An Analysis of the Reasons for Choosing the Teaching Profession and Life Satisfaction of Education Faculty Students against Some Variables

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate education faculty freshmen's life satisfaction and reasons for selecting the teaching profession in relation with certain variables. It was carried out as a quantitative research in survey model. The study group consists of 407 freshmen attending education faculty in a Turkish state university during the 2016-2017 academic year. It was investigated whether preservice teachers' reasons for choosing teaching profession vary by gender, major, high school type, parental education level, and parental income level. In addition, the participants' profiles and general life satisfaction levels were researched. It was found out that gender, socioeconomic level, parental educational status, or type of high school graduated do not have a significant effect on their preference for choosing teaching. On the other hand, a significant relevance was found between the reasons for choosing the profession and program of study. As a result of the study, interesting results were obtained about profiles of teacher candidates. Most of the participants have families with low and middle socioeconomic status, 83% of the mothers are housewives, and the fathers are mostly retired, self-employed, tradesmen and workers. Besides, it was found out that the candidate teachers have life satisfaction levels above average. Also a moderate positive relationship was found between the sub dimension *consciousness* as a reason for choosing the profession and life satisfaction. Finally, the study results were discussed in reference to the literature and recommendations were presented.

Key Words: *Teaching Profession, Preservice Teacher, Education Faculty*

1. Introduction

Profession is the most important part of the individual's identity and is an area of activity that allows individuals to meet their needs such as freedom, happiness, and satisfaction throughout their lives, to live in a place in the society, and to enjoy being useful (Ekinci, 2017; Kuzgun, 2000; Övet, 2006). Although profession is generally defined as an activity to earn profits, people do not work to earn money only. Healthy people use and develop their capacity by working and producing, and also gain pleasure and satisfaction (Kuzgun, 2000, p.2). Kuzgun also describes profession as an activity that enables one to be respected by others, to acquire a place in society, and to enjoy appreciation. Choosing a career is one of the most important choices in an individual's life. It refers to an individual's selection of a profession which includes activities that they think they will do best among various professions, that are appropriate for their interests and abilities, and that they believe will provide the highest level of satisfaction. Selection of profession can be influenced by a variety of factors such as socio-demographic facts, business benefits, environmental opportunities, and talent and interests. According to Hoppock (1957), a person's career choice plays a determining role in their future professional success and future contacts but also their the world view, everyday life style and habits (as cited by Kuzgun, 2000, p.6). Previous research on selection of profession demonstrates that professional preferences are predominantly driven by financial concern, and therefore such preferences hardly reflect individuals' true interests and talents (Demagalhaes, Wilde & Fizzgerald, 2011; Kniveton, 2004; Pekkaya and Çolak 2013). Review of the literature on reasons for selection of the teaching profession reveals no exception. In a study by Çermik, Doğan and Şahin (2010), the reasons for choosing the profession among primary school teacher candidates were listed as utilitarianism, extrinsic factors (job guarantee, long holiday, social security, and opportunity of public employment), intrinsic factors (love for children, suitability of the profession for personal interests and talents), and altruistic attitude (loving humans, loving teaching, desire to be helpful). Apart from that, Boz and Boz (2008) found out that preservice chemistry and mathematics teachers tend to prefer the teaching profession mostly due to three types of reasons as self-sacrificing, intrinsic, and extrinsic factors. Another example was carried out by Papanastasiou and Papanastasiou (1997) with preservice elementary teachers in the USA and

Cyprus and it was found out that intrinsic factors are decisive in selection of the teaching profession in the USA, while extrinsic factors replace in the context of Cyprus. Research results sign the influence of extrinsic factors in the preference of the teaching profession in recent years (Çermik et al., 2010; Küçükoğlu, Taşgın and Saadnie 2014). It is understood from review of the Turkis and international literature that is no consensus on the reasons why the teacher candidates prefer the teaching profession and there is a wide range of reasons. The variability can be explained with country-scpecific facts as well as multidimensional nature of career choice (Bastick, 2000; Çermik et al., 2010; Korkut-Owen, Kepir, Özdemir, Ulaş and Yılmaz 2012; Liu, 2010; Pekkaya and Çolak, 2013; Şahin, Zoraloğlu and Fırat, 2011). The literature proves much emphasis on harmony of personality and profession particulary in the field of Human Resources and Management. This opinion is rooted in psychologist J. Holland's works. Holland (1966) described personality traits and career choice in detail, and pointed out that selection of professions reflects many aspects of personality. From this point of view, it can be said that the relationship between personality and professional orientation, though applicable for all professions, is more evident in professions that require dedication especially concerning working area and working conditions (Püsküloğlu, 1986, as cited by: Hotaman, 2011,p.127). The teaching profession can also be discussed in this context since it is crucial for the future of the society. If teachers, as people who train future generations, perform their occupations dearly and with pleasure, the quality of education will be affected accordingly. Teachers have important duties such as developing a country, socialising and intergrating individuals into society, transfering the culture and values to new generations, and training highly qualified generations (Çermik et al., 2010). In this regard, the reasons why individuals choose the teaching profession and characteristics of individuals who choose this profession seem to gain importance. What the society will be like in the future is concerned with the question "*What are teachers like today?*" (Özpolat, 2005). The quality of teacher education is affected from many direct and indirect variables. First of all, educational settings of candidate teachers, schools settings for preservice teachers' school practice, characteristics of instructors, and input characteristics of preservice teachers can be listed as variables that have a direct effect on teacher education (Kiraz, Demir, Aksu, Daloğlu, Yıldırım, 2010; Okçabol, 2004; Yıldırım, 2013). In one sense, bringing up qualified teachers has to do with characteristics of teacher candidates as input of teacher training programs. It would be controversial and difficult to obtain a qualified output, ie teachers, out of lower quality input. Hence, it seems important to identify and highlight input characteristics, ie preservice teachers (Orhan and Ok, 2014, pp 76). According to Bloom's (1976) "learning at school" model; input characteristics of preservice teachers, students' history, and readiness are the important variables influencing success. So it is thought worth to explore demographic factors of students in education faculties (Okçabol, 2004), parental socio-economic and socio-cultural levels, their professional interests and attitudes towards the profession, and influential factors for preparing and renewing teacher training programs. Moreover, repeating such works on a periodical basis is thought to see how the profile of preservice teachers change during a certain period of time. This study was carried out with the aim of determining not only input characteristics of preservice teachers but also their reasons for selection of teaching and their overall life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is the paramount element to be possessed by humans for a happy and meaningful life (Dağlı and Baysal, 2016). Life satisfaction is defined as overall judgement and assessment and attitude of the individual regarding their own life (Diener et al.1985; Rice, Fone and McFarlin, 1992; Shin and Johnson, 1978). Life satisfaction refers to a cognitive process and is also defined as overall evaluation of life quality of individuals according to their own criteria (Diener et al.1985; Shin and Johnson, 1978). Life satisfaction refers to one's whole perception of their life rather than a specific area of life. To exemplify, if a person is satisfied with her/his job only, s/he is not necessarily contented with her/his all life, but job satisfaction can increase her/his life satisfaction (Dağlı and Baysal, 2015). Song and Appleton (2008, pp. 8-11) argue that life satisfaction has six sub-components. These are ;

1. *Income level, occupation and social status*
2. *Possibilities owned and social mobility,*
3. *Welfare conditions,*
4. *Current state policy,*
5. *Environment,*
6. *Family and social relations.*

From this perspective, it is possible that one's joyment of their profession and positive attitude towards the profession increases their life satisfaction. Profession is more than an activity to make money. The individual uses and improves their capacity by working and producing, which in turn gives them pleasure and satisfaction. In the context of education system, purposeful and willing selection of the teaching profession by preservice teachers in accordance with their personal interests and abilities can push up their life satisfaction as well as their work performance. Higher level of life satisfaction of preservice teacher candidates is likely to affect their subjective well-being but also other constituents of education system. Bearing this in mind, it is regarded

meaningful to investigate preservice teachers' life satisfaction levels along with reasons for selection of the profession.

This study was planned around the main question "What are the influential factors on preservice teachers' giriş özellikleri, life satisfaction and reasons for choosing the teaching profession in a Turkish state university?" The research problem was divided into sub-problems below.

1. What input characteristics do the education faculty students possess as regards to demographics and parental profile?

2. Do the factors influencing education faculty students' preference for the teaching profession vary depending on;

   a)   gender?
   b)   major?
   c)   parental income level?
   d)   type of high school graduated?

3. What is the level of overall life satisfaction of preservice teachers? Is there a relationship between the factors that influence students to choose the teaching major and their overall life satisfaction levels?

2. Methodology

In this part of the study; method, study group, data collection tools, data collection and analysis were described.

2.1. Research Design

This study was planned as a survey by following the quantitative research approach. Survey is a type research conducted on large samples that sheds light onto participants' views, interests, skills, abilities, attitudes, and so on regarding a particular topic or event. (Fraenkel ve Wallen, 2006). It aims at describe participants in a research rather than modifying variables.

2.2.Participants

In this study, participants consists of education faculty first-year students enrolled in the course tited "Educational Psychology" during the second semester at a state university during the 2016-2017 academic year. The study group was selected by using convenience sampling method. The study was carried out to collect data about the participants including their reasons for selecting the teaching profession and life satisfaction levels besides their input characteristics (demographic factors, type of high school attended, order of education faculty in university preference list, and parental facts).

2.2.3. Data Collection Instruments

In this study, data collection was completed by using three different tools. First, a "Personal Information Form" (on personal information, parental information and major of participants) was developed by the researchers. The other tools used in the study were "The Factors Influencing Teaching Choice (FIT-Choice) Scale" and "The Satisfaction with Life Scale" retrieved from the literature.

2.2.3.1.Personal Information Form

A personal information form was developed by the researchers to include basic data about participants such as major, gender, educational status of parents, occupation status of parents, and type of high school graduated.

2.2.3.2. The Factors Influencing Teaching Choice (FIT-Choice) Scale

In this study, data on participants' reasons for choice of teaching as a profession were gathered by using "The Factors Influencing Teaching Choice (FIT-Choice) Scale" (ÖAÖMTEEOFÖ) developed by Övüt (2006) with proven validity and reliability. The ÖAÖMTEEOFÖ is comprised of four sub-scales with a total of 31 items including 22 positive and 9 negative items, the latter being reverse-scored. It is a 5-point Likert type scale

ranging from *'Completely true (5)'* to *'Completely wrong (1)'*. Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated as (α = 0.86) for the entire scale during the development stage. The scale consists of four dimensions as Consciousness, Assurance, Ideal and Influence. As for the sub-scales; Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated as (α = 0.91) in Consciousness, (α = 0.80) Assurance, (α = 0.90) Ideal, and (α = 0.75) in Influence. Also factor analysis was applied to test construct validity of the scale.

2.2.3.3.The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

"The Satisfaction with Life Scale" is a self-evaluation Likert scale developed by Diener et al. (1985, 72). The original scale consists of one factor, five items and 7 points with each item responded on the basis of a 7-point rating scale (1: Disagree Strongly – 7: Agree Strongly). The scale was then adopted into Turkish by Köker (1991) and used as a 7-point scale by most Turkish researchers. Later, it was adopted by Dağlı and Baysal (2016) into Turkish resulting in one factor and 5 points. Unlike in the original version, the scale points were revised as *"Disagree strongly (1), Agree slightly (2), Agree moderately (3), Mostly agree (4), Agree strongly (5)"*. In the SWLS, the total score is obtained by adding up points of items. Increase in points indicates an increase in life satisfaction. Reliability of the SWLS was ensured with Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of (α = 0.88). As regards construct validity of the scale, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed by Köker (1991). The CFA revealed that the scale items have the identical distribution as the original version.

3. Data Collection and Analysis

Preservice teachers satisfying the abovementioned critera participated voluntarily in the study. For collecting study data, all of the participants were given the two questionnaires referred above: "The Factors Influencing Teaching Choice (FIT-Choice) Scale" (ÖAÖMTEEOFÖ) developed by Övüt (2006) and "The Satisfaction with Life Scale" developed by Diener et al. (1985) and as adopted into Turkish by Dağlı and Baysal (2016). Then, data analysis was performed based on the research question and sub-questions. The analysis was performed in computerised environment with SPSS 25. The characteristics of the respondents were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation). In response to the next research question, identification of the factors influencing selection of teaching as a career, predictive statistics were utilised such as t test and one way ANOVA. Lastly, research question three was analysed with Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC).

4. Results

This part of the study is allocated to findings obtained from data analysis following the same order as the research problems. First, input characteristics of participants are presented which were applicable as they entered faculty of education. These characteristics include demographic factors, parental facts, and order of education faculty in their university preference list. These findings are followed by factors affecting education faculty students' choice of the teaching profession. Finally, results are given about the connection between their overall life satisfaction and reasons for preferring teaching as a profession.

4.1. Input Characteristics of Education Faculty Students

59.5% of the participants were female (n = 242) and 40.5% (165) were male. The preservice teachers participated in the study on voluntary basis.

Demographic information about the participants is given in Table 1 grouped by program they attend.

Table 1
Demographic Information on Participating Education Faculty Students

Gender	f	%
Female	242	59,5
Male	165	40,5

Major	f	%
Preschool Education (ECE)	32	7,9
Social Sciences Education (SSE)	32	7,9
Art Education (AE)	32	7,9
Music Education (ME)	33	8,1
Science Education (SCE)	36	8,8
English Language Teaching (ELT)	30	7,4
Classroom Teaching (CT)	37	9,1
Computer Education and Instructional Technology (CEIT)	32	7,9
Turkish Language Education (TLT)	38	9,3
Special Education (SE)	31	7,6
Secondary School Mathematics Education (SSME)	37	9,1
Elementary Mathematics Education (EME)	37	9,1
Total	407	100

Examination of high school graduation of the participants shows that 45.5% (n = 185) studied in Anatolian High Schools, 22.4% in Multi-Program High Schools, 13.3% in Anatolian Teachers' Training High School, and the remaining 18.8% graduated from other types of high schools (science high school, girls' vocational high school, health vocational high school, military high school, etc.).

Table 2 below displays educational statistics about parents of the participants.

Table 2
Educational Status of Participants Mothers and Fathers

Educational Level	Mother		Father	
	f	%	f	%
Illiterate	22	5,4	2	,5
Literate	32	7,9	10	2,5
Primary school graduate	167	41	102	25,1
Secondary school graduate	61	15	84	20,6
High school graduate	90	22,1	124	30,5
Undergraduate/Postgraduate	22	5,4	78	19,2
Other	13	2,7	3	,7
Dead	-	-	4	1
Total	407	100	407	100

It is seen in Table 2 that mothers of most participants graduated from elementary school (41%) and high school (22.5%). Only 5.4% of the mothers are educated at undergraduate/ postgraduate level. As for the ratio of illiterate mothers, it was found as 5.4%, which is the same as the rate of mothers with undergraduate degrees. On the other hand, fathers' educational status seems to be higher on average. For example, 30.5% are high school graduates, 19,2% undergraduate/ postundergraduates, and 25.1% primary school graduates. Lastly, 2.5% of fathers were found to be literate only.

It is understood that the participant preservice teachers have parents with a myriad of professions. Information on professions of parents is presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Mother-Father's Profession

Profession	Mother		Father	
	f	%	f	%
Housewife	336	82,6	-	-
Teacher	9	2,2	19	4,7
Tradesman/Worker	9	2,2	72	17,7
Civil Servant	6	1,5	49	12
Self-Employed	6	1,5	90	22,1
Retired	17	4,2	118	29
Other	24	5,9	55	13,5
Dead	-	-	4	1
Total	407	100	407	100

Table 3 provides an attention-grabbing finding that majority of the participants' mothers are housewives (82.6%). Only 2.2% of mothers are teachers. On the other hand, it is seen that most of fathers are retired (29%). Of the rest of the fathers, 22.1% are self-employed, 17.7% are tradesmen/workers, 4.7% are teachers, and 12% are civil servants.

In relation with income level of the parents, statistics are given in Table 4.

Table 4
Parental Income Level

Parental Income Level	f	%
1400TL and belows	74	18,2
1400 TL to 2000TL	116	28,5
2000TL to 3000TL	110	27
3000TL to 4000TL	65	16
4000TL and above	39	9,6
Unknown	3	,7
Total	407	100

According to Table 4, most participants come from families with an income between 1400-2000 TL (28.5%), followed by the range of 2000-3000 TL (27%). It is remarkable that 16% of the partcipants' families live on the minimum wage and less.

This study also investigated the ranking of the respondents' current major in university preference list. It was found out that 26.8% (n = 109) of the participants opted for their current field of study in the first place, 8.1% (n = 33) in the second place, and the rest of 8.6% (n = 35) entered their program as their third preference. Regarding this question, no answer was obtained from 27 of the participants.

4.2. Do the factors influencing education faculty students' preference for the teaching profession vary depending on;

a) gender?

As a result of independent samples t-test on whether gender affects' selection of the teaching profession, no statistically significant difference was found. P> 0.05 was applicable in all sub-scales.

b) major?

One-way ANOVA test was used to analyse whether the factors influencing selection of the teaching profession differ across programs studied. As a result of the analysis; a statistically significant difference was found in the sub-scales *Assurance* [$F_{(11-395)}$=4.40,p<.01] and *Ideal* [$F_{(11-395)}$=7,22 p<.01] . In the sub-factor of assurance (Levene:,70;p>.01), the variances in the levene test were homogeneous so Schefe was used as the post-hoc test to spot the difference between the groups exactly. However, in the subscale *Ideal,* Dunnet C was used as a post-hoc test to determine the difference between the groups because the variances were not homogeneous in the levene test (Levene:4,37;p<.01). The results of the one-way analysis of variance for *Assurance* and *Ideal* are presented in Tables 5 and 6, respectively.

Table 5
"Assurance" as a Factor Influencing Selection of the Teaching Profession and Results of One-way ANOVA regarding the Variable of Major

Factor	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Square	F	P	Significant Difference
Assurance	Intergroups	481,68	11	43,79	4,40	,000[*]	**ELT**-SSE,AE, **SE**-SSE
	Intragroup	3932,66	395	9,96			
	Total	4414,34	406				

[F$_{(11-395)}$=4,40,p<.01]

It is seen in Table 5 that mean scores from the sub-scale *Assurance* differ statistically in favour of English Language Teaching (ELT) compared to Social Sciences Education (SSE) and Art Education (AE). Also, statistically significant difference was seen between mean scores obtained by preservice teachers in Special Education and Social Sciences Education in favour of the former.

Table 6
"Ideal" as a Factor Influencing Selection of the Teaching Profession and Results of One-way ANOVA regarding the Variable of Major

Factor	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Square	F	P	Significant Difference
Ideal	Intergroups	342,76	11	31,160	7,22	,000[*]	*ME*-ECE,SSE,SCE,CT,CEIT,TLT,SE, SSME,EME;
	Intragroup	1705,045	395	4,317			*AÖ*-SSE,SCE,CT,SSME
	Total	2047,808	406				*ELT*-ECE,SCE,CT,CEIT,TLT,SE,EME, SSME

[F(11-395)=7,22,p<.01]

Table 6 shows a statistically significant difference under **Ideal** in favour of Music Education compared the programs Preschool Education, SSE, SCE, CT, CEIT, TLT, SE, SSME, EME. Also a statistically significant difference was found between mean scores obtained by participants attending Art Education (AE) and SSE,SCE,CT,SSME in *Ideal* in favour of the former. Another important finding concerns mean scores from the **Ideal**. It is seen that the participants attending Classroom Teaching (CT) gain statistically higher scores in that sub-scale in comparison to those enrolled in programs ECE, SCE, CT, CEIT, TLT, SE, EME, and SSME.

      c)   parental income level?
      As a result of one-way ANOVA test regarding whether the perservice teachers' reasons for selecting the teaching profession differ according to parents' monthly income status, no statistically significant difference was found between the groups (p>.05).

      d)   type of high school?
      One-way ANOVA test regarding whether the perservice teachers' reasons for selecting the teaching profession differ by type of high school they graduated, yielded no significant difference between the groups (p>.05).

      3. What is the level of overall life satisfaction of preservice teachers? Is there a relationship between the factors that influence students to choose the teaching major and their overall life satisfaction levels?

The descriptive statistics of the respondents' answers to life satisfaction scale are given in Table 7.

Table 7
Descriptive Statistics regarding Life Satisfaction of Preservice Teachers

M	Statement	M	SD
1	I live close to my ideals.	3,47	1,19
2	My living conditions are perfect.	2,95	1,15
3	I am happy with my life.	3,86	1,08
4	I have had the important things in life so far.	3,35	1,14
5	If I were born again, I would change almost nothing in my life.	2,78	1,33

      When Table 7 is examined, it is seen that the highest mean score was calculated under the statement "*I am happy with my life*" ($\bar{X}$=3,86). On the contrary, the item with the lowest agreement was found to be statement 5, which reads as "*If I were born again, I would change almost nothing in my life*" ($\bar{X}$=2,78). It can be inferred

that the participant preservice teachers are satsified with their lives. Bearing the scale data in mind, it can be said that preservice teachers have life satisfaction above moderate level (M=3,28; SD=.86).

The relationship, if any, between the factors influential on preservice teachers' preference of the teaching professsion and their overall life satisfaction was checked with Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC). The analysis proved a significant positive relationship (*r=.30)* (p<.05) between mean scores obtained from the sub-scale *Consciousness* as a reason for choosing the teaching profession and mean scores from the *The Satisfaction with Life Scale*.

5. Conclusion

As the first research question, demographic facts about the preservice teachers reveal that 59.5% of the participants are female (Arı and Demir 2013; Bursal, 2016; Camadan and Duysak 2010; Çetin, 2012; Ekinci, 2017; Eret-Orhan and Ok, 2013; Okçabol, 2004). Also in other studies on this topic, majority of the sample is represented by female teacher candidates. This implies that teaching is preferred as a career by females more often. It could be explained by financial and sociological factors. To clarify, the fact that teachers work half-time and they have long summer vacations can be motivate women for this selection. It may also be preferred because teaching is appropriate for traditional gender roles. However, this situation should be investigated in depth through further research.

Secondly, it was found out that 45.5% of the participants graduated from Anatolian High Schools, 22.4% from Multi-Program High Schools, and 13.3% Anatolian Teachers' Training High School. Şimşek (2005) pointed out that type of high school graduation is the most important factor affecting attitudes towards the teaching profession. So it can be suggested that graduates of Anatolian Teachers' Training High School hold the most favourable attitude towards the profession of teaching. However, since those schools have been transformed into Anatolian High Schools Science High Schools and Social Sciences High School since 2014, the number of graduates of Anatolian Teachers' Training High School has decreased over the years. Nevertheless, the number of graduates of Science High Schools and Social Sciences High Schools accepted to education faculties is low compared to other high schools. However, Aydın and Sağlam (2012) found that type of high school does not affect the participants' attitude towards the teaching profession. A similar finding was also reported in the study of Bozdoğan, Aydın and Yıldırım (2007).

Examination of another variable, socioeconomic level of the participants' families, revealed that they mainly come from the middle and low socioeconomic status. This finding seems consistent with previous research findings (Aslan, 2015; Okçabol, 2004; Ok and Önkol, 2007; Richorsan and Watt, 2006; Saban, 2003). Since teaching is considered to be a profession with a higher job assurance than other others, families with low and middle socioeconomic status may have encouraged their children for this profession.

In relation with educational status of parents, 41% of the mothers are reported as primary school graduates while only 5.4% have undergraduate/postgraduate education. On the other hand, patriarchal educational status seems better, with 30.5% being high school graduates and 19.2% holding undergraduate/postgraduate level of education. As another familial aspect, occupational status of parents show that 82.6% of the mothers are housewives and 2.2% are teachers. In the case of the fathers' occupation status, 29% are retired, 22.1% are self-employed, and 17.7% are tradesmen/farmer. These findings look in conformity with the literature. For example, Kızılçaoğlu (2003) noted that 86.8% of the participants' mothers are housewives. In another example, a large scale research conducted by Kiraz et al., (2010) with 18.226 freshmen in education faculties across Turkey, it was found out that most preservice teachers come from families at lower socioeconomic level and mothers are elementary school graduates or even not (68%). Back to our study, it was found out that the mothers are predominantly housewives, and fathers are farmers or workers. Likewise, Baykara-Pehlivan (2008) discovered in their study that as many as 73.82% of the preservice teachers were born to housewives, and 23.31% of the fathers are civil servants, 21.1% are workers, and 18% are retired. In addition, Küçükömerler (2000) found out that 41% of participants have retired fathers and 82% have mothers who are housewives. Apparently, the vast majority of preservice teachers' mothers do not work and that their educational status is lower than fathers.

As for the rank of education faculty in preservice teachers' university preference list, more than 50% of the participants were placed in education faculty as one of their top five preferences. This finding is supported by other studies as well (Çevik and Yiğit, 2009; Kocabaş, 2000; Şimşek, 2005). In a study by Aydın and Sağlam (2012), no significant difference was found in preservice teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession

considering the rank of the profession in their university preference list. Additionally, similar results were reported in studies realised by Çapa and Çil (2000) and Şen (2006).

In some studies, gender is seen as an important factor affecting occupational choice (Çermik et al., 2010; Korkut-Owen et al., 2012; Övüt, 2006;). On the contrary, in the present research, statistically significant difference was not found between females and males in relation with their reasons for choosing teaching as a career. Support is extended by Buldur and Bursal 2015; Hacıömeroğlu, Şahin-Taşkın, 2010; Kılcan, Keçe, Çepni and Kılınç 2014. Exceptionally, Övet (2006) reported higher levels of idealism among female preservice teachers than their male peers.

In our study, the reasons for selection of the teaching profession differ significantly by major under the sub-scales *Ideal* and *Assurance*. In this connection; preservice English teachers are identified with a significant difference compared to Social Sciences Education and Art Education considering their perceptions related to *Assurance* (due to the advantages of their prospective profession such as job security, immediate employment and social security). However, in his survey on preservice teachers, Övet (2006) found out no difference in reasons for choosing the teaching profession among students from different majors. Yet, Orhan and Ok (2014) reported more positive attitudes towards the teaching profession among preservice English language teachers compared to their peers in CEIT. Another difference regarding *Assurance* was found between Special Education and Social Studies Education in favour of the former. The difference enjoyed by preservice English teachers with respect to *Assurance* perceptions in comparison to preservice social sciences and art teachers could be due to the gap between the numbers of teachers recruited by the government yearly. To exemplify, while 2193 English teachers were recruited, as few as 379 Social Studies teachers were appointed, and no art teachers were recruited during July 2017 (https://ilkatama.meb.gov.tr/branslaragorebasvuru.aspx). Kızılçaoğlu (2003) found out in his study investigating the profile of preservice social sciences teachers that the students enrolled in Social Sciences Education take the university entrance exam with the hope for a brighter future when they are in their first, second, and third years because of the limited employment opportunities for social sciences teachers. Again, it was reported by Aksu (2015) that employment opportunities are found the most sufficient by preservice Turkish language teachers, followed by elementary mathematics education, and preschool education, whereas preservice social sciences teachers are in top rank regarding insufficient employment opportunities. Furthermore; Tortop, Koçak, Acar, Oruç, Canöz, Kapusuz and Çoşkun (2014) found out that the most explanatory factor for preferring Education of the Mentally Handicapped is promising job opportunities from preservice teachers' perspective. Likewise, higher perceptions of the Special Education Teacher candidates regarding *Assurance* may be due to the fact that the possibilities for finding a job in both private and public sector are good.

In the other outstanding sub-scale, *Ideal*, regarding preservice teachers' career choice, signifiant difference exists between preservice music teachers and preschool, social sciences, science education, classroom teaching, computer education and instructional technologies, special education, secondary school mathematics and elementary mathematics education on the other side, indicating a more favourable position for preservice music teachers. In a study by Tebiş (2006) invsitigating the reasons for career choice among music teacher candidates, it was found out that the major is predominantly opted by graduates of Anatolian Fine Arts High School. It was added that the abovementioned participants might have opted to study music because they were taught by music teachers during elementary education in the 1st and 2nd grade. Furthermore, Tebiş (2006) found out that the preservice teachers' preference for music as a major is substantially affected from their musical abilities. In this regard, further findings were brought by Çiçek (2008) stating that preservice music teachers' love for music is the leading factor for their preference. So it could be suggested that preservice music teachers choose that major as it is their perceived ideal job and they are interested in and apt to music (candidates are accepted to the program only after passing a talent exam besides the national selection and placement test), but also as they model their teachers. Similarly, students are accepted to Art Education department only after a talent exam. In our study, the reasons why preservice art teachers prefer the teaching profession differ from Social Studies, Science, Classroom, and Secondary School Mathematics Education under the sub-scale *ideal*. In Buyurgan (2007), 57% of the study participants stated that they had entered art education program fondly. As in the case of music education, the respondents studying art education may also have chosen that major under the influence of their special talents. Under the same sub-scale, the reasons for choosing English Language Teaching (ELT) are significantly different from Preschool, Social Sciences Education, Science, Secondary School Mathematics, and Elementary Mathematics Education in this study. The participants from ELT might have perceived the major as their ideal job on the grounds of abundance job opportunities and their aptitude and interest in language learning. In most studies, the main reasons for selection of the teaching profession were listed as affection for the teaching profession, enjoyment of teaching, and perceived ideal job (Boz and Boz, 2008; Çetin, 2012; Ekinci, 2017;

Korkut-Owen et al., 2012; Okçabol 2004; Orhan and Ok, 2014). This could be a contributing factor about career choice of the participants in our study.

Another finding is that no statistically significant difference was revealed in the participants' preference for the teaching profession depending on the income level of the family. This result seems to be in consensus with similar research findings in the field (Bursal, 2016; Çermik et al., 2010; Hacıömeroğlu and Şahin-Taşkın, 2010; Övet, 2006; Özkan, 2017).

As a remarkable result of our study, there is a moderate positive relationship between overall life satisfaction of the preservice teachers and *Consciousness* as a reason for choosing the profession. Life satisfaction is a cognitive component of subjective well-being and includes cognitive judgments related to one's life (Diener et al., 1985). From this perspective, it could be argued that the relation between life satisfaction and *Consciousness,* which is one of the factors affecting selection of profession, may also affect subjective well-being (happiness) positively. The participants in this study have overall life satisfaction above medium level. This result coincides with findings of Orhan and Ok (2014). They also reported that higher general life satisfaction of preservice teachers positively affects their attitude towards teaching as a profession (Orhan and Ok, 2014).

It is stated that input characteristics of prospective teachers influence the quality of teacher training and the final output considerably (Bloom, 1976, MEB, 1992). If preservice teachers start their university education after a well-informed choice and in harmony with their interests and abilities, overall quality of teachers will be eventually affected in a desired way. In this regard, we think it is important to inform and encourage candidate preservice teachers about the teaching profession before they complete their selection. Teachers's characteristics have a direct influence on student behaviours (Hottaman, 2011). A teacher is not someone who is the best transferer of knowledge, rather it is the one who successfully prepares students' behaviours and successes by exhibiting desired behaviours and attitudes and is influential on instruction and students in this way (Sönmez, 2007). In a country, the most important part to play for educating the next generations and qualified human power needed by the country falls onto teachers (Küçükahmet, 1996). Bringing up of qualified human power that is required by the age is closely related to training and selection of qualified preservice teachers. Within this framework, placement of candidates into education faculties, as the main institutions of teacher training, should not be done only through exams, but extra criteria should be introduced (Ok, 1991). Finally, we recommend that the teacher training and selection policy in Turkey should be revisited by policy makers and academics in the light of the results of this and other studies, so that a movement can be initiated based on on scientific basis. In addition, works can be carried out in order to improve the knowledge and skills needed by preservice teachers and promote a positive attitude towards the profession by the time they start teaching practically.

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