An Investigation into Teacher Candidates' Resilience Hopelessness Levels

Sevgi Sezer[1]   Fatih Kezer[2*]
1.Ph.D Counseling Psychology, Ankara, Turkey
2.Ph.D Faculty of Education, Kocaeli University, Izmit, Turkey

Abstract
College life is expected to prepare young people for life and to contribute to their being more resilient and hopeful when they face problems. The aim of this study was to investigate whether the levels of resilience and hopelessness differ based on gender, class level, and major variables and whether resilience was a predictor variable of hopelessness for college students. This study was planned as a descriptive one that used the correlational research method. Data of the research was collected from 513 freshmen and senior undergraduate students studying in seven different departments of Ankara University. The Resiliency Scale and Beck Hopelessness Scale were used as data collection tools. An independent sample t-test, one way analysis of variance (ANOVA), Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient and simple linear regression analysis were utilized for data analyses. The results of the study revealed that resilience scores did not show any significant difference across genders but showed significant difference with regards to the students' class levels. Resilience scores were significant predictors of hopelessness scores. In general, results of the study were observed to be consistent with related literature.
Keywords: Resilience, Hopelessness, Teacher Candidate

1. Introduction

College students are affected by a natural risk factor because of the adolescence period they experience. When problems like leaving home, economic difficulties, adapting to a new social and cultural environment are taken into consideration together with the developmental problems pertaining to the period, college life can be highly demanding for young people. These challenging natural and environmental factors can bring about emotional problems like suicidal ideation, depression, and hopelessness (Çelikel and Erkorkmaz, 2008; Dilbaz and Seber, 1993; Magaletta and Oliver, 1999; Poch, Villar, Caparros, Juan, Cornella, and Perez, 2004; Zolkoski and Bulluck, 2012). Studies, which have demonstrated that the level of hopelessness among college undergraduates was as high as 13.9%, also draw attention to this risk (Poch et al., 2004). Hopelessness is defined as a negative expectation for the future which is frequently acknowledged to be a significant part of depression. Moreover, it is regarded as the most important risk factor for individuals with a clinical profile (Jonier, Brown and Wingate, 2005). Bacanlı and Tarhan (2016) have conducted a qualitative study on hope, which can be defined as the antonym of hopelessness, with a wide range of participants varying from elementary school students to college undergraduates. The results of this study revealed that hoping was not a passive wait but individuals necessarily needed to make an effort to achieve their goals and especially individuals should persevere in their efforts relying on themselves in the face of challenges. According to Bacanlı and Tarhan (2016), it is possible to list the opinions of the participants about hope as follows: positive feelings and opinions for the future, setting goals, making an effort, believing (both a belief that hope will come true and religious faith) and willing, one's positive feelings and ideas about himself/herself. Hopelessness, on the other hand, can be referred to as the condition where these are non-existent.

Resilience, which generally refers to one's endurance in dealing with demanding life events, has been tackled as a multi-dimensional and hard-to-define phenomenon in recent studies (Greene, 2014; Svetina, 2014). It has been established that resilience was not only a characteristic that was revealed against challenging environmental conditions and developed under the effect of such demanding conditions but was also affected by biological/social/psychological changes (Svetina, 2014). Resilience is defined as not to give up, hold one's ground against demanding life events and to continue fighting or solving the problem. Moreover, the results of studies have demonstrated that resilient individuals had a high level of autonomy, empathy, curiosity, the skills to solve problems, and established good interpersonal relationships (Werner and Smith, 1992), alongside with having high levels of self-sufficiency, self-esteem, optimism (Terzi, 2008) and well-being (Gürgan, 2013). Resilience, which is acknowledged to be a significant life skill, is also seen as a protective mechanism that encourages individuals to hold on to life and to learn how to deal with difficulties (Bonanno, 2004; Fraser, Richman and Galinsky, 1999; Masten, 2001; Steinhardt and Dolbier, 2008). As is seen, while resilience is defined as a protective factor, hopelessness is defined as a risk factor and from this angle a powerful reverse relationship between them is expected to occur.

Despite the fact that there is only a limited number of studies which have tackled resilience together with hopelessness, current studies have drawn attention to this relationship between the two concepts. Hjemdal,

Friborg and Stiles (2012) have demonstrated in their study that resilience was a protective factor against hopelessness, that resilience was a significant predictor of hopelessness, and that planning for the future, which was one of the sub-dimensions of resilience, was the best dimension that predicted hopelessness. While Gooding, Hurst, Johnson and Tarrier (2011) have shown that low hopelessness levels predicted high levels of resilience, a study by Oğuztürk, Akça and Şahin (2011) has pointed out to the significant relationship between college students' problem solving skills, which was generally seen to be one of the important dimensions of resilience, and their level of hopelessness. It seems, however, that this relationship needs to be supported by further studies. Studies handling resilience and hope together were also reviewed within the scope of this study as it might partially contribute to overcome such a limitation.

There is only a limited number of studies which argue that there is a positive and linear relationship between resilience and hope putting forward that hope is a potential factor in predicting resilience (Collins, 2009; Lloyd and Hastings, 2009; Mednick, Cogen, Henderson, Rohrbeck, Kitessa, and Sreisand, 2007). Collins (2009) stated that an increase in resilience was directly proportional to an increase in hope. Seginer (2008) pointed out that the effects of resilience on adaptation to the future was predicted by hope and other four factors, namely cultural adaptation, developmental period, interpersonal relationships, and interpersonal traits. Cohn, Fredrickson, Brown, Mikels and Conway (2009) concluded that happy individuals were not only more satisfied with life but were also able to develop the necessary resources needed for a good life in their study in which they argued that positive emotions would increase satisfaction with life through an increase in resilience and this would result in happiness. The results of a recent study, which has directly handled hope and resilience and investigated the relationship among the levels of hope, coping skills, and resilience levels of families with special needs children, revealed that resilience and coping skills together had a predictive effect on hope (İşcan and Malkoç, 2017). It is suggested that individuals who are called resilient are also hopeful individuals and this hope –to believe in change, to believe that positive things will happen- proves to be one of the unique forces that motivate resilient people as existential well-being incorporates such characteristics as endurance and holding one's head high. Therefore, it seems that conducting studies, which will serve to enable teacher candidates to achieve a perspective that will support their hopes about the future in increasing their levels of resilience, is important. This study is expected to contribute to the need for research in related literature and to psychological counselors' practices working with young individuals on such issues.

One of the factors that was investigated within the scope of this study was the class/year level variable. Teacher candidates who constituted the research group of this study were expected to demonstrate a positive change with regards to hopelessness and resilience levels beginning with their freshman to their senior years through the effect of college life as well. Oğuztürk, Akça and Şahin's study (2011) concluded that the year level variable (being in the first and fourth years) was a significant factor for resilience and hopelessness. Specifically gender roles create differences in women and men's attitudes towards social and psychological conditions. Investigating whether gender affects resilience and hopelessness may also contribute to preventive and protective studies on such issues. The results of many studies have revealed that male students had higher levels of hopelessness than those of female students (Çelikel and Erkorkmaz, 2008; Deniz, Hamarta and Arı, 2005; Girgin, 2009). Dimensions like job/career prospects, economic prospects, and the prestige of young individuals' programs they are majoring in may lead them to assign different meanings to their majors and this condition may affect their levels of resilience and hopelessness. That resilience was the best predictor of hopelessness in its planning for the future dimension has been mentioned before (Hjemdal, Friborg and Stiles, 2012). This datum reveals the significance of expectations and possibilities for the future on college students' scores of resilience and hopelessness. A study by Oğuztürk et al. (2012) has also shown that there was a significant difference between teacher candidates' hopelessness scores with regards to the programs they were majoring in.

College life is expected to prepare young people for life and to contribute to their being more resilient and hopeful when they face problems. The results of this study will render it possible to pinpoint to what degree teacher candidates experience this positive change beginning with their freshman to their senior years. The fact that there is only a limited number of studies which handle resilience and hopelessness together proves to be another reason that renders this study necessary. Within this framework, the aim of this study was to investigate whether the levels of resilience and hopelessness differ based on gender, year level, and department variables and whether resilience was a significant predictor of hopelessness for college students. To this end, answers were sought to be offered to sub-questions like "Do teacher candidates' resilience scores significantly differ based on gender, class level, and major variables?", "Do teacher candidates' hopelessness scores significantly differ based on gender, class level, and major variables?", and "Is resilience a variable that predicts hopelessness?"

2. Method

This study was planned within the framework of a correlational research model which investigated whether teacher candidates' hopelessness and resilience levels differed based on gender, year level, and major variables; and whether resilience was a variable that predicted hopelessness. Correlational research models are study

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models that determine the level of change among two and more variables (Karasar, 2012).

1.1 Participants

The data for the study were collected from a total of 513 teacher candidate undergraduates majoring in seven different programs at Ankara University's Faculty of Educational Sciences. The data were collected only from freshman and senior students in order to be able to interpret the effects of undergraduate education on resilience and hopelessness levels. Table 1 offers the distribution of the participants according to their majors and class levels.

Table 1. The distribution of teacher candidates according to their majors and class levels

Major	Freshman		Senior		Total	
	f	**%**	**f**	**%**	**f**	**%**
Computer and Instructional Technologies Teaching (CITT)	54	10.53	25	4.87	79	15.40
Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Teaching (RCMK)	38	7.41	44	8.58	82	15.98
Pre-School Teaching (PST)	43	8.38	27	5.26	70	13.65
Guidance and Psychological Counseling (GPC)	42	8.19	34	6.63	76	14.81
Classroom Teaching (CT)	37	7.21	33	6.43	70	13.65
Social Sciences Teaching (SST)	32	6.24	41	7.99	73	14.23
Mentally Handicapped Teaching (MHT)	27	5.26	36	7.02	63	12.28
Total	273	53.22	240	46.78	513	100.00

Out of a total of 513 teacher candidates, from whom the data of the study were collected, 165 (32.16%) were male, 348 (67.84%) were female and as is offered by Table 1, 53.22% (273) of them were freshmen while 46.78% (240) were seniors.

1.2 Data Collection Tools

1.2.1 Personal Information Forms

The researchers prepared personal information forms presenting information on the gender, major, and class levels of the participants in line with the goals of the study.

1.2.2 Resilience Scale

Gürgan (2006) specified 50 items as scale items out of a 228-item pool as a result of the analyses he conducted. A re-application was conducted with the specified items and validity confidence proofs were obtained. The researcher also applied Rosenbaum's Learned Resourcefulness Scale, Focus of Control Scale, Beck Hopelessness Scale, and Problem Solving Inventory with the scale he devised. Within the framework of the reliability study of the scale, Cronbach's Alpha internal consistence coefficient was calculated by test-retest reliability and the result was found to be 0.89. Moreover, internal consistence coefficients which were calculated as confidence proofs were found to be Cronbach's Alpha value 0.78 and 0.87 in the same group at different times. The Cronbach's Alpha value calculated for another group was found to be 0.80.

The scale's Cronbach's Alpha reliability was found to be 0.95 while split-half reliability was found to be 0.91 through the data collected from teacher candidates within the scope of the study.

1.2.3 Beck Hopelessness Scale

Beck Hopelessness Scale (HS) was developed by Beck, Lester and Trexler in 1974 in order to investigate the psychopathological conditions that reflected hopelessness. This was a 20-item scale. The scale's Cronbach's Alpha confidence coefficient was found to be 0.93. The adaptation of the scale to Turkey was conducted by Seber (1991) and Durak (1993). The internal consistence evaluation of the scale conducted by a study carried out by 37 depressive patients revealed that its Cronbach's Alpha confidence coefficient was 0.86 (Seber, 1991) while the same figure was found to be 0.85 in a study conducted with 373 normal and psychiatric patients (Durak, 1994). The item-total score correlations between the scores obtained from each item of the scale and the scores obtained from the whole scale were found to be between 0.07 and 0.72 in Seber's (1991) study, while they were found to be between 0.31 and 0.67 in Durak's (1994) study. Furthermore, the split-half reliability of the scale was revealed as 0.85 and test-retest reliability was found to be 0.74 (Durak, 1994; Seber, 1991).

Within the scope of the study on the scale, Cronbach's Alpha reliability was found to be 0.86, while split-half reliability was revealed as 0.84.

1.3 Data Analysis

The t-test was utilized to unearth whether the mean resilience and hopelessness scores differed according to gender and class levels with regards to the independent samples which tested the significance of the difference between the mean scores of the two groups. The fact that the data were collected constantly with minimum intervals and that they had normal distribution rendered the parametric technical utilization possible. Similarly, whether the mean resilience and hopelessness scores differed according to the major variable was analyzed by one-way ANOVA that compared the mean scores of a minimum of two groups. Post-hoc techniques were used in order to reveal the source of the difference. While the "Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient" was

utilized for the correlation between the resilience and hopelessness scores, simple linear regression was used to find out whether resilience scores were significant predictors of hopelessness scores. Data analyses were conducted by the SPSS 17 software program.

3. Results

Resilience and hopelessness scores were evaluated regarding some variables within the first stage of the study. The results of the study were presented in parallel with the study questions.

The t-test was utilized to unearth whether resilience scores differed according to gender and it was seen that the mean resilience scores did not reveal any significant difference with regards to the gender variable ($t_{(511)}$=1.736; p>0.05).

Table 2. The T-test results of resilience scores according to the gender and class variables

	N	Mean	Std. D.	df	T	p
Gender						
Male	165	183.94	31.15	511	1.736	0.083*
Female	348	188.93	30.05			
Class						
Fresh	273	184.73	29.41	511	2.062	0.040**
Senior	240	190.27	31.42			

*p>0.05, **p<0.05

The T-test was again used to reveal whether the resilience scores of teacher candidates differed according to their class years (Table 2). There was a significant difference between the resilience scores of 273 freshmen and 240 seniors from whom the data of the study were collected [t(511)=2.062; p<0.05]. Cohen's d coefficient was calculated in order to investigate the effect size and this coefficient was found to be 0.18. Cohen's d coefficient revealed that there was a weak difference between the two groups. When the arithmetic means were evaluated, it was seen that the mean resilience score of senior teacher candidates was 190.27 and was higher than that of freshmen teacher candidates (184.73). The results revealed by the study suggested that college life and 4-year undergraduate education might increase teacher candidates' resilience levels when other factors were disregarded.

When the seven different majors from which the data of the study were collected were taken into consideration, whether the resilience scores differed based on majors was investigated by one-way ANOVA and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The ANOVA results of resilience scores based on majors

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.		Dif.
Between Groups	13420.12	6	2236.69				CITT– RCMKT
Within Groups	461834.39	506	912.72	2.451	0.024*	0.028	CITT– GPC
Total	475254.52	512					

*p<0.05

As is demonstrated in Table 3, there was a significant difference between the mean resilience scores of teacher candidates majoring in seven programs handled within the scope of the study ($F_{(6.506)}$=2.451; p=0.024). When the source of variance was investigated, it was found out that there was a significant difference between the mean resilience scores of undergraduates majoring in CITT and RCMKT, CITT and GPC. When the mean scores were analyzed, it was seen that the mean resilience scores of teacher candidates majoring in CITT was 179.36, while the same figure was 193.57 for RCMKT majors, and 194.55 for GPC majors. The resilience levels of teacher candidates majoring in RCMKT were found to be higher than those of CITT majors. Similarly, the resilience levels of GPC majors were higher than those of CITT majors. The fact that eta-squared was found to be low suggests that other variables might be at the source of variance.

Whether hopelessness scores of teacher candidates differed according to gender and class levels was investigated and the results obtained are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. The T-test results of hopelessness scores according to the gender and class variables

	N	Mean	Std. D.	df	T	p
Gender						
Male	165	5.42	4.67	280.85	2.369	0.019*
Female	348	4.42	3.98			
Class						
Fresh	273	5.58	4.42	511	3100	0.002**
Senior	240	4.13	3.94			

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

The results of the study revealed that the mean hopelessness scores of teacher candidates differed according to gender [t(280.85)=2.369; p<0.05]. Cohen's d coefficient which showed the effect size of difference was found to be 0.28. As is shown in Table 4, when the arithmetic means were investigated it was seen that male undergraduates' mean hopelessness score was 5.42 while the same figure was 4.42 for female undergraduates. Along these lines, it can be argued that male teacher candidates are more hopeless than female teacher candidates.

Table 4 also demonstrates that there was a significant difference between the mean hopelessness scores of teacher candidates based on their class levels [t(511)=3.100; p<0.05]. Cohen's d coefficient of the difference was found to be 0.27. The mean hopelessness score of freshmen teacher candidates was 5.58, while the same score was found to be 4.13 for senior teacher candidates. The hopelessness level of freshmen teacher candidates was found to be higher than that of senior teacher candidates going through the last year of their undergraduate education.

One-way ANOVA was utilized to determine whether hopelessness scores differed according to the majors of teacher candidates and the results obtained were presented in Table 5.

Table 5. ANOVA results of hopelessness scores according to majors

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.		Dif.
Between Groups	447.54	6	74.59				RCMKT-MCT, RCMKT-SST, RCMKT-CITT, GPC-MCT, RPD-SBO, RPD-BÖTE
Within Groups	8735.56	506	17.26	4.321	0.000*	0.051	
Total	9183.09	512					

As is demonstrated in Table 5, there was a significant difference between the hopelessness scores of teacher candidates according to their majors (F(6,506)=4.321; p=0.000). The mean hopelessness scores of teacher candidates according to their majors were from the highest to the lowest were MCT 5.822, SST 5.691, CITT 5.681, CT 4.662, PST 4.58, GPC 3.522, and RCMKT 3.516 respectively. When the source of variance was investigated, it was seen that the mean hopelessness scores significantly differed between RCMKT-MCT, RCMKT-SST, RCMKT-CITT, GPC-MCT, GPC-SST, and GPC-CITT. If one pays close attention, it can be observed that differences are seen in the scores of RCMKT and GPC majors, which have the lowest mean hopelessness scores, and the scores of other majors.

The correlation between the resilience and hopelessness scores and whether resilience significantly predicted hopelessness was investigated within the scope of the second stage of the study. When the correlation between the resilience and hopelessness scores of teacher candidates was investigated, a moderate negative correlation was found between the two (r=-0.618). The negative correlation coefficient demonstrates the fact that as the resilience scores of teacher candidates increase their hopelessness scores decrease. In other words, it can be argued that candidates with high hopelessness levels also have low resilience levels.

The results of the study revealed that resilience scores were significant predictors of hopelessness scores (Table 6).

Table 6. Simple regression analysis of the prediction of hopelessness scores

Değişken	B	Std. Error	B	t	Sig.
Constant	20.827	0.918		22.691	0.00
Resilience	-0.086	0.005	-0.618	-17.751	0.00

R= -0.618 R^2 =0.380
$F_{(1-511)}$ =315.104,   p= 0.00

A regression equation like "Hopelessness=20.827 – 0.086 Resilience" can be defined between the resilience and hopelessness variables (R=-0.618; R^2=0.380; F=315.104; p<0.05). As is demonstrated in Table 6, analysis results point out to the fact that 38% of the variance related to the hopelessness variant is explained by the resilience variant. This prediction shows that resilience scores of teacher candidates can lead the way to estimate their hopelessness scores. It is seen that being able to cope with negative circumstances in demanding conditions is one of the most important factors affecting the hope levels of teacher candidates.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

This study investigated whether teacher candidates' resilience and hopelessness scores differed according to gender, class level, and major variables alongside with whether resilience predicted hopelessness or not. Resilience scores did not show any significant difference according to gender. Terzi (2008) and Erdoğan, İşeri and Ünal (2006) obtained the same result in their studies as well. However, in Yokuş's (2015) study, which investigated the psychological endurance/resilience levels of teacher candidates majoring in music teaching, female candidates' resilience level was found to be significantly higher than that of male candidates. It was seen

that men were more hopeless than women, in other words, women were more hopeful with regards to hopelessness levels. Men having high hopelessness scores was observed in other studies as well (Çelikel and Erkorkmaz, 2008; Deniz, Hamarta and Arı; 2005; Girgin, 2009). This may be related to the gender roles assigned to men. Societies expect more from men than women about issues like having a job, earning money, and starting a family.

The results of this study revealed that there was a significant difference on part of the seniors between the freshmen and seniors when handled from the resilience perspective. Hopelessness levels were significantly higher in classes in line with this datum, that is to say, as the class level goes up hopelessness decreases and resilience increases. When investigated from the angle of class level, Oğuztürk et al. (2011) also found out that the hopelessness scores of freshmen were higher than those of seniors as was the case in this study as well. This result can be interpreted as college education has a positive effect on personal development. Moreover, this result is an expected one as this four-year process incorporates experiences which are expected to increase resilience like new experiences, leaving the family and standing on one's own two feet.

While GPC and RCMKT majors' resilience scores were significantly higher than those of CITT and MCT majors, CITT and MCT majors' hopelessness scores were significantly higher than those of GPC and RCMKT majors. Şar and Sayar (2012) found in their study that CITT undergraduates' hopelessness scores were higher than those of other undergraduates. The authors stated that GPC majors' hopelessness scores were lower than those of other majors as well. While the fact that resilience and hopelessness scores differed depending on majors might be related to the post-graduation opportunities that these majors offered and the social prestige of the occupation, it might also be related to the individuals' processes of occupation selection and the curricula of such majors. A study by Hjemdal, Friborg and Stiles (2012) demonstrated that resilience was a significant predictor of hope and the fact that the best predictor dimension of hopelessness was the dimension of planning for the future rendered this datum meaningful. The fact that GPC and RCMKT majors had lower hopelessness scores could be related to the graduates' easier appointment to teaching posts but it could also be related to the curricula of these majors and the different support systems and experience opportunities they offered to their undergraduates. This evaluation and the likes need to be investigated in detail by further studies.

The results of the study revealed that resilience scores significantly predicted hopelessness scores and there was a reverse significant correlation between them. This result is in line with Hjemdal, Friborg and Stiles' (2012) study that demonstrated resilience was a significant predictor of hopelessness. Gooding, Hurst, Johnson and Tarrier (2011), however, found in their study that hopelessness predicted resilience. One can also argue that this result is in line with literature that draws attention to the statistical relationship between resilience and hope as well (Collins, 2009; Cohn, Fredrickson, Brown, Mikels, and Conway, 2009 ; Lloyd and Hastings, 2009; Mednick et al., 2007; Seginer, 2008).

Consequently, the results of this study revealed that while resilience did not change according to gender, men were more hopeless; as class level went up resilience increased and hopelessness decreased; resilience and hopelessness scores differed according to teacher candidates' majors; and resilience was a significant predictor of hopelessness. Therefore, one can argue, within the framework of such results, that college education supports the personal development of teacher candidates and proves to be a process that contributes to their being more resilient and more hopeful but its level changes according to teacher candidates' majors. The following recommendations are developed in line with the results of the study:

• The results of the study support the significance of higher education institutions in preparing young people for life. However, in order to prepare teacher candidates for life in a multi-dimensional manner not only academic studies but also planned studies with a preventive and protective function which will contribute to their social, cultural, and personal developments –like group guidance, psychological group counseling, psychoeducation studies, social, cultural, and sports activities— seem very important.

• Guidance and psychological counseling services should be made easily accessible in higher education.

• The fact that male students' hopelessness levels were found to be higher in many studies points out to the significance of studies, which will investigate the pressure brought about by gender roles, to be conducted specifically about male students.

• The reasons why the hopelessness levels of teacher candidates majoring in CITT and MCT departments are higher can be investigated by further studies and thus measures can be taken about this issue.

• Preventive and protective personal counseling studies which will enhance individuals' resilience and hope levels can be conducted through school counseling services and mainstreaming into educational programs at elementary and junior high school levels. Current guidance services framework programs include practices about these issues but to what degree they can be achieved depends on the institution, the specialist, and the teacher.

• Further studies can develop psychoeducational programs on resilience and hopelessness and can investigate its effects.

• The resilience and hopelessness levels of various social groups with different ages and different sociological

characteristics can be compared rendering it possible for researchers to discuss the issue from a wider perspective.

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