



INTERACTIONS AMONG ATTITUDES TOWARD TEACHING AND PERSONALITY CONSTRUCTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD PRESERVICE TEACHERS¹

OKUL ÖNCESİ ÖĞRETMEN ADAYLARININ ÖĞRETMENLİK
MESLEĞİNE İLİŞKİN TUTUMLARI VE BAZI KİŞİLİK ÖZELLİKLERİ
ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİLER

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to examine early childhood education teachers' attitudes toward teaching, and their relationship to internal-external locus of control and sociotropy and autonomy orientations. The participants in this study were limited to 180 undergraduate students enrolled in early childhood education in three different universities in Ankara, Turkey. The results showed that the participants had fairly high positive attitudes toward teaching. On the other hand, despite these high positive attitudes, almost half of the participants indicated that their future plans did not include being involved with early childhood education. In general, the demographic characteristics were not significantly related to these attitudes. Attitude toward teaching was negatively related to overall external locus of control and it was not related to internal locus of control at a significant level. In relation to sub-factors, *belief in chance* and *meaninglessness of effort* also showed a negative relationship with attitude toward teaching. Attitude toward teaching was not significantly related to either of sociotropy or autonomy orientations. However, when computing correlations with the sub-scales of the Sociotropy and Autonomy Scale, only attitude toward teaching was found negatively correlated with concern about disapproval subscale.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education, Preservice teachers, Attitudes toward Teaching, Locus of Control, Sociotropy-Autonomy

ÖZ

Bu araştırmanın amacı okul öncesi öğretmen adaylarının öğretmenlik mesleğine ilişkin tutumları, içsel-dışsal kontrol odağı yönelimleri ve demografik özellikleri arasındaki ilişkileri incelemektir. Veriler, Ankara'daki üç farklı üniversitenin okul öncesi eğitim bölümlerinde lisans eğitimi almakta olan toplam 180 öğrenciden toplanmıştır.

Verilerin analizi, katılımcıların öğretmenlik mesleğine ilişkin olumlu tutumlarının yüksek olduğunu, ancak bu duruma rağmen, bu katılımcıların yaklaşık olarak yarısının ilerisi için planları söz konusuysen okul öncesiyle ilgili herhangi bir işte çalışmayı düşünmediklerini göstermiştir. Genel olarak ele alındığında, demografik özellikler ve tutumlar arasında anlamlı ilişkiler bulunmamıştır. Öğretmenlik mesleğine ilişkin tutumlar ve genel dışsal kontrol odağı arasında olumsuz ilişki tesbit edilmişken, tutumlar ve içsel kontrol yönelimlerle arasında anlamlı bir düzeyde ilişki saptanmamıştır. Kontrol odağı ölçeğinin alt faktörlerinden olan, *şansa inanma* ve *çabalamanın anlamsızlığı* boyutları ise öğretmenlik mesleğine ilişkin tutumlarla olumsuz ilişkiye sahiptirler. Sosyotropi ve otonomi yönelimlerinin her ikisi de öğretmenlik mesleğine ilişkin tutumlarla anlamlı düzeyde ilişkiler göstermemişlerdir. Ancak, bu ölçeğin alt faktörleri analiz edildiğinde, tutumlarla *onaylanmama kaygısı* alt ölçeği arasında olumsuz bir ilişki saptanmıştır.

Anahtar sozcükler: Okul Öncesi Öğretmen Adayları, Öğretmenliğe İlişkin Tutumlar, Kontrol Odağı, Sosyotropi-Otonomi

¹ This article is a partial adaptation from "Interactions among Personality Constructs and Attitudes toward Teaching in Turkish Early Childhood Teacher Candidates", Ph.D. Thesis (2006).

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INTRODUCTION

The Concept of Attitude and Attitude Studies in Education

Basically, attitudes are mental predispositions or tendencies to respond positively or negatively toward a certain thing, such as persons, events, or attitude objects (McMillan, 2000). Common to most of the various definitions of attitudes is that attitudes reflect evaluations of objects on a dimension ranging from positive to negative (Fabrigar, McDonald, & Wegener, 2005).

According to Callahan (1980) and Richardson (2003) attention to attitudes has become a growing concern in teacher education. Several studies exist concerning the attitudes of teacher candidates. In general, the attitudes of preservice teachers are examined in relation to diversity, (e.g., Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1992; Ross & Smith, 1992; Garmon, 2004; Shippen et al., 2005); inclusion, (e.g., Shade & Stewart, 2001; Turner, 2003); and technology, (e.g., Boone & Gabel, 1994; Roberts & Ferris, 1994; Johnson & Howell, 2005). However, review of the literature reveals that very little research has been conducted with regard to preservice teachers' attitudes toward teaching or the teaching profession.

Pigge and Marso (1997) conducted one of these studies, which examine the role of teacher attitudes toward different variables, including teaching. In their longitudinal study, the researchers found that whereas preservice teachers' negative attitudes toward teaching accompanied teacher burnout in their in-service teaching career, their favorable attitudes toward teaching correlated with their positive classroom behaviors. In addition, their research indicated that positive attitude toward teaching was related to a more adaptive transition from being a pre-service to being an in-service teacher (Pigge and Marso, 1997).

In Turkey, too, little research has been done, to date, on attitudes toward teaching. Erkus et al. (2000) measured attitudes toward teaching of college of education students, teaching certification students, and high school students. Their findings indicated that college of education students had significantly more positive attitudes toward teaching, in comparison to the other two groups. Another study, which examined the attitudes toward teaching in Turkish preservice teachers, was reported by Capa and Cil (2000). Their sample comprised 340 college of education students. The researchers reported finding no gender differences with respect to overall attitude toward teaching. Additionally, the ranking of the program in their application form for the colleges was not related to students' attitudes toward teaching (Capa & Cil, 2000).

Locus of Control Construct

As a personality dimension, the concept of *expectancy of control* was introduced by Rotter (Rotter, 1966). Rotter (1966) described locus of control in the context of his social learning theory, and defined the construct as an

individual's general expectancy of the outcome of an event as being within the person's control versus being beyond personal control. Locus of control is subdivided into two categories: external locus of control and internal locus of control. Individuals displaying internal locus of control are characterized by believing that an event is contingent upon personal behavior or individual personality qualities. In contrast, individuals with external locus of control present a belief that the event (reward) results from outer sources such as luck, chance, or powerful others (Rotter, 1966).

Locus of control in teachers has been examined in a number of studies using Rotter's Locus of Control Scale or other scales devised specifically for teachers. For example, Sadowsky, Blackwell and Willard (1985) studied locus of control as it relates to preservice student teaching performance. Their findings indicated that internals had higher performance rates as reflected by progress reports than their external counterparts and also internals seemed to have better preparation before entering the classroom in comparison to their external counterparts. Pigge and Marso (1994) examined 150 preservice teachers' attitudes about teaching as a career, personality type, locus of control and anxiety about teaching. Their findings indicated no relationship between the attitude toward teaching and locus of control and, compared to participants with average and high feelings of externality, those with internal control tendencies reported less anxiety about teaching. On the other hand, little research exists specific to the early childhood preservice teachers' locus of control orientations (Raymond-Lorenz, 2000). In her thesis research, Raymond-Lorenz examined the relationship between early childhood education preservice teachers' locus of control, self-concept and approach to discipline in an early childhood program setting. This study indicated that those teacher candidates with an external locus of control presented more mandating approach to discipline when they are interacting with the children (Raymond-Lorenz, 2000).

Sociotropy-Autonomy Construct

One of the most important personality dimensions in psychology literature that has received a lot of attention and been examined within different cultures is relatedness and individualism (Kagitcibasi, 1996). Relatedness refers to an investment in interpersonal relationships, whereas individualism reflects a need to be active and autonomous (McBride, Bacchioni, & Bagby, 2005). Beck (1983) introduced another analogous personality dimension that corresponds to the relatedness-individualism dimension: sociotropy and autonomy. Sociotropy matches with the more expansive definition of relatedness (McBride, Bacchioni, & Bagby, 2005), and is characterized by being dependent on others and concerned about pleasing others (Sato & McCann, 1998). Highly sociotropic individuals are extremely concerned with the possibility of disapproval from others.

Additionally, their “sense of worth” depends on the love and acceptance they perceive from other individuals (McBride, Bacchiochi, & Bagby, 2005).

In contrast, autonomy is synonymous with the broader conceptualization of individualism (McBride, Bacchiochi, & Bagby, 2005) and emphasizes individuality, independence and control (Sato & McCann, 1998). Highly autonomous individuals are extremely concerned with the possibility of failure; their “sense of worth” depends on achievement and control (McBride, Bacchiochi, & Bagby, 2005).

Sahin, Ulusoy, and Sahin (1993) examined the sociotropy-autonomy construct in a sample of Turkish psychiatric patients and college students. Their findings regarding the student group revealed that female students scored higher on the Sociotropy dimension and its two sub-scales (concern over separation and pleasing others) than males.

To the researcher’s knowledge, no study to date has examined the attitudes toward teaching, locus of control orientations and sociotropy-autonomy orientations simultaneously in teachers or teacher candidates. Additionally, a possible relationship between attitudes toward teaching and any personality dimension has remained unexamined in Turkish samples until the current study. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to ascertain whether relationships existed among early childhood preservice teachers’ attitude toward teaching, locus of control orientations, sociotropy-autonomy orientations, and demographic characteristics such as GPA, highest educational level of parents and a time frame for deciding to choose early childhood education as a profession.

METHOD

Population and Sample

The study included 180 Turkish college students, all majoring in early childhood education. The scope of this study is limited to only three universities (Hacettepe University, Gazi University and Ortadogu Teknik University), located in Ankara. These institutions were selected for this study, due to: (a) convenience of their locations for the researcher, (b) adequacy of their student populations in the numbers and the demographic cross-sectional of the students, and, (c) positive reactions and supportive attitudes of the contact persons in these universities whose approval and cooperation were crucial for the study. Furthermore, these three universities are considered to be deeply rooted and esteemed educational institutions in Turkey, especially in comparison to the more recently established institutions.

The majority (177 of 180) of test subjects are females since early childhood education is one of the female dominated professions in Turkey. Furthermore, only students who were in attendance on the day that the instruments were distributed were included. Those, who participated, were volunteers and remained anonymous. Participants were expected to engage in

approximately 60-minute sessions to complete four questionnaires, and they were not offered any incentives for participating.

Instrumentation

Data collection in this research employed four instruments: The Demographic Data Sheet, Attitude Toward Teaching Scale, Locus of Control Scale and Sociotropy-Autonomy Scale. A description of the four instruments follows:

Attitude toward Teaching Scale

Attitude Toward Teaching Scale (ATTS) is a Likert-type response scale developed by Erkus (2000) at Mersin University, Turkey. This scale aims to measure the degree of positive and/or negative attitudes of the College of Education students toward the teaching profession. Cronbach alpha coefficient of the scale reliability is reportedly .99 (Erkus et al., 2000).

Locus of Control Scale

Rotter developed the original form of the Locus of Control Scale which consists of 29 forced-choice items. This scale measures individuals' beliefs about whether the individual or the environment has greater control over life circumstances. Test-retest reliability ranged from .70 to .80, and Cronbach's alpha coefficients of internal consistency ranged from .65 to .79 (Rotter, 1966). Based on Rotter's scale, Dag developed the Turkish version of the Locus of Control Scale that has been used in this study. Dag reported that test-retest reliability is .88, and internal consistency coefficient alpha is .92 (Dag, 2002).

Sociotropy-Autonomy Scale

The Sociotropy-Autonomy Scale was developed by Beck (1983) in order to measure this sociotropy-autonomy construct. It consists of a 30-item Sociotropy Subscale and a 30-item Autonomy Subscale. Both subscales were factor analyzed and three factors were found for the each scale: Concern about Disapproval, Concern over Separation, and Pleasing Others constitute the Sociotropy Scale. Individual Achievement, Freedom from Control by Others, and Preference for Solitude constitute the Autonomy Scale (Beck, 1983). The Sociotropy-Autonomy Scale was translated to Turkish by Sahin et al. in 1993. For college samples, reliability for the sociotropy subscale has been measured as .83 whereas for the autonomy subscale, the reliability value was .81 (Savasir & Sahin, 1997).

Demographic Information Sheet

This particular research uses a unique, specifically designed demographic information sheet. The short survey gathers information of some demographic characteristics of participants including: Gender, GPA, origin,

highest educational level of parents, time of decision regarding early childhood education as a profession, the choice ranking of early childhood education in the application list for colleges, and immediate plans upon graduation.

Process of Data Collection

Administration of the instruments occurred between October 20 and November 7, 2004. Participants from Gazi University had direct contact with the researcher, where the instructors granted class time for administration of the questionnaires. The participants received brief information about the study and the research materials. Instruction included a request for a careful reading of the informed consent form. Each participant returned the materials upon completion within 55 to 70 minutes. For the students at Hacettepe University and Gazi University, where the researcher did not administer the instruments, the instructors distributed data collection packets. In every administration, after a brief explanation of the study, the students in the classes received data collection packets. The procedural instructions requested placement of their completed questionnaires in the original envelopes before returning them to the researcher or the instructors.

Process of Data Analysis

In this study quantitative methods or approaches were used in the process of data analysis. The researcher entered the data from the returned questionnaires into the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The SPSS software (version 13.0) analyzed and presented the data. Along with measures of central tendency, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and the linear regression analysis provided the answers to the research questions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Information

The participants were 180 Turkish pre-service teachers who enrolled in early childhood education departments of three selected universities in Ankara, Turkey, and almost all of the participants were females (98.3%). About 4/5 of the participants reported that they were living in cities, while 1/5 indicated that they were living in either towns or villages. In terms of parents' formal educational levels, 121 of the mothers and 79 of the fathers have less than a high school degree.

Table 1 presents the information of the participants' decision time to become a teacher, persons who influenced participants to enroll in early childhood education programs, ranking (choice for early childhood education in college application form), and GPA.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Variables: Participants' Decision Time to Become a Teacher, Persons Who Influenced Them, Ranking and GPA

Variable	n	Percent (%)
<u>Decision Time</u>		
During Elementary School	35	19.6
During Secondary School	28	15.6
During High School	60	33.5
Right Before The Exam	19	10.6
After Arrival of Exam Scores	<u>37</u>	20.7
	179	
<u>Influencing Person in Decision</u>		
Nobody	67	37.4
Family	56	31.3
Friends	7	3.9
Teacher	24	13.4
Other	<u>25</u>	14.0
	179	
<u>Ranking (Choice) of ECE on Application</u>		
1	86	48.3
2-6	65	35.5
7-12	16	9.0
13-19	10	5.6
19-25	<u>1</u>	0.6
	178	
<u>GPA</u>		
1.5- 2.55	21	13.2
2.56- 3.30	92	57.8
3.31- 4	<u>46</u>	28.9
	159	

In terms of decision time to become a teacher, 33.5 percent of the participants reported that they decided to become a teacher during their high school years. Students who decided to choose teaching as a career during their elementary school years comprise 19.6 percent of the total participants. About 15.6 percent of the students reported that they made their decision during secondary school education. About 10.6 percent of the students indicated that they decided to become a teacher just before the university entrance exam; whereas, 20.7 percent stated that they came to a decision after receiving exam scores. About 37.4% of enrollment in the early childhood education program is a result of participants' own decisions. Although 31.3% of the participants reported that their family influenced their decision to enroll in the early childhood education program, only 13.4% stated that their teachers were influential on this decision. Additionally, 86 out of the 178 participants indicated that early childhood education was their number one choice in their application list for college. Participants' GPAs ranged from 1.5/4 to 3.86/4. The average GPA of the participants was 3.05/4. Forty-six of the participants

indicated that their GPAs were 3.31 or higher, while 21 reported that their GPAs were 2.55 or lower.

Plans upon Graduation

Only half of the participants (50.3%) reported that they were planning to work only as an early childhood education teacher. About 59.8% of the participants reported that their plans included being an early childhood education teacher and also continuing to a higher level of education at the same time. The percentages of the participants who checked the options “open a preschool” or “to have another job” were 35.2% and 6.7%, respectively. About 10% of the participants indicated that they had “other plans” that were not included in the questionnaire as an option. Table 2 summarizes immediate plans upon graduation and the percentages of the participants who checked these items as their immediate plans upon graduation.

Table 2: Participants’ Plans after Graduation

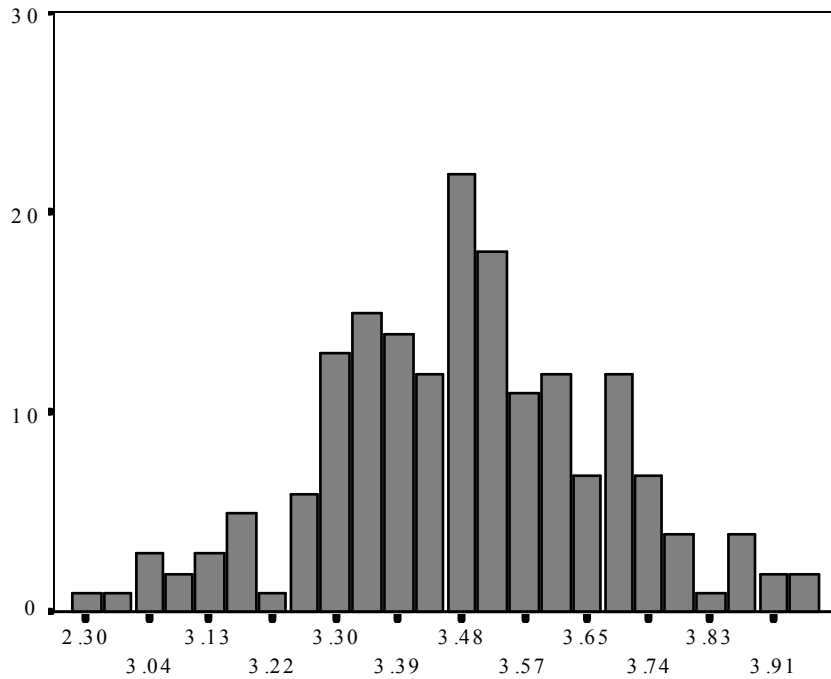
Post Graduation Plan Option	n	Valid Percent (%)*
To be an early childhood education teacher	90	50.3
To continue to a higher level of education	54	30.2
To be an early childhood teacher and to continue to a higher level of education	107	59.8
To open a preschool	63	35.2
To have another job	12	6.7
Other plans	18	10.1

*Percent does not total 100%, because multiple choices could be selected.

Table 2 demonstrates that almost half of the students did not check “to be an early childhood education teacher” or “to be an early childhood education teacher and to pursue a higher level of education” options and about 17% of the students checked “to have another job” or “other plans” options as their immediate plans after graduation. Perhaps, even if those participants held positive images of teaching or being a teacher, they might have some other or higher ideals for their actual futures, when the current status of teachers is taken into consideration.

Attitudes toward Teaching

Overall, the participants presented fairly high positive attitudes toward teaching. Percentage and frequencies showed that only 1% of the participants had a lower average than 3. Almost all of the participants (99%) had an overall positive attitude about teaching. The summated item mean for the Attitude Toward Teaching Scale was 3.47 (n=178; SD=.21). The scores for the attitude toward teaching scale ranged between 2.30 to 4.00 (see Figure 1).



Mean Attitude Theoretically Ranges from Low (1) to High (4)

Figure 1: Pre-service Teachers' Attitude toward Teaching

Similar results were found in Erkus et al.'s study, which developed the Attitude Toward Teaching Scale. In his study, the participants were high school students, teaching certification students and a mixed group of college of education students. The group mean for college of education students was 82.27 ($n=76$; $SD=13.48$). The summated item mean in his study was 3.57. Therefore, considering the results of the current study and Erkus et al.'s study, apparently attitudes of early childhood education preservice teachers in this study are not different from those of college of education students majoring in various sub-fields of education.

Locus of Control

For the Internal Locus of Control Subscale and External Locus of Control Subscale, the group means were found to be 52.66 ($n = 175$; $SD = 5.57$) and 74.40 ($n=178$; $SD=11.86$), respectively. The average total locus of control score is 127.06. In a comparable study, which included Turkish female and male students from a psychology department, the average total locus of control score reported was 108.76 for both males and females, and 116.24 for the female students (Dag, 2002). The Locus of Control Scale is interpreted in the direction of externality, with higher scores indicating a greater external orientation (Dag, 2002). In comparison to Dag's sample, the participants of the

current study represented a higher external locus of control orientation. Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations for the Locus of Control Scale.

Table 3: Means and Standard deviations of Locus of Control Scale

Scale	n	M	SD
<i>Internal Locus of Control</i>	175	52.66	5.57
<i>External Locus of Control (Total)</i>			
Belief in Chance	178	32.39	5.74
Meaninglessness of Effortfulness	178	20.52	5.35
Belief in Fate	178	10.81	2.70
Belief in an Unjust World	178	10.66	2.60
Total	175	127.06	17.43

The higher scores reflect belief in external locus of control and the possible scores range between 47 and 235.

Sociotropy-Autonomy

The participants scored higher on the Autonomy Scale than the Sociotropy Scale (Table 4). However, in comparison with another study by Sahin, Ulusoy, and Sahin (1993), which included 189 Turkish female and male college students who were living in Ankara, the participants of the current study scored a little higher on the Sociotropy Scale and lower on the Autonomy Scale. In Sahin, Ulusoy, and Sahin's study the mean scores for these scales were 67.66 ($n = 189$; $SD = 13.16$) and 79.19 ($n = 189$; $SD = 11.79$), respectively (Sahin, Ulusoy, and Sahin, 1993). On the other hand, when this comparison is made only with their female students' sociotropy scores ($n = 69.52$; $SD = 12.28$), the sociotropy scores of the current study seem no different.

Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations of Sociotropy- Autonomy Scale

Scale	N	M	SD
<i>Sociotropy-Total</i>	157	70.11	15.51
Concern about Disapproval	166	20.65	6.86
Concern over Separation	171	34.17	7.92
Pleasing Others	170	12.08	3.30
<i>Autonomy-Total</i>	158	74.24	15.16
Individual Achievement	167	35.02	5.82
Freedom from Control	167	29.20	6.30
Preference for Solitude	173	13.07	4.98

The highest possible score for both the Sociotropy and Autonomy subscales was 120.

Relationship between Attitude toward Teaching and Locus of Control Orientations

To determine the relationship between attitude toward teaching and internal locus of control required a computing of Pearson Product Moment correlation. Internal locus of control was not significantly related to attitude toward teaching ($p > .05$). To measure the relationships between attitude toward teaching and overall external locus of control, and relationship between attitude toward teaching and each sub-factor of external locus of control came from computing Pearson Product Moment correlations. Attitude toward teaching was negatively related to overall external locus of control $r = -.197$ ($p < 0.01$). The first sub-factor (belief in chance) of external locus of control scale was negatively related to attitude toward teaching $r = -.241$ ($p < 0.01$). The second sub-factor (meaninglessness of the effort) also showed a negative relationship with attitude toward teaching $r = -.165$ ($p < 0.01$). The other two sub-factors, *belief in fate* and *belief in an unjust world*, had no significant relationships ($p > .05$) with attitude toward teaching. As previously noted, Pigge and Marso (1994) found no relationship between the attitudes and locus of control orientations. However, according to the results of the current study, externality dimension negatively relates to attitudes toward teaching. Therefore, students who possessed a tendency to believe that an event results from outer sources such as luck, chance, or powerful others were likely to have less positive attitudes toward teaching.

Attitude toward Teaching and Demographic Factors

A Pearson Product Moment Correlation computation determined the relationships between attitude toward teaching and GPA. No significant relation ($p > .05$) appeared to exist between these two variables. The relationship between the type of regional origin (where the participants were living before college) and attitudes toward teaching was examined by using point bi-serial correlation. With the regional origin coded into two levels (village and town vs. city), no significant relationship was found. Formal education level of parents was examined using two dummy coded levels (less than or equal to a high school education and college degree or more). Mothers' level of education was not significantly related to attitudes toward teaching. On the contrary, levels of fathers' education were positively related to these attitudes. Participants with fathers beyond a high school education level had significantly more positive attitudes (point bi serial $r = .529$, $p < .05$). When mothers' education and fathers' education were combined in an index, no significant relationship appeared between this and attitudes toward teaching.

Participants were asked to specify their decision time to enroll in early childhood education based on five different periods of time: During elementary school, during middle school, during high school, before receiving their exam scores, and right after receiving their exam scores. The decision time was

examined in two levels (before high school and during or after high school). Participants who decided to enroll in an early childhood education program during high school or later had significantly higher positive attitudes toward teaching (point bi-serial $r = .278$; $n=177$). In contrast, Pigge and Marso's study (1994) indicated that preservice teachers who had decided to become a teacher before high school had more positive attitudes toward teaching compared to those who had decided during high school or later. The participants of this study who made their decisions earlier, might hold greater expectations for teacher education that they developed over time, and the teacher education program in which they enrolled might have failed to fulfill these high expectations, leading to less positive attitudes.

The category of persons who influenced the participants' decisions to become a teacher was not significantly related to their attitudes toward teaching. Additionally, participants' after-graduation plans were not significantly related to their attitudes. Therefore, having other post-graduation plans rather than being an early childhood teacher should not be seen as something caused by their attitudinal tendencies, but by some other factors.

Attitude toward Teaching and Sociotropy-Autonomy Orientations

Computed Pearson Product Moment correlations determined the relationships between attitude toward teaching and sociotropy orientation and attitude toward teaching and autonomy orientation. Attitude toward teaching was not significantly related to either of these two variables. However, when computing correlations with the sub-scales of the Sociotropy and Autonomy Scale, only attitude toward teaching was found negatively correlated with concern about disapproval subscale ($r = -.174$; $p < 0.05$).

A further analysis that correlates the highest sociotropy and the highest autonomy scores with attitude toward teaching scores did not yield a different result. That is, no significant correlation exists when attitudes toward teaching are examined only with the extreme scores of the sociotropy and autonomy scales. Taken as a whole, attitude toward teaching may not be related to sociotropy or autonomy; however, factorial examination of attitudes toward teaching may present different results. That is, some sub-factors of the attitudes (such as affective, cognitive and behavioral factors) toward teaching construct might have stronger relationships with the sociotropy or autonomy constructs.

Combined Influence of Personality Variables and Demographic Factors on Attitude toward Teaching

A summary of multiple regression results appears in Tables 5 and 6. The initial regression analysis provided an examination of all variables entered in the regression equation, regardless of their statistical significance (see Table 5).

Possible collinearity between mother and father education level was a concern. An analysis revealed the relationship was Cramer's $V = .53$; $p < .001$.

Although significant, these two variables were only moderately related and collinearity diagnostics from the regression output revealed no collinearity problem. Assumptions were met regarding linearity, homoscedasticity and normality of residuals.

This initial regression model was significant at the .09 alpha level. Developing a reduced model used stepwise regression analysis. Table 5 contains those results.

Table 5: Summary of Stepwise Regression Results with Personality Factors and Demographic Factors Entered for Final Model Explaining Attitudes toward Teaching

Independent Variable	b	SE b	Beta	Partial	t	p
Sociotropy	.03	.30	.07	.06	.69	.49
Autonomy	.03	.04	.08	.08	.89	.37
Internality	.00	.04	.04	.04	.45	.66
Externality	.00	.00	-.24	-.20	-2.3	.21
Origin (0=All Other; 1=City)	.01	.05	.02	.02	.22	.82
Mothers' Education (0=HS or less; 1=Post HS)	.00	.06	.00	.00	.00	.9
Fathers' Education (0=HS or less; 1=Post HS)	.02	.05	-.05	-.04	-.45	.65
Decision Time (0=HS or Earlier before or after the Arrival of Exam)	.10	.04	.23	.23	2.7	.00
Influencer	-.02	.02	-.07	-.07	-.77	.44
Constant	3.4	.30			11.16	.00

Summary Information for the full regression model:

F = 1.72	Multiple R = .33
df = 9/128	R Square = 10%
p = .09	Adj. R Square = 4.5%

This initial regression model was significant at the .09 alpha level. Examination of the individual variables in Table 5 revealed only *time of decision* and *externality* were statistically significant variables in the equation. Therefore, developing a reduced model used stepwise regression analysis. Table 6 contains those results.

Table 6: Summary of Stepwise Regression Results with Personality Factors and Demographic Factors Entered for Final Model Explaining Attitudes toward Teaching

Independent Variable	b	SE b	Beta	Partial	t	p
Externality	.00	.00	-.20	-.20	-2.3	.02
Decision Time (0=HS or Earlier before or after the Arrival of Exam)	.10	.04	.23	.23	2.8	.00
Constant	3.6	.130			27.56	.00

Summary Information for the final regression model:

F = 6.9	Multiple R = .30
df = 2/135	R Square = 9%
p = .001	Adj. R Square = 8%

The reduced model in Table 6 indicates that two variables (external locus of control and time of decision) are statistically significant at the ≤ 0.5 alpha level. Collectively, they explain approximately 9% of the variance in attitudes toward teaching. Therefore, despite the contribution of these two variables to the variance, some other unmeasured factors must be more important determinants of the attitudes toward teaching.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, participants presented a high positive attitude toward teaching. In terms of the demographic characteristics, only two variables, fathers' education level and participants' decision time to major in an early childhood education program, were found to be significantly related to attitudes toward teaching. The current study supports only slightly the previous research in which locus of control is correlated with attitudes toward teaching. The findings of this study indicate that attitude toward teaching was associated with external locus of control. That is, students with more externality presented less positive attitudes toward teaching. Except for its disapproval sub-scale, sociotropy-autonomy scale was not related to the attitude toward teaching scale. Only a weak negative correlation exists between the attitudes and the concern about disapproval. In addition, external locus of control and decision time were statistically significant predictors of attitude toward teaching when examining simultaneously locus of control orientations, the sociotropy-autonomy orientations and the demographic variables.

The current study had the following limitations: First, the participants were 180 students recruited from three Turkish universities. Therefore, the

scope and generalizability of this study are limited to students who were enrolled in the early childhood education departments of these universities at the time these data were collected. Second, the measurement of attitudes toward teaching, locus of control and sociotropy-autonomy concepts was limited to the instruments' validity and reliability. Third, in order to complete the instruments included in the study, the participants were asked to choose responses that were already provided. Thus, the responses were restricted by the structure of the instruments. In addition to the factors listed above, as reported by McMillan (2000), participants' potential biases in their responses, such as *social desirability* (a tendency to respond to the items in a way that is deemed socially acceptable or desirable, regardless of the real thoughts or feelings of the individual), *response set* (a tendency to respond in the same way, regardless of the content of the items, e.g., always selecting the "strongly agree" category), and *faking* (deliberately providing inaccurate responses) were also among the possible limitations for the study. Therefore, some additional and more systematic research is needed to better understand the attitude and personality concepts in pre-service teachers. Since both teachers' work-related attitudes (Richardson, 2003) and personality characteristics (Feeney, Cristensen & Moravick, 1983; Feeney & Chun, 1985) are likely to relate to the effectiveness of the education they provide, a careful examination of attitudes toward teaching and personality characteristics has a potential benefit for establishing educational theories and practice in terms of the effectiveness of teacher training, quality of preschool education, and personal well-being and satisfaction of the teachers.

In the current study, interestingly, despite apparently high positive overall attitudes toward teaching, almost half of the students did not check "to be an early childhood education teacher" or "to be an early childhood education teacher and to pursue a higher level of education" options and about 17% of the students checked "to have another job" or "to have other plans" options as their immediate plans after graduation. As a major misuse of human and economic resources of the country, this condition deserves attention by policy makers in Turkey. First, during high school or earlier, students must be encouraged to carefully examine preferences for their future jobs. For college students who understand that they are not in the right major, re-taking of the university entrance exam should not involve strong penalties that hold them back from trying to find a better-fitting major. Perhaps at least some of the participants, who indicated that they did not want to have any occupation relating to early childhood education, will become early childhood education teachers eventually, due to the current stagnant nature of the job market. When those teacher candidates enter the teaching profession, having a job they do not want can affect their productivity in the classroom and their overall life satisfaction. Therefore, some steps need to be taken in order to revise the current selection systems of higher education.

Especially in Turkey, little research has been conducted on early childhood teachers and the education of early childhood teachers. A need exists for studies in every subject that deals with early childhood education. Since, for early childhood education, interest is growing from different segments of the society, more support might be obtained for these studies aimed toward the improvement of early childhood education in general.

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