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Prospective Teachers' Views on Effective Teacher Characteristics and Their Occupational Self-efficacy Perceptions in terms of These Characteristics

AKIF KOSE and MEHMET UZUN

Abstract

This research aims to analyze the views of prospective teachers regarding effective teaching characteristics and the relation between their occupational self-efficacy perceptions with regard to these characteristics and to examine the relation in terms of various demographic characteristics. The research was carried out with prospective teachers who serve as candidate teachers within the Kahramanmaraş Provincial Directorate of National Education, Turkey, and who participated in the prospective teacher training program of July-August 2016. The research sample holds a total of 257 prospective teachers consisting of the whole population. Having a quantitative research design, this research used a relational screening model. The research has deployed a bi-directional scale including 41 items each. The frequency, percentage, t-test, one-way variance analysis (F statistic) was used during data analysis. Research results have displayed that the averages of teachers' views regarding the characteristics of an effective teacher was found to be "Absolutely Necessary" (\bar{x} = 4.79) and that of their occupational self-efficacy perceptions was at the level of "Completely Have" (\bar{x} = 4.43). In addition, a statistically significant difference was found between the prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions. However, no significant relation was determined between this difference and demographic characteristics.

Keywords: prospective teacher, effective teacher characteristics, prospective teacher self-efficacy perception.



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Introduction

The success of a system is directly proportional to the nature of those who work within the system. In general, the success of the education system, particularly the school organization, depends largely on the qualifications of the teachers who will operate and implement the system (Blanton et al., 2003; Erişen & Çeliköz, 2003) since education is a system that regulates the future of society (Akgün, Yıldız, & Kutluca-Canbulat, 2003). Teachers need a set of standards so that they can possess these qualities; one of which is regarded as teacher qualifications (Seferoğlu, 2004), while another is effective teaching qualities through which these competencies can be effectively displayed.

The effective teaching qualities that teachers possess are regarded as a terminal condition that allows the education system to achieve its goals and to be effective (Şahin, 2011). Teachers must have a number of qualifications in order to be effective. In other words, various conditions within and outside of the classroom must be fulfilled (Kızıltepe, 2002). The qualities that an effective teacher should possess can be considered in two main groups: personal qualifications and professional qualifications. On the one hand are motivating, focusing on success, and being professional are the personal qualities of an effective teacher; whilst on the other, planning educational activities, using teaching methods and techniques, effective communication, classroom management, using time effectively, evaluating learning and guiding students are considered as the professional qualifications of an effective teacher (Demirel, 2000). Erden (2001) also assessed the qualities that an effective teacher must have under two main categories; also personal qualifications and professional qualifications. He stated that the most important personality traits to be found in an effective teacher are to be tolerant and patient, open-minded, flexible, adaptive, compassionate and humorous to different ideas, showing understanding, having high expectation of success from students, encouragement and support; while the professional qualifications include having a good level of general culture and adequate special field knowledge, planning teaching process, diversification of the process, using teaching period effectively, creating a teaching environment in which all students can participate, and monitoring students' development.

Teachers need to be competent in their personal and professional qualities identified by Demirel and Erden in order to show effective teacher characteristics. Balcı (2014) expressed the sense of competency that a teacher feels as one of the factors of an effective teacher. At this point, competency can be specified as the presence of features that provide individuals the power to play certain roles (Bursalıoğlu, 1981). One of the significant concepts related to competency is self-efficacy as the perceptions or beliefs of individuals on their own competencies in a certain field also reflect their perceptions and beliefs regarding their self-efficacy (Yılmaz & Çokluk-Bökeoğlu, 2008).

The concept of self-efficacy is defined as self-judgment in one's capacity to organize and execute the activities required to perform certain attainments (Bandura, 1997). Kear (2000) noted that self-efficacy belief is about how individuals perceive themselves about a particular subject. Self-efficacy beliefs often emerge in relation to specific areas. Teacher self-efficacy can be expressed as one of the most important of these specific fields (Çapri & Çelikkaleli, 2008; Ekici, 2008). Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy (2001) defined teacher self-efficacy as the judgment of his/her own capabilities to ensure desired outcomes of student

engagement and learning. Goddard, Hoy and Woolfolk-Hoy (2004) described teacher self-sufficiency as a judgment about whether or not the teacher can plan and implement the thoughts necessary to perform his or her duties. Teachers with a high level sense of efficacy have close relationships with their students, use various approaches in effective teaching, and endeavor to ensure students learn and take responsibility for their learning (Pajares, 1992, as cited in Yılmaz & Çokluk-Bökeoğlu, 2008). In this regard, teachers with high qualifications are needed in order to achieve the goals of the education system (Ay & Yurdabakan, 2015).

Upon examining the relevant literature, numerous studies have been conducted on prospective teachers' self-efficacy beliefs regarding teaching profession (Akgün et al., 2003; Bakaç & Özen, 2017; Çakır, Kan, & Sünbül, 2006; Demirtaş, Cömert, & Özer, 2011; Donmuş, Akpınar, & Eroğlu, 2017; Erişen & Çeliköz, 2003; Gürol, Altunbaş, & Karaaslan, 2010; Kahyaoğlu & Yangın, 2007; Seferoğlu, 2004; Şeker, Deniz, & Görgeç, 2005; Ünlü, Kaşkaya, & Kızılkaya, 2017; Yavuz & Memiş, 2010; Yenice, 2012; Yeşilyurt, 2013) and their self-efficacy beliefs about private field teaching (Ağgöl-Yalçın, 2011; Akbaş & Çelikkaleli, 2006; Akkuzu & Akçay, 2012; Berkant, 2013; Çalışkan, Selçuk & Özcan, 2010; Ekici, 2008; Hevedanlı & Ekici, 2009; Morgil, Seçken, & Yücel, 2004; Savran & Çakıroğlu, 2001; Ülper & Bağcı, 2012). These studies have examined the self-efficacy perceptions of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession and private field teaching.

Few studies have been found on the self-efficacy perceptions of prospective teachers towards effective teaching or ideal teaching characteristics (Ay & Yurdabakan, 2015; Özabacı & Acat, 2005). Furthermore, the sample of the studies mostly consisted of prospective teachers who have undergraduate education or pedagogical formation education. No studies have been found that were conducted on the prospective teachers who were involved in the education system. Thus, this current study aims to analyze the views of prospective teachers included in the education system regarding effective teaching characteristics and the relation between their occupational self-efficacy perceptions with regard to these characteristics and to examine the relation in terms of various demographic characteristics. This study is therefore expected to contribute to the literature in this field. In service of this goal, answers to the following research questions have been sought:

- What are the distribution levels of prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions?
- Is there a statistically significant difference between prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions?
- Do prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions significantly vary by gender, marital status, age, graduation faculty, or teacher appointment type?

Methodology

Having a quantitative research design, this research used a relational screening model. Relational screening models are research models that aim to identify whether or not there is a relationship between two or more variables, and to determine the level of any relationship (Karasar, 2014). In this regard, the current research examined prospective teachers' views on

the characteristics of an effective teacher and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions based on these characteristics.

The research was carried out with prospective teachers who serve as candidate teachers within the Kahramanmaraş Provincial Directorate of National Education and who participated in the prospective teacher training program of July-August 2016. The research sample consists of 257 prospective teachers, which is the whole population. Prospective teachers received 24-week compliance training and participated in teaching practicum at schools accompanied by counselors. Data collection was performed at the end of the eight-week in-service training activities. Table 1 depicts the demographic characteristics of the research sample.

Table 1. Demographic Information about the Participants

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>(f)</i>	<i>(%)</i>
Gender	Female	167	65.0
	Male	90	35.0
Marital status	Single	182	71.0
	Married	75	29.0
Age	25 and under	136	53.0
	26-30	81	31.0
	31-35	20	8.0
	36 and over	20	8.0
Graduating faculty	Education faculty	190	74.0
	Other faculty	67	26.0
Teacher appointment type	First appointment	237	92.0
	Transition from different institution	20	8.0

This research employed a bi-directional scale developed by Ay and Yurdabakan (2015) in order to determine prospective teachers' views on the characteristics of an effective teacher and their professional self-efficacy perceptions in terms of these characteristics. The first part of the scale aims to determine prospective teachers' views on "effective teacher characteristics," while the second part aims to identify "occupational self-efficacy perceptions."

The five-point, Likert-type scale contained options of (5) "Absolutely necessary", (4) "Necessary", (3) "Undecided", (2) "Not Necessary", and (1) "Not Necessary at all" to determine "the characteristics of an effective teacher." For evaluating prospective teachers' self-efficacy perceptions in terms of these characteristics, the options of (5) "Completely Have", (4) "Partially Have", (3) "Undecided", (2) "Scarcely Have", and (1) "Do not Have" are used. Ay and Yurdabakan (2015) concluded that the Cronbach alpha coefficient of the first scale is .94 and .93 for the second. The current study has identified the Cronbach alpha coefficient as .95 for the first scale and .92 for the second.

Ay and Yurdabakan (2015) stated that the scale has one factor as a result of factor analysis. The current study performed Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) on the 41 items using the mPlus 7.4 program in order to verify the validity of the one-dimensional structure specified for both directions of the tool. Table 2 presents the fit indices obtained from the CFA results for both directions of the scale.

Table 2. Fit Indexes for Bi-directional Scale

<i>Aspects</i>	χ^2/sd	<i>CFI</i>	<i>TLI</i>	<i>RMSEA</i>	<i>SRMR</i>
Characteristics of an effective teacher	1.58	.92	.90	.048	.052
Occupational self-efficacy	1.35	.92	.91	.037	.058

Considering the fit indices in Table 2, the χ^2/sd ratio is 1.58 ($\chi^2/sd=1057.061/667$) for “Effective Teacher Characteristics,” and 1.35 for the “Occupational Self-efficacy Perceptions” ($\chi^2/sd=976.255/721$). Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, and Müller, (2003) noted that a ratio of χ^2/sd of ≤ 2 refers to a “good fit.” CFI and TLI values are above .90 for both directions of the scale, which is regarded as valid. The RMSEA value was calculated as .048 for the “Effective Teacher Characteristics,” and .037 for the “Occupational Self-efficacy Perceptions.” On the other hand, SRMR value was determined to be .052 for the first direction and .058 for the second. RMSEA values of $\leq .05$ indicate a perfect fit, while SRMR values of $\leq .08$ suggest a good fit (Brown, 2006).

The research has been analyzed through use of the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows 21.0 package program with a view to determining prospective teachers’ views on the characteristics of an effective teacher and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions in terms of these characteristics. The arithmetic average and standard deviation values, significance test (*t*-test) for determining the relationship between the variable, and one-way variance analysis (ANOVA; F statistic) was used during data analysis (Büyüköztürk, 2017).

Results

Distribution of Prospective Teachers’ Views on Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Occupational Self-efficacy Perceptions

The arithmetic mean and standard deviations of prospective teachers’ views on effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Prospective Teachers’ Views on the Effective Teacher Characteristics and Arithmetic Averages and Standard Deviations of Occupational Self-efficacy Perceptions

<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>
Characteristics of Effective Teacher	257	4.78	.25
Occupational Self-Efficacy	257	4.43	.30

Table 3 displays that the arithmetic mean of prospective teachers’ views on effective teacher characteristics is 4.78, with a standard deviation of .25; and the arithmetic mean of their occupational self-efficacy perceptions related to effective teaching was determined to be 4.30 and a standard deviation of .30. The averages of teachers’ views regarding the characteristics of an effective teacher was found to be “Absolutely Necessary” ($\bar{X}= 4.78$) and

that of their occupational self-efficacy perceptions was at the level of “Completely Have” ($\bar{X}=4.43$).

Difference between Prospective Teachers' Views on Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Perceptions towards Occupational Self-efficacy

The results of the Paired Samples *t*-Test are presented in Table 4, and shows the difference between the average scores of prospective teachers' views about the effective teacher characteristics and their perceptions towards professional self-efficacy.

Table 4. *t*-Test Results of the Difference between Prospective Teachers' Views on the Characteristics of an Effective Teacher and their Perceptions towards Occupational Self-efficacy

<i>Measurement</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Characteristics of Effective Teacher	257	4.78	.25	256	17.845	.000
Self-Efficacy Perceptions	257	4.43	.30			

Table 4 shows that a significant difference has been identified between the views of the prospective teachers regarding the effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions [$t(256)=17,845$, $p<.01$]. The average scores of the prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics is $\bar{X}=4.78$, while those of their perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy is $\bar{X}=4.43$. Prospective teachers' perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy have been determined to be low depending on the characteristics that a teacher should have in effective teaching.

Difference between Prospective Teachers' Views on Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Perceptions towards Self-efficacy in terms of Demographic Characteristics

Prior to determining whether or not the difference between prospective teachers' views on the characteristics of an effective teacher and their perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy varies across demographic characteristics, and whether the scores show normal distribution was examined through coefficient of skewness, graphic method and normality test (Büyüköztürk, 2017). The skewness value is assumed to be .299 and the data has normal distribution. Figure 1 displays Histogram and Q-Q Plot graphs for the differences between the averages.

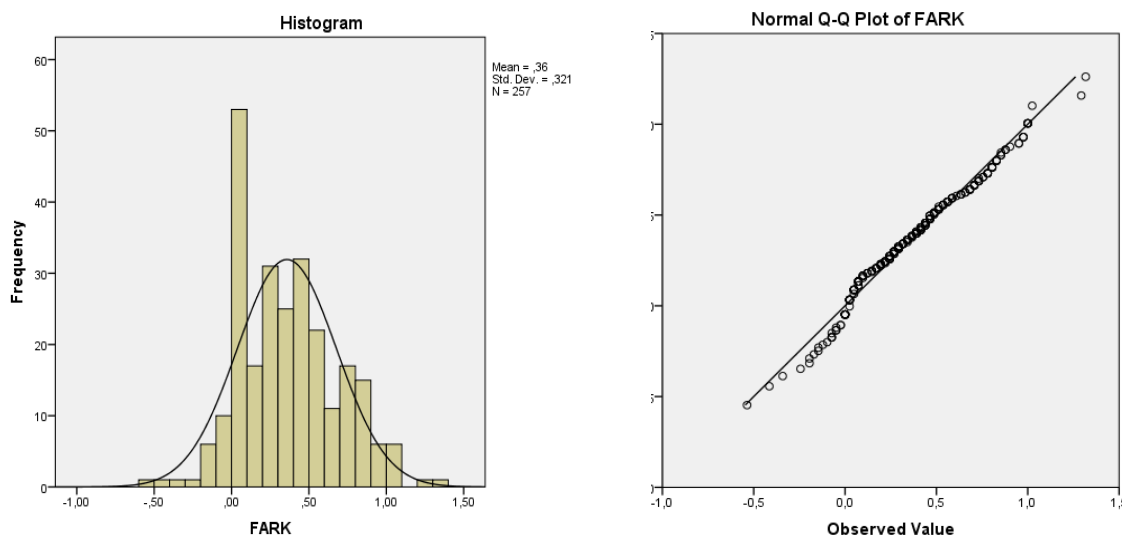


Figure 1. Histogram and Q-Q Plot Graphs of Prospective Teachers’ Views on Normal Distribution of Average Differences between Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Occupational Self-efficacy Perceptions

Table 5 displays the results of the Independent Samples *t*-test conducted to test whether or not prospective teachers’ views on the effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions differ across their gender.

Table 5. *t*-Test Results: Prospective Teachers’ Views on Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Self-efficacy Perceptions by Gender

<i>Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Female	167	.36	.32	255	.147	.883
Male	90	.35	.32			

As can be seen in Table 5, no significant difference was found between the prospective teachers’ views regarding the characteristics of an effective teacher and their perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy in terms of gender ($t=.147$; $p>.05$).

Results of the Independent Samples *t*-test conducted to see whether or not prospective teachers’ views on the effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions differ across their marital status are shown in Table 6..

Table 6. *t*-Test Results: Prospective Teachers’ Views on Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Self-efficacy Perceptions by Marital Status

<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Single	182	.34	.32	255	-1.273	.204
Married	75	.40	.33			

Independent group *t*-test results suggest that no significant difference exists between prospective teachers’ views on the characteristics of an effective teachers and their perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy in terms of their marital status ($t=-1.273$; $p>.05$).

The results of the Independent Samples *t*-Test conducted to see whether or not prospective teachers' views on the effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions differ depending on their graduation faculty is shown in Table 7.

Table 7. *t*-Test Results: Prospective Teachers' Views on Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Self-efficacy Perceptions by Graduation Faculty

<i>Graduation faculty</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Education faculty	190	.35	.32	255	-.498	.619
Other faculty	67	.37	.32			

According to Table 7, no significant difference has been identified between prospective teachers' views on the characteristics of effective teachers and their perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy in terms of their graduation faculty ($t=-.498$; $p>.05$).

The results of the Independent Samples *t*-Test performed to examine if prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions vary across their appointment type are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. *t*-Test Results: Prospective Teachers' Views on Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Self-efficacy Perceptions by Teacher Appointment Type

<i>Teacher appointment type</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
First appointment	237	.35	.31	255	-.317	.752
Transition from different institution	20	.38	.40			

As can be seen in Table 8, there is no significant difference between prospective teachers' views on the characteristics of effective teachers and their perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy in terms of their appointment type ($t=-.317$; $p>.05$).

The results of the One-way Variance Analysis (ANOVA), which is performed to determine whether or not prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions differ by age are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. One-way ANOVA Results of the Difference between Prospective Teachers' Effective Teacher Characteristics and Their Occupational Self-efficacy Perceptions by Age

<i>Age</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>	<i>Source of Variance</i>	<i>Sum of squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
25 and under	136	.36	.32	Between groups	.132	3	.44	.425	.735
26-30	81	.36	.31	Within groups	26.258	253	.104		
31-35	20	.37	.32	Total	26.390	256			
36 and over	20	.28	.33						
Total	257	.35	.32						

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique was applied to determine whether or not prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their perceptions of occupational self-efficacy differ significantly depending on their age. Accordingly, no statistically significant difference was found in terms of their age ($F=.425$; $p>.05$).

Conclusion and Discussion

Research results revealed that prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions were high. Prospective teachers have a high level of involvement in the teaching of these effective qualifications in relation to the effective teacher characteristics specified in the effective teaching dimension. This result is in line with that of Ay and Yurdabakan's (2015) study.

The research results also suggested that prospective teachers have high level perceptions regarding effective teacher characteristics. Similar results emerged in the studies conducted by Ay and Yurdabakan (2015), Ekici (2008), Gürol et al. (2010), Kahyaoğlu and Yangın (2007), Morgil et al. (2004), Ülper and Bağcı (2012), Yavuz and Memiş (2010), and Yeşilyurt (2013). However, several studies stated that prospective teachers perceive themselves as partially sufficient in terms of their occupational self-efficacy perceptions (e.g., Erişen & Çeliköz, 2003) or those who see themselves as insufficient (e.g., Akgün et al., 2003). Since the sample of these studies was composed of prospective teachers who had received their undergraduate education, their occupational self-efficacy perceptions may differ across the university, by faculty, program and the quality of education. Besides, it is likely that prospective teachers who constitute the sample of this research have completed their undergraduate education and have been included in the education system as prospective teachers, thereby increasing their self-confidence and leading to a high level of effective teaching perceptions.

A significant difference has been identified between prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy. Accordingly, prospective teachers' occupational self-efficacy perceptions have been determined to be low depending on the characteristics that an effective teacher must possess. Similar results have been found in the studies conducted by Ay and Yurdabakan (2015) and Özabacı and Acat (2005). That prospective teachers have low level of perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy may result from the qualifications of undergraduate education, the failure in the integration of the theoretical knowledge in undergraduate education with teaching practices and the lack of professional experience. Indeed, Yılmaz and Çokluk-Bökeoğlu (2008) stated that teachers' beliefs about teaching competency are at a high level, which may derive from their proficiency in their knowledge and skills, their sufficiency in teaching methods and techniques and their capacity in measuring and evaluating.

The results of the current study also found no significant difference between the prospective teachers' views on the effective teacher characteristics and their perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy in terms of gender, marital status, age, graduation faculty, and appointment type. Prospective teachers' views about effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions did not vary by gender; a result consistent with various other studies (e.g., Akbaş & Çelikkaleli, 2006; Akkuzu & Akçay, 2012; Bakaç & Özen, 2017; Çakır et al., 2006; Ekici, 2008; Erişen & Çeliköz, 2003; Gürol et al., 2010; Hevedanlı & Ekici, 2009; Kahyaoğlu & Yangın, 2007; Savran & Çakıroğlu, 2001; Seferoğlu, 2004; Ülper & Bağcı, 2012; Yenice, 2012). However, several studies did find a significant difference between prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions in favor of females (e.g., Ağgül-Yalçın, 2011; Çapri & Çelikkaleli, 2008; Donmuş et al., 2017; Şeker et al., 2005; Ünlü et al., 2017), and those in

favor of males (e.g., Ay & Yurdabakan, 2015; Berkant, 2013; Çalışkan et al., 2010; Demirtaş et al., 2011; Morgil et al., 2004; Yeşilyurt, 2013). Although the differences reported in some of the studies may be due to the characteristics of the measurement tools used and the sample groups, numerous studies have found no significant difference between prospective teachers' occupational self-efficacy perceptions in terms of gender.

In addition, no significant difference has been identified between prospective teachers' views regarding effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions in terms of graduation faculty. This is parallel to the results of other studies (e.g., Şeker et al., 2005; Umaz, 2010), although it differs from some (e.g., Bakaç & Özen, 2017; Çapri & Çelikkaleli, 2008; Erişen & Çeliköz, 2003; Eroğlu, 1999; Yeşilyurt, 2013). The finding of no significant difference in terms of age is in line with the study conducted by Umaz (2010), who concluded that teachers' ages and their self-efficacy levels do not significantly differ.

The significant difference between prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions could not be explained through demographic characteristics. In plain English, no significant relationship was found between the views of the prospective teachers on effective teaching and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions in terms of demographic characteristics (gender, marital status, age, graduation faculty, or appointment type). In the studies of Bakaç and Özen (2017) and Demirtaş et al. (2011), a positive significant relation was found between prospective teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their attitudes towards the profession. Yenice (2012) pointed to a positive significant relation between prospective teachers' self-efficacy levels and problem-solving skills. Hence, this current study's difference between prospective teachers' views on effective teacher characteristics and their occupational self-efficacy perceptions may arise from different variables such as attitudes of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession, beliefs, problem-solving skills and having adequate professional experience.

Recommendations

Prospective teachers have been found to show high levels of participation related to the characteristics that an effective teacher should possess. In this respect, teacher educators and teacher-educating institutions may consider these features during the teacher training process. In addition, qualified teachers may be trained through school administrations, district and provincial education directorates and the Ministry of National Education taking these characteristics into account.

Despite the high level of occupational self-efficacy perceptions of the prospective teachers, this ratio was lower when compared to their views on effective teacher characteristics. Prospective teachers may gain more qualifications in the process of undergraduate education, both in theory and in practice, so that they can have more effective teaching qualities and therefore perceive effective teaching qualities at a higher level. Training activities to enhance these characteristics and perceptions may be promoted.

A significant difference was found between prospective teachers' views on the effective teaching and their perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy, yet no significant relation was identified between this difference and the participants' demographic characteristics. In

this regard, qualitative studies may be conducted in order to examine in-depth the prospective teachers' views on effective teaching and their perceptions towards occupational self-efficacy.

Quantitative studies that analyze teachers' effective teaching perceptions through different variables such as organizational culture, school climate, perception of organizational support, job engagement, and organizational justice may be carried out.

Notes

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