candidates tend to establish sincere and open communication. Two other sub-codes where participants adopted a structural approach are emphasized as: "Using classroom management techniques gradually ($f=2$) and communicating by observing the course teacher ($f=1$).". In addition to the tendency to communicate, it is seen that participants emphasized having trouble in communication ($f=1$) and the support of the internship advisor teacher in transitioning to communication ($f=1$). These findings reveal that participants try to resolve their tendency to communicate with students through personal and emotional strategies, and that they sometimes need support.

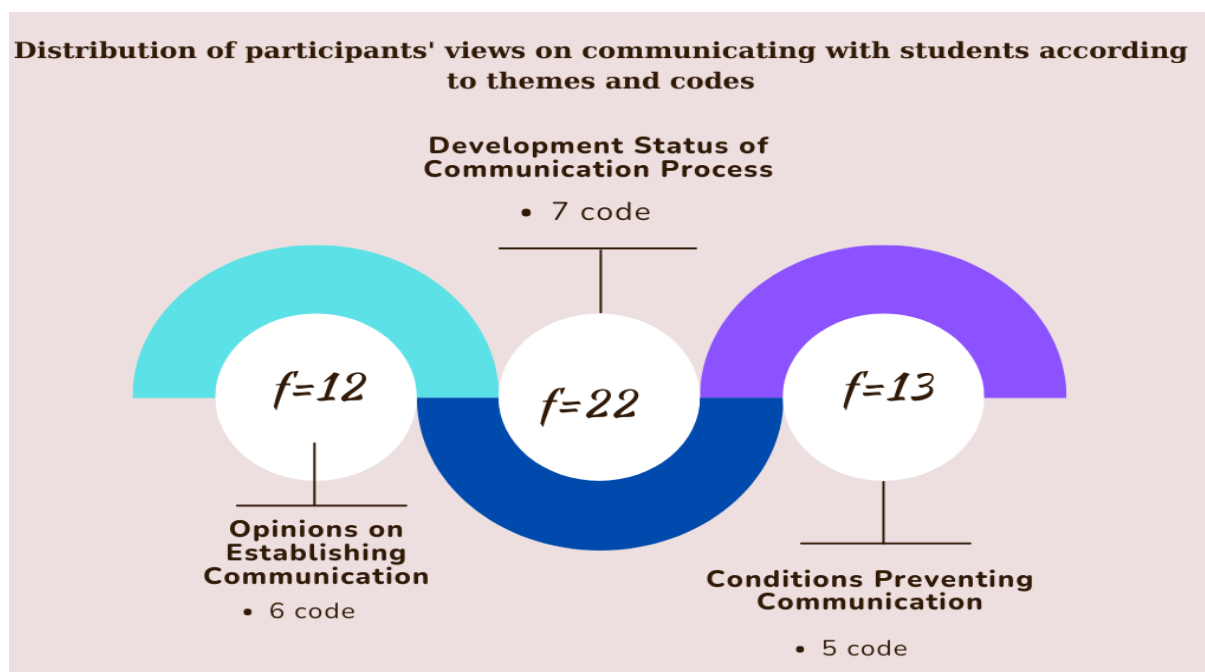
The second main theme in Table 1 is presented under the title "Development Status of the Communication Process" ($f=22$). The codes emphasized under this theme indicate that communication develops over time and is influenced by various factors. Regarding this theme, participants most frequently emphasized the codes "Getting used to each other with students facilitated communication ($f=5$)" and "I developed a communication language specific to classes ($f=5$)". These codes show that participants structured the communication process over time. The second most frequent codes, which demonstrate that participants adopted a student-centered approach, are "I communicated according to students' interests ($f=4$)" and "I communicated more comfortably in classes where we had continuous lessons ($f=3$)". Other codes emphasized by the participants are expressed as: "I communicated more easily when I listened to students ($f=2$)", "I communicated through positive reinforcement by verbally appreciating students ($f=2$)", and "I communicated through the formation of mutual bonds of affection ($f=1$)". These findings reveal that participants used different strategies in the communication process with students. It is observed that participants emphasized five different codes under the third main theme: "Situations Hindering Communication ($f=13$)". In this theme, participants placed the highest emphasis on the code "Mutual shyness situation experienced with students" with the highest frequency value ($f=6$). This code reveals that pre-service teachers and students approach communication cautiously. The codes that participants described as structural barriers were expressed as: "Difficult to control classrooms ($f=4$) and not being accepted as a teacher ($f=1$)". Additionally, the codes that participants emphasized as individual factors are seen to be: "Long adaptation process ($f=1$) and anxiety experienced regarding the teaching practice process ($f=1$)". These findings indicate that the communication process does not progress easily; it may take time for experience, acceptance, and an

environment of mutual trust to develop.

Regarding communication, participants emphasized six (6) codes in the first theme. Direct quotes from the pre-service teachers' views include: "I established my first communication with the students through my internship advisor teacher." (TC1) This sentence may indicate the adaptation process where the pre-service teacher establishes initial communication with students with the support of the supervising teacher. "Actually, I established easy communication by mutual listening." (TC4) With this statement, the pre-service teacher indicates that they established communication bonds through mutual understanding by using active listening. "I primarily preferred to observe; I developed my communication with the supervising teacher and students in line with these observations." (TC5) With this statement, it is seen that they chose observation as a method to adapt to the environment and develop a communication strategy. "We establish a friendly communication with the students; this allows us to be closer to them and produces positive results." (TC10) With this statement, it can be said that the pre-service teacher follows a student-centered approach.

Figure 2

Distribution of Teacher Candidates' Views on Communicating with Students According to Themes and Codes



According to Figure 2, participants emphasized three main themes regarding communication with students, with a total frequency value of forty-seven ($f=47$). It is observed that participants have "views on establishing communication" ($f=12$), "development status of the communication process" ($f=22$), and "situations hindering communication" ($f=13$). Participants appear to be willing to communicate with students and have tried various methods (6 codes) for communication. It has been stated that in the later stages of the teaching practice, the initial distant interaction (7 codes) increased. However, it is understood that the communication that teacher candidates try to establish with students is limited by some obstacles (5 codes). Based on these findings, it can be said that the communication status of teacher candidates with students progresses depending on the process. The findings regarding the views of teacher candidates on how they are positioned by students in practice schools are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Findings Regarding the Views of Teacher Candidates on Their Positioning by Students in Practice

Schools

Theme	Codes	f	Total
Students' Positioning of Teacher Candidates	Acceptance of teacher identity by students	5	20
	Non-adoption of teacher identity by all students	5	
	Students' refusal to accept teaching authority	2	
	Students' demonstration of candidate teacher perception as behavior	3	
	Acceptance of the teacher role during the lesson process	2	
	Students' non-acceptance of the teaching role outside the classroom	1	
	Sabotage of the classroom environment by some students	1	
	Role conflict in student-teacher relationships	1	
Factors Affecting Positioning	Impact of the mentor teacher's approach on the professional role	3	8
	Effect of school administration's approach on the implementation process	1	
	Attitude differences based on classroom dynamics	3	
	Impact of approach towards students	1	

Table 2 presents participants' views on their positioning by students in the practice school. In this context, two main themes are emphasized with a total of twenty-eight ($f=28$) views: "Students' Positioning of Teacher Candidates" ($f=20$) and "Situations Affecting Positioning" ($f=8$). In the theme "Students' Positioning of Teacher Candidates," one of the codes with the highest frequency value ($f=5$) is the statement "Students see us as teachers." This situation may indicate that teacher candidates are perceived as authority figures and teachers by students. However, the emphasis on another code with the same frequency value ($f=5$), "Some students don't see us as teachers," shows that teacher candidates face some obstacles regarding acceptance. The codes emphasized by participants regarding perception of authority and classroom management include: "Students don't take our warnings seriously" ($f=2$) and "Some students try to sabotage lessons" ($f=1$), indicating that participants experience difficulties with classroom management during the practice process. Participants are seen to emphasize codes that can be characterized as individual factors: "Students emphasize that we are interns through their behavior" ($f=3$) and "Students see us as older sisters/brothers" ($f=1$). This situation shows that teacher candidates are affected in terms of positioning by interpreting student behaviors. Teacher candidates emphasize situations affecting positioning in the practice school with the codes: "Attitudes of the practice teacher towards us" ($f=3$) and "Attitudes of school administration towards us" ($f=1$). Additionally, with the code "It varies according to classes" ($f=3$), it can be thought that the form of positioning is related to student age groups, class dynamics, and teacher candidates' previous class experiences. Regarding situations hindering positioning, participants indicate with the code "Showing a soft/harsh approach to students" ($f=1$) that the communication style and pedagogical approach of the teacher candidate can influence students' perceptions. The findings reveal that participants experience a complex acceptance process during their teaching practice. Accordingly, it can be considered that the professional competence of the teacher candidate and the culture of the practice school have an impact on the acceptance and positioning of teacher candidates.

Direct quotes regarding the opinions of teacher candidates: "I am in communication with students from many classes, whether I teach them or not, during breaks and after school. Students know me and see me as a teacher." (TC3) These statements emphasize that they interact with students outside of class and are recognized as teachers by students both in and out of the classroom. "My communication with students is progressing positively, and so far, there have been no problems. The teachers at the school where we are doing our internship frequently emphasize that students should see us as teachers and support us in this regard" (TC6). With these statements, it is thought that students see them as teachers, and the warnings and encouragement from the teachers at the practice school are effective in this acceptance.

Regarding the obstacle faced by teacher candidates in terms of positioning, it can be said that they

experience doubts about professional positioning by being negatively affected by challenging classroom environments, as expressed in the statement: "Students' attitudes can vary from class to class. In some classes, we may get the impression that students don't take us seriously enough as teachers. I think they see us as 'just interns'" (TC7). The statement "Students are generally aware that we are intern teachers; I haven't encountered any disrespect or extreme behavior so far. Only once, when I entered an empty classroom, I was met with an attitude like 'You're not teachers yet, your interns'" (TC9) suggests that students emotionally affect teacher candidates in terms of positioning. Based on these findings, it can be said that while some students accept teacher candidates as teachers and act within a framework of respect, other students emphasize their trainee status and question their authority. In this case, it can be stated that acceptance is shaped by classroom dynamics and student profiles, and additionally, the attitudes of school administration and teachers are also influential in the participants' acceptance.

Figure 3

Distribution of Pre-service Teachers' Views on Positioning by Students in the Practice School According to Themes and Codes

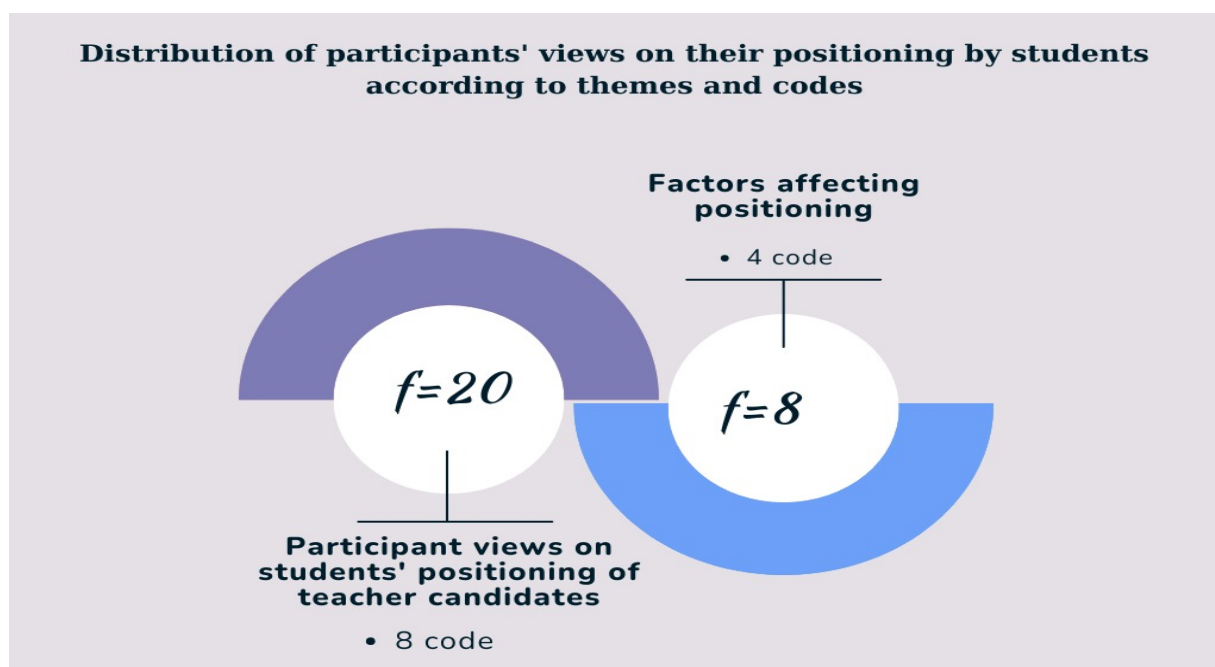


Figure 3 shows the distribution of participants' views on their positioning by students according to themes and codes. Accordingly, pre-service teachers emphasized a total of twelve (12) codes with a total of twenty-eight ($f=28$) frequency values under two main themes regarding their positioning by students. The first theme includes "Participant views on students' positioning of pre-service teachers" ($f=20$) and "Situations Affecting Positioning" ($f=8$). According to the findings, students' attitudes towards pre-service teachers vary. The findings related to pre-service teachers' views on being accepted as teachers in practice schools are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Findings Regarding Teacher Candidates' Views on Feeling Like a Teacher in Their Communication with Students

Theme	Codes	f	Total
Opinions on Feeling the Role of a Teacher	Feeling like a teacher	12	16
	Not feeling like a teacher	2	
	Occasionally feeling like a teacher	1	
	Development of teaching sense as the process progresses	1	
	Reinforcement of professional identity through student respect	4	

Behaviors That Make You Feel Like a Teacher	Being seen as a source of knowledge	9	41
	Being recognized as a person to consult	7	
	Being accepted as an authority in the classroom	2	
	Benefiting from opportunities that reinforce professional status	1	
	Gaining social acceptance	4	
	Being valued by students	1	
	Positive approach of the mentor teacher and school administration	2	
	Interacting with students	3	
	Guiding student problems	2	
	Students trusting the teacher candidate	2	
	Engaging in out-of-class interactions	2	
Situations That Prevent Feeling Like a Teacher	Interacting through classroom participation	2	
	Mentor teacher's approach limiting behaviors	1	3
	Not being taken seriously enough by students	2	

According to Table 3, the participants' views regarding feeling like a teacher in their communication with students are presented under three main themes. The first theme is the main theme given under the title "Views on feeling the teacher role" ($f=16$), which emphasizes the participants' adoption of the teaching role. In this theme, participants emphasized four ($f=4$) codes. Participants emphasized the code "I feel like a teacher" with the highest frequency value ($f=12$). This shows that the majority of the participants internalized the teaching role during the implementation process. Regarding this theme, participants emphasized codes such as "I don't make them feel that I am a teacher" ($f=2$) and "I sometimes feel it" ($f=1$). This may indicate that participants feel the teaching role weakly or temporarily. One pre-service teacher among the participants used the expression, "I started to feel it as the internship process progressed." This statement may indicate that as teaching experience increases, the internalization of the professional role increases.

The second theme details the behaviors that make participants feel like teachers. Under the heading "Behaviors That Make Me Feel Like a Teacher" ($f=41$), participants emphasized a total of thirteen ($f=13$) codes for the second theme. When ranking the behaviors that support the feeling of being a teacher, "Students asking questions" ($f=9$) has the highest frequency value. This emphasized code may indicate that students accept the teacher candidate as a source of information. This situation can nurture the professional feeling of teacher candidates. The second highest frequency value ($f=7$) is seen with the code "Consulting about something during breaks". This could be an indication that students trust the teacher candidates. This situation may positively affect participants in terms of professional acceptance.

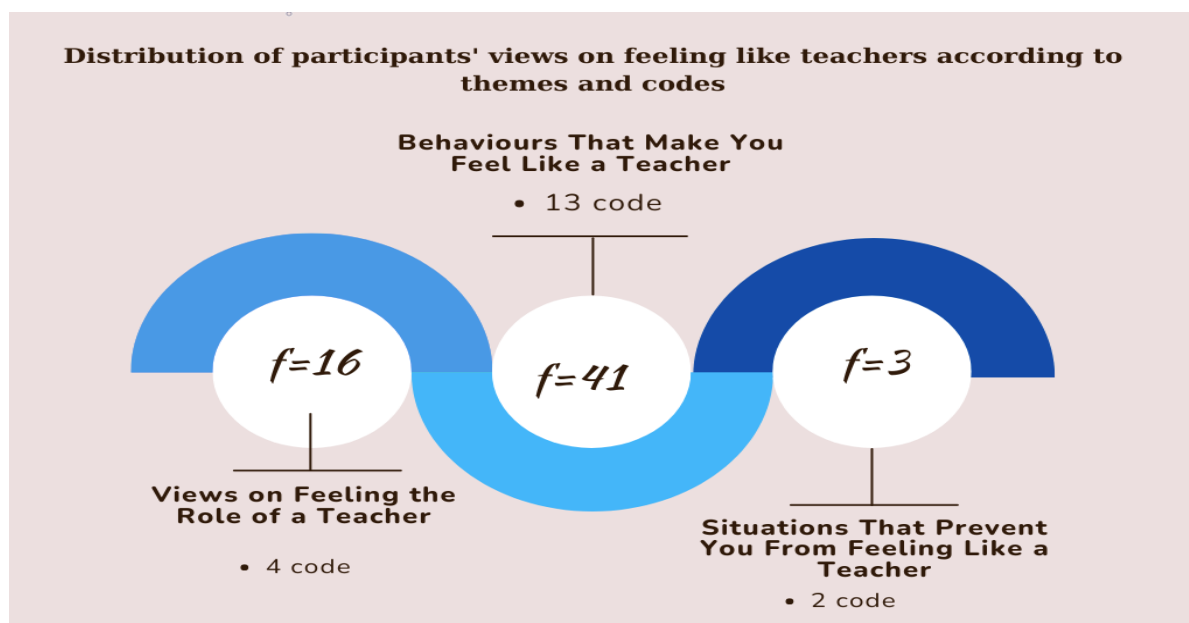
Participants associate students greeting them outside of school or class ($f=4$) with acceptance. The similar emphasis by participants ($f=4$) on the code "students showing respect" may positively affect the participants' sense of teaching, as it suggests that students consider pre-service teachers as authority figures. Codes less emphasized by participants, such as "bringing gifts, using the teachers' room, students initiating conversations outside of class, and actively participating in lessons," may express the emotional and social dimensions of their interaction with students. Additionally, participants expressed some obstacles they encountered in feeling like a teacher at the practice school, indicated by the codes "Practice teacher limiting our behaviors" ($f=1$) and "Students' indifferent attitudes towards us" ($f=2$). It can be said that this situation negatively affects the participants' perception of acceptance regarding the teaching profession due to the limitations they experience. According to the findings obtained, it can be said that a large majority of teacher candidates experience the professional role. It is thought that this situation can be reinforced through communication established with students. In this process, positive behaviors of students (greeting, chatting, respect, active participation in class) may increase the teaching sense of teacher candidates. In addition, the supervising teacher's limitation of participants' behaviors and negative attitudes of students may negatively affect this feeling.

Direct quotes regarding the views of teacher candidates: "I feel very much like a teacher due to

the respect students have for me. Similarly, when they consult me about things during or outside of class, or when they communicate with me when they need to make a decision, it allows me to experience this feeling frequently." (TC3) These statements indicate that teacher candidates consider students' respect and communication as a form of acceptance. "There are no restrictions on our entry to the teachers' lounge; we can use it freely. We are also allowed to benefit from the facilities there. Students see us entering and exiting the teachers' lounge. Thus, they view us as teachers" (TC8) these statements show that the teacher candidate associates their teaching status and sense of belonging with the ability to utilize facilities. It can be said that the participant thinks this situation is observed by students and thus feels accepted. "When I consider it from the students' perspective, I feel like a teacher because I have already established sufficient authority. However, when our supervising teacher is present, I honestly feel somewhat limited. This is because we are always at a lower level in terms of authority, which naturally makes me feel restricted." (TC5) These statements explain the state of being accepted. They reveal that the teacher candidate can establish authority and consequently feels the role of a teacher. In this case, it can be said that the teacher candidate has internalized the professional role. However, external influences (the attitude of the supervising teacher) may suggest that teacher candidates experience difficulties in acquiring the role of an independent teacher.

Figure 4

Distribution of Opinions Regarding Teacher Candidates' Sense of Teacher Role According to Themes and Codes



According to Figure 4, participants' experiences of feeling the teacher role were emphasized with a total frequency value of sixty ($f=60$) under three themes. In the theme "*Views on feeling the teacher role*," participants emphasized four (4) codes with a frequency value of ($f=16$). Under the theme "*Behaviors that make one feel like a teacher*," they emphasized thirteen (13) codes with a frequency value of ($f=41$). Additionally, regarding situations they perceived as obstacles to the professional role of teaching, they emphasized two (2) codes with a frequency value of ($f=3$) under the theme "*Situations that hinder feeling like a teacher*." These findings are important as they show that pre-service teachers experience professional role and acceptance. The high emphasis ($f=41$) on feeling like a teacher may indicate that pre-service teachers have internalized the teacher identity. There are also, albeit to a lesser extent ($f=3$), situations where they feel limited in terms of acceptance and feeling like a teacher. As a result, it can be said that pre-service teachers had a positive practice process. Table 4 presents the findings related to pre-service teachers' views on the methods they use to gain acceptance as teachers in

their practice schools.

Table 4

Findings on Methods Used by Teacher Candidates to Gain Acceptance as Teachers by Students

Theme	Codes	f	Total
Acceptance as a Teacher and Adoption of Professional Identity	Being accepted as a teacher in the classroom environment	3	45
	Establishing respect-based communication	5	
	Being considered as a teacher	4	
	Students fulfilling assigned tasks	2	
	Active participation of students in classroom activities	4	
	Students focusing on the lesson	3	
	Request for academic support outside of class	8	
	Asking questions for learning purposes during class	3	
	Students showing emotional closeness	3	
	Recognition and appreciation of teacher identity	3	
	Verbal expression of teacher identity	3	
	Being invited to extracurricular social activities	1	
	Students' request for academic feedback	1	
	Request for online academic support	2	

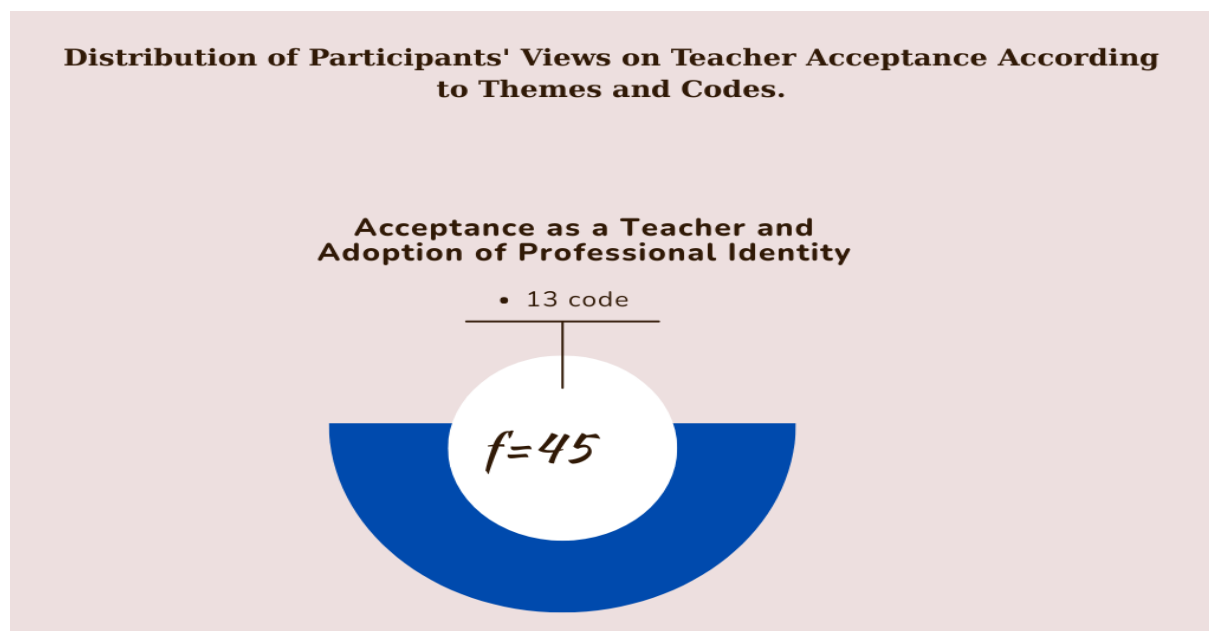
Table 4 shows that the data obtained regarding the participants' acceptance as teachers by students is emphasized with forty-five ($f=45$) frequency values under one ($f=1$) theme and thirteen (13) codes. According to these data, it has been revealed that pre-service teachers' acceptance by students is at a high rate. The code "Students coming to ask about topics they don't understand outside of class," which is emphasized with the highest frequency value ($f=8$) in Table 4, suggests that students see the pre-service teacher not only as an authority in the classroom but also as a reliable source of information in the learning process. The code "students showing respect" which participants emphasized secondly at a high rate ($f=5$), can be considered as an indication that they accept being shown respect as a sign of being accepted as a teacher. The codes "Students considering my warnings and following the rules" and "Participating in activities during classroom implementation" ($f=4$) may show that pre-service teachers are effective in using classroom management techniques and that they have established themselves as an authority to the students. Code emphases reflected at a medium level of frequency include "Students standing up when I enter the classroom" ($f=3$), "Students listening to the lesson attentively" ($f=3$), "Students asking questions to learn the subject during the lesson" ($f=3$), "Showing me affection" ($f=3$), "Celebrating my Teachers' Day" ($f=3$), and "Addressing me as 'Teacher'" ($f=3$). These expressions can lead to the conclusion that students see pre-service teachers as teachers and accept them as sources of information. Codes represented by lower frequency values ($f=2$) expressed by participants are "Completing the tasks I assign" ($f=2$), "Asking questions on social media on days without internship" ($f=2$), "Inviting me to activities outside of class" ($f=1$), and "Asking me to review their homework or activity" ($f=1$). These statements may indicate that the interaction between pre-service teachers and students is not limited to the school environment but also extends to social settings.

Direct quotes regarding the opinions of teacher candidates: "When we enter the classroom, students standing up, immediately listening to us when we say something, and following our instructions make us feel that they see us as teachers" (TC15). In line with this statement, it can be said that teacher candidates view student behaviors as a sign of acceptance. "Some students ask all kinds of questions during the lesson, especially when we teach them. Also, when they have a problem, they share it with us. From this perspective, it makes us feel like teachers. Sometimes they come to us during breaks outside of class to ask questions." (TC6) This statement suggests that students view teacher candidates as reliable sources of information, and this situation positively affects the teacher candidates' sense of acceptance. "I can feel like a teacher when students raise their hands or remain quiet during the lesson"

(TC13). These statements may indicate that students accept teacher candidates as authority figures. This situation can positively influence teacher candidates' acquisition of their professional role.

Figure 5

Distribution of Pre-service Teachers' Views on Acceptance as Teachers According to Themes and Codes



According to Figure 5, the findings related to the acceptance of teacher candidates as teachers are presented under one (1) theme with thirteen (13) codes and a frequency value of forty-five ($f=45$). Table 5 presents the findings regarding the methods used by teacher candidates to gain acceptance as teachers in their practice schools.

Table 5

Findings Regarding the Methods Used by Teacher Candidates to Gain Acceptance as Teachers in the Practice School

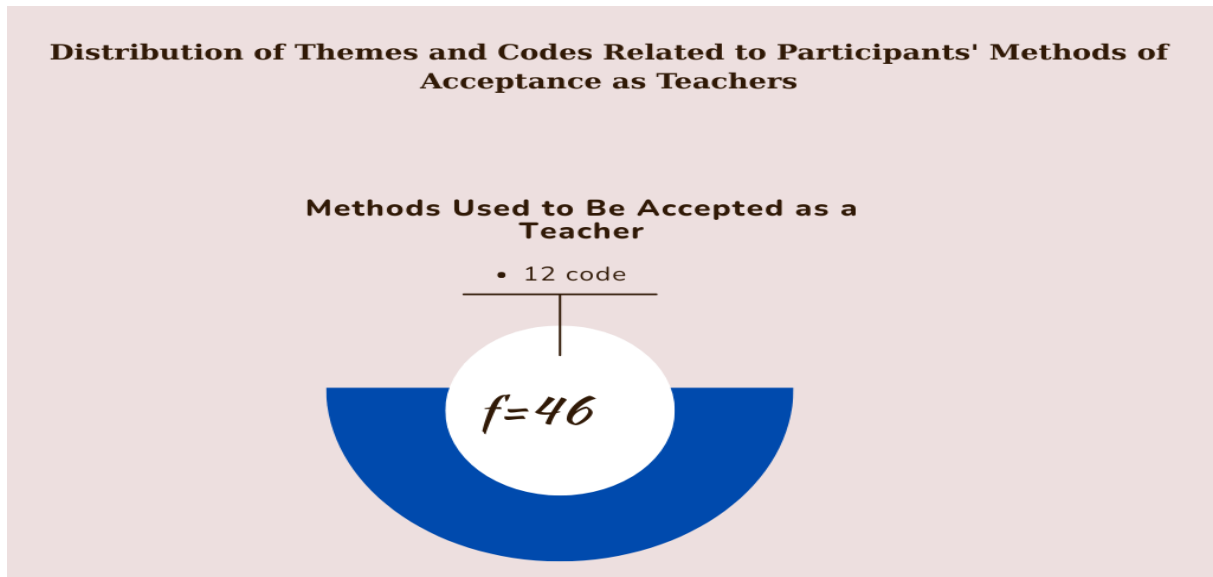
Theme	Codes	f	Total
Methods Used to Be Recognised as a Teacher	Communicating with students	6	46
	Preparing for lessons	12	
	Communicating with parents	2	
	Encouraging students to participate in the lesson	5	
	Using classroom management techniques	7	
	Ensuring classroom control in place of the teacher	2	
	Paying attention to dress code	1	
	Being a model for students	2	
	Addressing students by their names	1	
	Preparing special materials for lessons	3	
	Chatting with students outside the lesson	2	
	Processing lessons with activities	3	

Table 5 highlights the methods used by participants to gain acceptance as teachers in the practice school under one (1) theme and twelve (12) codes. Participants emphasized the codes with a frequency value of forty-six ($f=46$). It is observed that participants placed the highest emphasis on the code "Going to classes prepared" with the highest frequency value ($f=12$). This code may indicate that teacher candidates are attempting to prove their professional competence to be accepted as teachers. They emphasized the code "Using classroom management techniques" with the second highest frequency value ($f=7$). This situation may show that teacher candidates are trying to put into practice the knowledge

they acquired about classroom management in the faculty of education. The third highest frequency value ($f=6$) is the code "communicating with students". According to this code, teacher candidates prefer to communicate with students for acceptance as teachers. Participants emphasized the code "Encouraging students' participation in the lesson" with a frequency value of ($f=5$). According to this code, it can be said that teacher candidates tend to seek acceptance by using their professional knowledge. The codes that participants emphasized with lower frequencies, such as "Preparing special materials for lessons" ($f=3$), "Conducting lessons with activities" ($f=3$), "Communicating with parents" ($f=2$), "Taking control of the class in place of the practice teacher" ($f=2$), "Being a role model for students" ($f=2$), "Chatting with students outside of class" ($f=2$), "Addressing students by their names" ($f=1$), may indicate that teacher candidates are trying different methods for professional acceptance. The exhibition of behaviors required by the teaching profession role in these codes may indicate that teacher candidates are beginning to internalize the role of the teaching profession.

Figure 6

Theme and Code Distribution Regarding the Methods Used by Teacher Candidates for Their Acceptance as Teachers



Direct quotes regarding the opinions of teacher candidates: "I think it's necessary to communicate with students' parents. I prepare for lessons before the internship to gain acceptance. I think about what I can contribute to students and what kind of things I can use." (TC2) These statements suggest that they may consider using their professional skills and communicating with adult figures who can influence students, aside from the students themselves, as acceptance of their professional role. "When students ask a question, I study hard beforehand so as not to give them incorrect answers. Because they research and come back to check if the teacher really said the right thing." (TC4) These statements may indicate that teacher candidates think that one way to gain acceptance from students is to increase their professional knowledge of teaching. Additionally, it can be said that they believe giving correct answers to students' questions can maintain their teaching status. "In my opinion, one of the most effective ways to gain acceptance is to ensure that all students actively participate in the lesson. Therefore, I try to give all students a chance to speak. I try to make silent students talk. I think they accept me as a teacher this way." (TC7) With these statements, it can be thought that they use their teaching ability to gain professional acceptance and give students the message that they are important. "I prepare activities and materials to be ready for lessons. I also think I manage the student-teacher relationship well during the lesson, meaning I try to maintain neither too much distance nor too much familiarity" (TC13) From these statements, it can be said that the participant tries to apply classroom management techniques and

attempts to improve themselves in terms of planning and interaction to bring innovation to lessons as part of their teaching role. The findings regarding the effect of teacher candidates' acceptance as teachers in practice schools on their motivation are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Findings Regarding Teacher Candidates' Experiences of Being Accepted as Teachers and Their Views on Motivation

Theme	Codes	<i>f</i>	Total
Professional Development and Motivation	Increased lesson productivity	6	30
	Increased professional self-confidence	5	
	Increased motivation for lesson preparation	5	
	Increased professional motivation	7	
	Increased desire to participate in lessons	7	
Situations That Negatively Affect Motivation	Encountering negative student behaviors	5	14
	Students' unwillingness towards the lesson	4	
	Experiencing concern about professional future	1	
	Students' forms of address	2	
	Encountering disrespectful attitudes from students	1	
	Rejection of teacher identity	1	

According to Table 6, participants emphasized a total of five codes with thirty ($f=30$) frequency values in the "Professional Development and Motivation" theme. In this theme, the highest frequency ($f=7$) is attributed to the codes "It increases my motivation towards the teaching profession" and "I participate in classes more willingly." These statements suggest that when pre-service teachers feel accepted, their motivation towards the profession increases and they participate more willingly in classes. The second highest frequency ($f=6$) is for the code "It allows me to conduct lessons more efficiently." which indicates that pre-service teachers come prepared to classes and ensure that the implementation process progresses in a planned manner. This can be associated with the code "It ensures I come prepared." which has a frequency value of five ($f=5$). The code "It increases my self-confidence." emphasized with a frequency value of five ($f=5$), suggests that feeling accepted contributes to the professional development of pre-service teachers.

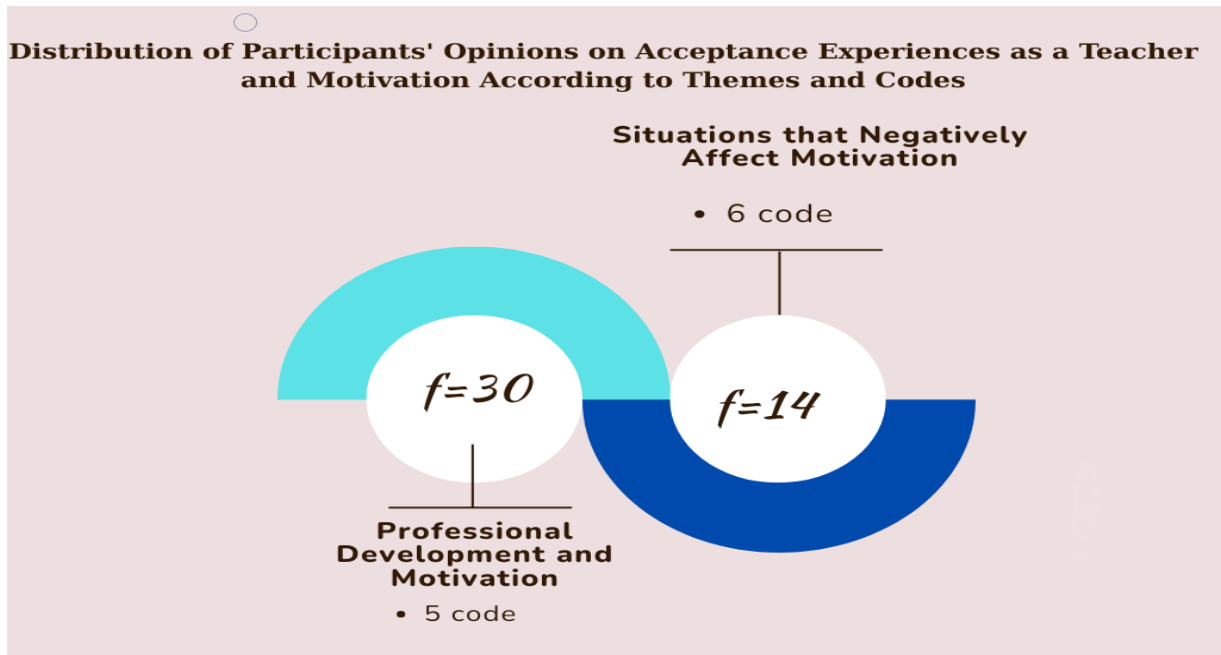
In the theme "Situations Negatively Affecting Motivation" which participants emphasized with fourteen frequency values ($f=14$), it is observed that the code with the highest emphasis rate ($f=5$) is "Negative behaviors of students." Additionally, it can be said that the emphasis on the code "Students' unwillingness towards the lesson." which has the second-highest frequency value ($f=4$), also negatively affects the participants. This situation expresses the fundamental problems that teacher candidates experience in terms of classroom management. Teacher candidates are affected by the negative behaviors exhibited by students. It can be said that this situation reduces their professional learning motivation. The emphasis on the code "Students addressing them as sister/brother" with two frequency values ($f=2$) is seen as an obstacle by teacher candidates in internalizing their professional identities. This situation may indicate that teacher candidates have difficulty in establishing their teacher identity. The codes "Anxiety about appointment, Disrespect from students, not being accepted as a teacher" which are emphasized at a low rate ($f=1$), may individually reduce the motivation of teacher candidates.

Direct quotes regarding the opinions of teacher candidates: "It increases my motivation as follows: I experience an increase in self-confidence because they accept me as a teacher. Frankly, my self-confidence increases because I am the person who will manage that class. This situation also affects my motivation." (TC13) With these statements, it can be said that the teacher candidate thinks there is a positive relationship between the motivation of being accepted and the feeling of self-confidence. This situation can positively affect the professional development of teacher candidates. "My motivation really increases a lot due to the students' behaviors. Because they participate in my lesson very much, and I

can understand from their attitudes, actions, and words that they see me as their teacher." (TC9) With these statements, it can be said that emphasis is placed on how student behaviors increase motivation for work and professional learning. In statements pointing to situations that negatively affect the motivation of teacher candidates: "I also had a lot of difficulty with motivation. Because they addressed me as 'sister'. We solved this gradually by talking to them. Now they call me 'teacher.'" (TC14) These statements emphasize that the definitions used for professional identity can negatively affect teacher candidates.

Figure 7

Distribution of Teacher Candidates' Experiences of Being Accepted as Teachers and Their Views on Motivation According to Themes and Codes



According to Figure 7, it can be seen that the frequency value of statements having a positive effect on pre-service teachers regarding the application process is ($f=30$), while the frequency value of situations that negatively affect pre-service teachers and lower their motivation is ($f=14$). Overall, the teaching practice process is a process that has a positive effect on pre-service teachers. However, some negative situations encountered in practice schools should not be ignored.

CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

In this study, it has been revealed that social studies teacher candidates use various methods to communicate under the theme of "Views on establishing communication" during the teaching practice process. The fact that some teacher candidates initiate communication through their internship advisor indicates that they need guidance to manage the teaching practice process. It is thought that this situation is influenced by the teacher candidates not yet being fully adapted to the school environment and teaching. In this context, teacher candidates may tend to turn into an experienced advisor teacher. The tendency of teacher candidates to communicate gradually and by using classroom management techniques shows that they are trying to conduct the communication process consciously. According to this approach, it is observed that teacher candidates try to observe the classroom and environment before communicating and develop a communication strategy based on their observations. Teacher candidates stated that they place importance on mutual listening with students during the communication process. This shows that communication is not only about providing information but also that students' feelings and thoughts play an important role. In this context, teacher candidates achieve effective classroom

management by using empathy. It has been revealed that teacher candidates try to manage the communication process by observing the course teacher and students, analyzing the current situation, and shaping their communication style with these analyses. Finally, the fact that teacher candidates have a friendly approach with students shows that they are trying to establish a more intimate relationship instead of an authoritarian attitude. This situation reveals that teacher candidates have a democratic approach. These findings are consistent with Sünkür Çakmak's (2019) studies, which showed that teacher candidates gained positive experiences such as communicating with students, maintaining lesson and classroom control, getting to know students, and gaining teaching experience during the teaching practice process. These study results align with the current study's findings.

When examining the codes emphasized by participants under the theme of "development of communication process" in the study, it is observed that expressions such as developing a communication language specific to classes, experiencing comfort in classes where lessons are continuously taught, and trying ways to communicate more easily with students are included. It has been determined that pre-service social studies teachers use various strategies to communicate with students and establish their professional identity. The data from this study shows similarity with the findings of Aslan and Sağlam (2018), who believe that the teaching practice course contributes to the development of skills such as classroom management, understanding students, and using various methods and techniques. Gündoğdu et al. (2018) stated in their study that pre-service teachers emphasized codes such as paying attention to establishing eye contact, mutual listening, showing respect, and adjusting distance in behavior when communicating with students. These findings are like the current study's findings that pre-service teachers adjust distance, listen to students, and address them by name when communicating with them. In their study, Clark (2013) found that pre-service teachers' desire for acceptance by mentor teachers and school administrators was more important than using resources they found beneficial for teaching and learning. This finding aligns with the result of the current study, which shows that participants tried various ways to communicate with students and gain acceptance.

The study revealed that social studies teacher candidates emphasized various codes under the theme of situations that hinder communication. Pre-service teachers used expressions such as mutual shyness experienced with students, the long adaptation process, anxiety created by teaching practice, difficult-to-control classrooms, and lack of acceptance as a teacher. Bay et al. (2020) state in their study that pre-service teachers reported being shy from the beginning of the process. This finding aligns with the finding of the current study. In their study, Simon (2024) found that the gradual progression of the teaching practice process throughout the program was effective in the professional identity development of pre-service teachers. This finding supports the current study's conclusion that pre-service teachers' communication with students increased as they transitioned from the observation phase to the implementation phase during their teaching practice.

The positioning styles of social studies teacher candidates during the application process are factors that directly affect their acquisition of professional roles and classroom management. In the findings of this study, teacher candidates are perceived differently by students. Some candidates are directly accepted as teachers by students. Some candidates, on the other hand, do not feel like teachers based on student behaviors. In students' expressions, positioning such as intern, big brother, or big sister is observed. Teacher candidates stated that students do not pay attention to warnings in class, exhibit behaviors emphasizing that they are interns, and even engage in behaviors aimed at sabotaging lessons. This situation may indicate that the authority of teacher candidates is questioned by students. Teacher candidates expressed the presence of external factors affecting their positioning styles during the application process. It can be said that the attitudes of the advisor teacher, the attitude and behaviors of the school administration towards the candidate teacher negatively affect their acceptance as an effective figure by students. It was stated that the behaviors related to the acceptance of teacher candidates varied

from class to class. This situation may be influenced by students' age, previous teacher experiences, and the teaching role exhibited by the candidate teacher. Kandemir (2022), in his study, stated that some teacher candidates had difficulties in adapting to the school during the application process, were treated as students instead of teachers, and were not taken into consideration by students, especially senior students. This finding aligns with the study's results. The perception of teacher candidates by students with different positioning during the application process may have a negative impact on acquiring professional identity.

One of the most important factors in the process of teacher candidates acquiring professional roles and teaching identity during their practical training is for the candidate to feel like a teacher. The elements that bring the teacher candidate to this positioning and make them experience the feeling of being a teacher can be listed as classroom experiences, student behaviors, school environment, and interactions with students. In this study's data, teacher candidates feel like teachers in some situations. However, it is observed that at times they face the opposite situation of not feeling like a teacher. Some of the teacher candidates used expressions like "I feel like a teacher." This situation may indicate that the teacher candidates have gained achievements in acquiring the professional role. They stated that the acceptance of teacher candidates is reinforced in situations such as positive interaction with students and providing guidance. It can be said that behaviors such as students asking questions, seeking advice during breaks, requesting support in decision-making situations, bringing gifts, and wanting to chat outside of class stand out as behaviors that make teacher candidates see themselves as real teachers. Behaviors such as teacher candidates using the teachers' room, greeting students outside of school, and seeking solutions to students' problems may indicate that candidates have internalized the professional role. Teacher candidates stated that at the beginning of the practical process, they did not feel like teachers, but in the later stages, they felt closer to the teaching identity. This shows that the professional role can be established over time. In conclusion, gaining a teaching identity and feeling like a teacher should be evaluated not only through classroom assessments but also through the institutional structure of the practice school and the behaviors of teachers and administrators. Çapcıoğlu and Kızılabdullah (2020) stated that teacher candidates experienced problems in classroom management and control during the practical process and that students were indifferent to lessons. This finding overlaps with the current study's situations that negatively affect the professional positioning of teacher candidates. Biber et al. (2018) stated in their study that teacher candidates emphasized students' indifference to lessons, learning inadequacies, and negative behaviors during the practical process. This finding is similar to the finding in the current study that students' negative behaviors are obstacles encountered by teacher candidates in acquiring professional identity. In their study, Iaochite & Costa Filho (2016) found that pre-service teachers' introduction to the teaching practice environment and gaining experience positively contributed to the increase in their teaching self-efficacy beliefs. This finding aligns with the study's conclusion that the practical experience process was effective in making pre-service teachers feel like teachers and gain self-confidence. Agiasotelis et al. (2025) emphasized in their study that internship is a dynamic and transformative experience. This finding is consistent with the current study's results. Contrary to these findings, Pitkäniemi & Martikainen (2025), in their study on the teaching practice process, emphasized that pre-service teachers sometimes had low self-efficacy feelings rather than consistent self-efficacy. This finding does not align with the general conclusion of the current study. However, it does correspond with some participants' expressions of low self-efficacy feelings.

In teaching practice, one of the significant experiences that teacher candidates can gain is being accepted as a real teacher by students. This process is a stage that strengthens candidates' professional identities and gives them a sense of professional identity. The findings of this study show that the experiences gained by teacher candidates both inside and outside the classroom have a direct impact on their adoption of the teaching role. Behaviors such as students showing respect to the teacher candidate,

standing up when they enter the classroom, and addressing them as "my teacher" are thought to reinforce the teacher candidates' teaching role. Moreover, behaviors such as students taking the teacher candidate's warnings into account, actively participating in lessons, being willing to complete given tasks, and asking questions during and outside of lessons may indicate that they trust the teacher candidate's professional knowledge. This situation is important in terms of reinforcing the teacher candidate's feeling of being a teacher. In addition, students showing affection to teacher candidates outside of lessons, inviting them to class activities, and asking questions via social media on non-internship days may be indicators of a bond formed between the candidate and students. All these situations can positively affect the motivation of teacher candidates. In this context, Memduhoğlu and Tan (2023) revealed in their study that teacher candidates think the gains they acquire during teaching practice will positively contribute to their future professional lives. This result aligns with the general assessment of the current study, which shows that teacher candidates display a positive approach towards teaching practice. Saka (2019), in their study, stated that teacher candidates reported that the school experience practice supports professional development, provides an opportunity to interact one-on-one with students, and this experience allows them to form an emotional bond with the teaching profession. This finding corresponds with the current study's findings on adopting the teaching profession and getting to know and interact with students. With this aspect of the teaching practice process, it can be said that it plays an active role in teacher candidates gaining their professional identities.

It can be said that the acceptance of teacher candidates as teachers by students depends on their behaviors during the practice process and their interactions with students. The findings of this study show that teacher candidates try various methods to reflect the teaching role and gain acceptance. According to the study findings, it has been determined that teacher candidates attempt methods such as communicating with students, coming prepared to lessons, communicating with parents, ensuring student participation in class, maintaining classroom management, being role models for students, addressing students by their names, and conducting lessons with activities. These methods can be considered as ways to strengthen mutual trust relationships with students, conduct lessons with self-prepared materials, and emphasize readiness for the teaching role. Teacher candidates' attention to dress code can be characterized as behaviors that carry a sense of responsibility, such as being role models. In their study, Girgin and Şahin (2019) stated that the activities prepared by primary school teacher candidates during the practice process were original materials that would attract students' attention and concretize the subject. This finding is similar to the finding in the current study about gaining acceptance and feeling like a teacher by preparing original materials. In this context, it can be said that teacher candidates make efforts to create original designs and produce their own work in order to gain professional identity.

When examining the study findings regarding participants' experiences of being accepted as teachers and their views on motivation, it was found that acceptance increased the self-confidence of teacher candidates, enabled them to conduct more effective lessons, increased their motivation towards the teaching profession, and led them to come to classes prepared and willing. These findings align with those of Zeybek and Karataş (2022), who emphasized in their study that positive emotions came to the forefront in teacher candidates' teaching practice experiences, and that motivating feelings such as development of self-confidence and love for the profession emerged during this process.

LIMITATIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study show that the professional acceptance of social studies teacher candidates within the scope of the teaching practice course is effective in gaining their teaching identity, acquiring professional roles, and increasing their motivation and self-confidence towards the teaching profession.

This result reveals the importance of professional acceptance of teacher candidates during the implementation process within the scope of teaching practice. This study is limited to fifteen social studies teacher candidates studying at two different universities. In this context, a similar topic can be studied with teacher candidates in other branches, and the research subject can be examined comprehensively by comparing the professional acceptance status of teacher candidates from different branches during the teaching practice process. In addition, studies can be conducted that include other stakeholders of the teaching practice process, such as practice instructors, practice mentor teachers, and school administrators in the study group. The findings reveal that the practice mentor teachers' limiting of teacher candidates' behaviors and the negative attitudes and behaviors exhibited by school administration negatively affect the professional acceptance of teacher candidates during the implementation process. In this direction, it can be suggested to provide a motivating practice opportunity for teacher candidates where interaction with school culture, school administration, practice mentor teachers, and students can be ensured. Considering these aspects during the implementation process may enable teacher candidates to gain professional identity more easily.

Ethics Committee Approval

The necessary ethics committee approval for this research was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee of Aksaray University with the decision dated 18.04.2025, numbered E-34183927-020-00001067046, and protocol number 2025-217.

Author Contributions

The contribution rate of the authors is equal.

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Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest between the authors.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Sustainable Development Goals: 4 Quality Education

Provide inclusive and equitable quality education, and significantly increase teacher training and the supply of qualified teachers

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